

PRELIMINARY  
UNEDITED  
TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY  
FOR THE PERIOD:  
3:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.  
THURSDAY, MARCH 29, 1979

The House met at 3:00 P.M.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

ORAL QUESTIONS:

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, there is a very grave and serious matter, Sir, that I want to raise. I do not know whom to ask the questions of but I think the matter should be raised in this House, Sir. I believe, probably, the best one for me to deal with on it would be the Premier because it is of such a serious nature and could affect the future of this Province and I refer, Mr. Speaker, to the oil spill, recently, that came from the British tanker about nine or ten miles off Cape Breton.

CAPTAIN WINSOR: Is that the one that broke in two?

MR. NEARY: Yes, the Kurdistan.

MR. SIMMONS: The Frank Moores.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, first of all I have to give a little preliminary on this. I think the saving grace in that particular case, as far as Newfoundland is concerned, is the fact that the prevailing wind was easterly at the time and was jamming the ice in on the Cape Breton coast and then managed to contain the oil spill, otherwise it would have had devastating effects on Newfoundland and on the fishery in the Gulf and in the Bay St. George area and right along the Southwest Coast, along the Burgeo banks and so forth. Nobody raised the matter in this Province and I was hoping that one of the ministers or the new Premier would raise it here in the Legislature.

March 29, 1979

Tape No. 559

NM - 2

MR. NEARY:

I think we should bring it to the attention of the authorities in Ottawa that there should be more discipline regarding the movement of oil tankers in the Gulf, especially during the Winter months, because

Mr. Neary: that particular incident, Sir, could have ruined our fishery on the Southwest Coast, which is a year-round fishery. And I want to ask the Premier now what action this government is going to take to bring this matter forcibly home to the Government of Canada that we cannot allow that to happen, that we cannot tolerate it in the future, that it has to be stopped, that there has to be more discipline.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER (MR. OTTENHEIMER): A point of order.

MR. MARSHALL: I do not want to interrupt my friend on the opposite side, but, you know, the Question Period, Mr. Speaker, is supposed to be for the answering of questions not the supplying of information or the giving of speeches. And I think the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) has asked this question and he is going too far.

MR. SPEAKER: There is no doubt that our Standing Orders do indicate that any preamble should be brief and give such necessary information as is required for the question. I, in fact, think that the hon. gentleman in his preamble did that, and to the best of my knowledge has in fact asked his question.

MR. NEARY: I am just asking the question, Sir. I was just wondering if this is the crowd that brought democracy to Newfoundland and now want to suppress a very important matter concerning the future of this Province. And I am asking the Premier -

MR. MARSHALL: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order.

MR. MARSHALL: And I think we better get the ground rules -

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. MARSHALL: We better get the ground rules straight, Mr. Speaker. When a member of this House gets up on a point of order -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (MR. OTTENHEIMER): Order, please!

MR. MARSHALL: When a member of this House gets up on a point of order and puts it before Your Honour and Your Honour makes a ruling on it, it is to be accepted, and the member who is subjected to the ruling, it is entirely out of order for him to be making comments about a member of this House rising legitimately, and raising legitimate points to Your Honour.

MR. SPEAKER: I think in order to facilitate the orderly flow of the Question Period what I should do now is recognize the minister to answer the question, because my understanding is the question has been asked.

MR. NEARY: Not yet.

MR. SPEAKER: Well obviously there might be a supplementary. But my understanding is that the question has been asked.

MR. NEARY: That will be fine, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for asking the question. It is a very important issue in Eastern Canada and in Newfoundland. A day and a half ago I wired the Prime Minister of Canada requesting that I have a meeting with him and some of his ministers to discuss matters of great concern both to the Province and Eastern Canada, and one of the things on

PREMIER PECKFORD: my shopping list is the whole question of the movement of ships, oil tankers and so on, in the winter time which was highlighted by that recent accident that the hon. member refers to. So I have already taken action to try to sit down with the Prime Minister of our country, and with various ministers concerned with this, to review that as well as other matters facing the Province and facing Eastern Canada.

MR. SPEAKER: (Mr. Ottenheimer) A supplementary.

MR. S. NEARY: First of all, Sir, I want to thank the hon. gentleman for his answer. I am amazed and surprised that the hon. gentleman moved so quickly and I congratulate him for it. Because this is a matter that does not involve partisan politics, it is a matter that could affect the future of this Province, especially with so much oil drilling going on off our coast and so forth that we should be very conscious and very concerned about our environment and about the possibility of an oil spill. I would like to ask the Premier if he thinks this matter is important enough that perhaps the Government, in the next day or so, could bring in a resolution, have it unanimously approved by the House, to ask the Government of Canada, the ministers in Ottawa, to take immediate action on this situation. If the wind had been in an opposite direction, I am told by master mariners that our fisheries, especially in my district of LaPoile and down around Burgeo along the Southwest coast, would have been ruined and that would have been disastrous. I am glad the Premier took action but I would like to follow it up with a resolution passed in the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I will take that under advisement, whether that is the route to go. I think that at this point in time it might be more appropriate for me rather than jump the gun on the Prime Minister, I have requested a meeting to try and line up a meeting with him and some of his ministers in the next couple of weeks, to address him or bring him up to date on the issue, and then if following giving him an opportunity to react to the concerns I have that if there is no reaction or no positive response to our concerns on it in the next

PREMIER PECKFORD: month or so, after I have had an opportunity to brief the Prime Minister, at that point in time, I think perhaps a resolution from this House would be appropriate. But in the first instance I think we should give the federal authorities, the federal ministers and the Prime Minister a chance to hear our concerns and give them a chance to respond positively. Then if they do not respond positively I think that is the appropriate point in time in which to pass a unanimous resolution from this House.

MR. SPEAKER: (Mr. Ottenheimer) Hon. member.

MR. S. NEARY: I was not quite clear on the answer that the hon. gentleman gave about the meeting with the Prime Minister. My understanding, it was to be a meeting, now that the hon. gentleman is the new Premier of the Province, a familiarization meeting with the Prime Minister. This was not specifically mentioned, this incident in the gulf.

MR. NEARY: or was it? I am not quite sure. If it was mentioned fine! But if it was not mentioned, then we could pass the unanimous resolution in this House.

MR. SPEAKER: (Mr. Ottenheimer) The hon. Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, this particular issue was not specifically mentioned. All that was mentioned was that there were a number of concerns that I had, one of them is, of course, the -

MR. NEARY: I just gave it to you now when I read it to the House.

PREMIER PECKFORD: The hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) must recognize that two years ago - and the hon. member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) might be interested and enlightened by the following information, that two years ago, through the Department of Mines and Energy and the provincial government, we instituted our own study on oil spills in this Province long before the Federal Environmental Department ever decided to do some studies. And at our insistence this past year we persuaded the Federal Environmental authorities to get involved in environmental questions off Labrador as it related to oil spills. So we have been familiar with the whole question of environmental protection as it relates to oil spills for quite some time and therefore my familiarity with it has allowed me now to use as one of my concerns to the Prime Minister the whole question of the accident off Cape Breton.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Bellevue.

CAPT. WINSOR: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member has a supplementary.

I will hear the hon. member's supplementary.

CAPT. WINSOR: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

Would the hon. the Premier when he meets with the Prime Minister, or any of the ministers of the federal government, try to ascertain whether that ship broke up because of very high seas and a storm



CAPT. WINSOR: or was she punctured by ice?  
Then, if it is the latter I think there should be restrictions on ships, tankers especially, entering that area during that period of the season.

MR. SPEAKER:(Mr. Ottenheimer) The hon. Premier,

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I think perhaps we can ascertain that information without having to ask the Prime Minister. I think perhaps this can be ascertained from the Coast Guard or whatever agency has been responsible for trying to clear it up and to investigate the accident. I think it is worthwhile to try to determine the cause of the accident because then whatever the cause is will largely determine the kind of action you would like to take to insure that it does not happen again.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Bellevue followed by the hon. members for Stephenville, Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir and Terra Nova.

MR. CALLAN: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Premier. When we returned to the legislature on Tuesday, March 27th, in his opening remarks the Premier, the new Premier said, among other things, that he was giving notice of his intention to introduce a bill which would provide the people of Labrador with a fourth seat. I want to ask the Premier among other reasons - obviously one of the reasons why this is being done now is as a result of a promise that was made during the campaign, but what would be the primary reason? What is the primary reason for wanting to add a fourth seat in Labrador?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Premier

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, the primary reason is to increase the amount of representation

PREMIER PECKFORD: in this hon. House for the people of Labrador given the fact that the hon. member for Eagle River, (Mr. Strachan) who is not in his place right now, over the past number of years has indicated the difficulty in travelling the whole length of the coastline of Labrador. It is very difficult to provide representation for areas in the southern part of the coastal area as well as the northern part, difficulties in transportation and so on that you have on the Labrador coast not only on the coast but in Labrador generally, a whole lot of different circumstances prevailing. There are a lot of regions in Labrador. The southern straits area does not have the same problems as just out of the straits have. For example, Port Hope Simpson and Red Bay are not that similar in some of their problems, communications, transportation and fisheries and all the rest of it. Nor is Davis Inlet the same as Port Hope Simpson. Nor, may I suggest, is Happy Valley - Goose Bay the same as Makkovik. So the problems vary.

Given the large land mass, that additional representation is needed if the true regional needs of that land mass are to be reflected here in the House of Assembly. Not only the member for Eagle River, the present Minister Rural Agricultural and Northern Development, the member for Naskaupi (Mr. Goudie) has brought it to my attention, the hon. member for Menihek (Mr. Rousseau) has, and over the years members who are no longer in this House who represented Labrador have brought up this very issue. So I think what I am really trying to do and what the government is trying to do is to indicate their concern in a tangible way to Labrador, first by doing what a lot of people have already said needed to be done and through this concrete act to indicate that to be somewhat of a symbol that we are now taking a new look at Labrador and that we are going to try to bring Labrador into the mainstream of Newfoundland society so that they really feel a part of it. We can go on from this day in making a fourth seat to doing other things in Labrador which allow them to destroy once and for all that separatist feeling which is there and which could

PREMIER PECKFORD:

grow if we do not do something.

MR. CALLAN:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary.

MR. CALLAN:

Mr. Speaker, nobody agrees with the Premier anymore than I do that the need for a fourth, fifth sixth, seventh, eighth seat is there in Labrador. This leads me to a supplementary in view of what the Premier had to say; why was it, then, that the same gentleman who is now the Premier, who was in the Cabinet, a member of the same caucus and the same Cabinet that back in 1974, when redistribution was brought in and when ten new seats were added to the Legislature, why were more seats not added to Labrador at that time? Why did the people in Labrador have to wait five years? Why, for example, were six seats added in St. John's at a time when obviously Labrador needed them?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

Before recognizing the hon. the Premier I should point out that, as hon. members are aware, questions should not be argumentative and, strictly speaking, they are to deal with matters of

MR. SPEAKER: current significance or  
(Mr. Ottenheimer) government policies now. They  
are not really historical inquiries into government policy  
two, three or four years ago but really are meant to deal  
with contemporary matters, matters of public importance  
going on now.

MR. CALLAN: Let me rephrase.

MR. SPEAKER: I do not think it will be  
necessary because I think the hon. gentleman has heard  
the question.

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I think that is  
like asking why there were only three and one-half seats  
in 1972 or 1974, whenever the redistribution was done in  
Labrador, in 1949, rather than have to wait until 1972.  
Why did we not respond more positively as a society to  
concerns of those people who were poor so that they were  
getting - a widow with one child was getting \$230 a month in  
1955 rather than 1975? You know, it begs the whole question.  
One learns about one's province as one learns more about  
it through this House and so on, and government must  
respond each year to new concerns and new regional  
priorities which we might set. In that regard we have  
learned a hard and valuable lesson as it relates to  
Labrador, that additional representation is needed. That  
lesson was not obviously learned well enough in 1974.  
And I, for one individual in government and one individual  
in this Province, admit that many times we do things which  
might not always be in the best interests of the Province.  
I will continue to learn and, hopefully, in years to  
come I will learn other things to reflect a new situation  
at that time which will give better representation to a  
given set of people.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the member for  
(Mr. Ottenheimer) Stephenville.

MR. W. McNEIL: Mr. Speaker, my question is  
for the hon. the Premier.

With regard to the sale of  
Labrador Linerboard to Abitibi Price, could the Premier  
tell the House if Abitibi Price, Stephenville division  
is exempt from municipal taxes in Stephenville? And if  
not, when does their tax responsibility start? Does it  
start immediately or does it start when the mill goes into  
operation in 1981? I ask that question because the  
municipality has budgeted an amount in this year's annual  
budget.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I will refer that  
to the present Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. Doody).  
The former Minister of Industrial Development is pretty  
familiar with this issue.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

MR. NEARY: What about the retirement fund  
you set up in Switzerland?

MR. DOODY: Does the hon. member have a  
retirement fund in Switzerland? Any time the hon. member  
wants to take advantage of a retirement fund wherever he  
may have it set up, we would be only too happy to  
send him there.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. DOODY: The last trip the hon. member  
took was from Bell Island to LaPoile. Now it looks like  
from LaPoile to Geneva. Our best wishes go with him!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order, please!  
Hon. members should restrict their comments to questions  
and answers, travel itineraries to be discussed in private.

March 29, 1979

Tape 564

EC - 3

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. DOODY:

Yes, well I was working on it

for a while.

I think the question has something  
to do with the municipal tax situation in Stephenville.

MR. DOODY: We had our discussions with Abitibi in relationship to the sale of the mill and we made it abundantly clear to them that any plans they might have with regard to municipal tax payments would be a matter between the municipality and with the company. Government made absolutely no intrusions into that area. We felt that the municipality was vibrant enough and alive enough to look after itself in that regard. We put no restrictions on it at all. It is entirely up to the company and to the municipality to work out whatever arrangements they want to make with regard to municipal tax payments to the town of Stephenville, or to the surrounding area or to the school boards or to any other concessions or agreements that they might want to enter into.

MR. MCNEIL: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. MCNEIL: Was that made known to the municipality of Stephenville prior to the contract being signed? Because they are of a difference impression, they thought that it was involved in the contract itself and they budgeted \$200,000 in this year's budget and that was supposed to be from the advice they got prior to the signing of the new agreement.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. DOODY: I beg to differ with the hon. member. I had discussions with the Mayor and with other members of council no later than the day of the signing of the agreement, and prior to that, and made it abundantly clear at that time. As a matter of fact, Mr. Tittlemore and Mr. Walsh, the Mayor, and myself shared the same little enclave in that restaurant where we had the dinner and at that

MR. DOODY: time we said exactly that, that Mr. Tittlemore would be most happy to sit down with the Mayor and discuss municipal tax matters at a time convenient to both and they would arrive at a conclusion satisfactory to both and that government would not intrude in any way unless requested to do so by either of the two parties. To date we have not been and I hope that we are not because obviously it is not a matter that government should concern itself with.

MR. MCNEIL: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

The hon. member for  
Stephenville.

MR. MCNEIL: Would the hon. minister undertake to table the sales contract here in the House?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. DOODY: Your Honour, there is going to be a debate coming up very shortly dealing with the entire proceedings leading up to and the subsequent sale of the mill. At that time we will be most happy to table all the documentation, the sales contract -

MR. NEARY: Are you talking about the government or -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. DOODY: The hon. gentleman from Geneva is at it again. Would you please ask him to control himself?

MR. NEARY: Frank is in Switzerland now is he?

MR. DOODY: Your Honour, do I have to endure the indignities of this incessant barrage



Mr. Doody: of pointless interruption. The inanities coming from the -

MR. SPEAKER (MR. OTTENHEIMER): Order, please!

MR. DOODY: I am trying to Your Honour. I will table anything that the hon. member wishes tabled when the debate comes forth.

MR. RIDEOUT: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary. The hon. member for Baie Verte-White Bay.

MR. RIDEOUT: Mr. Speaker, while we are on the topic of the sale of the Linerboard mill to Abitibi Price, I wonder if the minister could tell us whether or not any agreement was made in the purchasing contract between the government and Abitibi Price regarding the use or disposal of the thousands of cords of pulp wood that is lying idle and sort of damaging the countryside all over my district, and particularly in the Roddickton and Main Brook area, and also in the Burlington Peninsula area? Was there any agreement made with Abitibi Price to use that which is obviously an asset of Labrador Linerboard? Or, if not, is there some means whereby it can be disposed of for some use or other?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. DOODY: We had hoped prior to the sale of the assets of the mill to make many of these woodpiles available to the municipalities involved. We had some discussions on that prior to that effort. Most of these unused piles of wood that are around the Province are not now the property of Abitibi, but rather the property of the Crown, and if there is some way that it can be made available to the municipality or to the people in the area I am sure that the Department of Forestry or the Department of Industrial Development will be most happy to discuss it with the municipalities or with the people concerned. And it could very well be that they may be sold to Abitibi or to Price or to Bowaters or to some other organization, it is an open question, and it has not been sealed by the Linerboard sale.

MR. RIDEOUT: Could I have a final supplementary, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER (MR. OTTENHEIMER): A final supplementary from the hon. gentleman, and then the hon. member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir.

MR. RIDEOUT: Mr. Speaker, the minister's answer is obviously interesting because there is a great deal of interest from individuals and municipalities about all those thousands of cords of wood that are lying unused around the country. Could the minister tell me whether or not some mechanism could be, since it is the property of the Crown, could the minister tell me whether or not some mechanism could be set up whereby municipalities, through the Department of Forestry or through Industrial Development, could be made aware of this and thereby

MR. RIDEOUT: invited to submit proposals, whether they want to take charge of it and dispose of it or let it go to individual contractors who might want to buy the lot and sell it off to people who might want to use it for firewood and so on? Could we just do something rather than leave it there because it is practically spoiled now anyway?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. DOODY: It would obviously be impossible for me to identify all the various areas that are involved or the various piles of wood.

MR. RIDEOUT: Most of it is in my area I believe.

MR. DOODY: Yes, that is right. Quite a lot of it is in the hon. member's district. I think the most logical and reasonable way to approach it would be to contact the Department of Industrial Development and they, together with Forestry, would make whatever arrangements are possible. Some of these piles of wood are the property of contractors who are trying to sell it. Maybe a deal can be worked out with them. Others are the property of creditors; the contractors who cut the wood have gone, unfortunately, insolvent and the creditors have to be satisfied. Each wood pile is an individual problem and I think they will have to be faced on an individual basis and so I would suggest that the proper approach would be to contact Industrial Development and ask them to deal with it on that basis. They would be most happy to do so. The wood as it is piled now is certainly no asset to anybody and it is just going to deteriorate as it is.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Burgeo -  
Bay d'Espoir.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, a question for  
the Minister of Public Works and Services. I refer to the  
Report of the Auditor General which I see the new minister -  
any significance to the fact that an undertaker is the  
Minister of Public Works, in view of the cover up we  
have had there so far?

MR. YOUNG: They are all buried now.

MR. SIMMONS: The minister admits he is  
buried, Mr. Speaker. We have him on the record as buried.

MR. MORGAN: He will bury all the rest of you before too long.

AN HON. MEMBER: There goes our jail bird  
again, Mr. Speaker. Our jail bird is at it again.

Mr. Speaker, I refer the  
Minister of Public Works and Services to page forty of the  
Auditor General's Report, paragraph -

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. SIMMONS: Now, Mr. Speaker, I find myself  
in somewhat the situation my friend, the Minister of Energy  
was in a moment ago, except now the inaneness is coming  
from two seats

MR. SIMMONS: to his left.

MR. SPEAKER: (Mr. Ottenheimer) Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS: And I would hope that he could be restrained for a moment.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! When any hon. member has the floor asking a question or answering a question there should be no interruptions.

MR. SIMMONS: Paragraph 56 on page 40 of the Auditor General's Report, towards the bottom of the page, makes mention of the fact that payments totalling \$283,000 had been made to various contractors for work for which no authorization could be produced by the minister's department. I wonder would the minister indicate to the House what steps have been taken to recover this amount of \$283,000 which was paid out illegally and in contravention of the law?

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister of Public Works.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, these invoices were paid, Sir, after a complete inspection of the order by the consulting engineer and after approval by Treasury Board and Cabinet. And this order was authorized by the Department of Public Works.

MR. SIMMONS: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, the minister is somewhat vague about this. We realize it has been paid. the Auditor General said that, Mr. Speaker. We also realize that the work was done without authorization and my real question to the minister is what steps does he intend to take as the new minister to see that this amount, which was paid out against the law, what steps he intends to take to have this amount recovered to the Public Treasury?

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister of Public Works and Services.



MR. SIMMONS: had been given. I would presume from that that no tenders were called or contracts awarded at the very least, Mr. Speaker. And I wonder also would the minister either now or else take under advisement the question of whether or not this \$189,000 will be paid out illegally, against the law - whether or not that will be done or whether he will take steps to see to it that these invoices amounting now to a net of \$189,000 are not honoured by the department in view of the fact that they would constitute payments against the law?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.  
(Mr. Ottenheimer)

MR. H. YOUNG: To my knowledge, Mr. Speaker, the balance owing will not be paid out or recognized by the department, but I will take note and get more on it.

MR. SIMMONS: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. SIMMONS: Just for clarification, I want to understand what the minister said last now. I understood him to say that these amounts will not be paid out.

MR. H. YOUNG: That is to my knowledge now.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, the minister acknowledged that that is the case. That is important for the record, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. F. WHITE: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. F. WHITE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a supplementary not completely in line with the same subject to the Minister of Public Works and Services, and it has to do with the administration of his department. I wonder if he could tell the House who the Deputy Minister of Public Works and Services is at the moment in view of the fact that it was the understanding that Mr. Tom Whelan

MR. F. WHITE: was going to be the Deputy Minister of both Transportation and Communications and Public Works and Services? I wonder if the minister would tell the House what the situation is now with respect to his department?

MR. SPEAKER (MR. OTTENHEIMER): The hon. minister.

MR. H. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I understand that Mr. Tom Whelan is still Deputy Minister of Public Works and Services and acting Deputy Minister of Transportation and Communications.

MR. F. WHITE: A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A final supplementary, then the hon. gentleman for Terra Nova.

MR. F. WHITE: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the minister could tell the House whether or not this situation will continue for quite some time or will it be changed and a new Deputy Minister appointed for one of the departments? What is the situation? - or whether or not the two departments are still going to be consolidated?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

MR. H. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, that is a problem of the Premier's and I have nothing to do with it.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Terra Nova.

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, I wanted to direct a question to the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn) but he is not here today. Is there an acting Minister of Labour and Manpower?

MR. SIMMONS: No, he is out creating a -

MR. LUSH: Okay, well, I will put the question then to the Premier.



MR. LUSH: I am just wondering whether the Premier can indicate to the House the status of the present negotiations between the government and the Newfoundland Teachers' Association?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.  
(Mr. Ottenheimer)

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, first of all, the hon. the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn) is away from his office today because his wife is in hospital and he is at the hospital right now as I understand it. I do not have an up-to-date report as of twenty-four hours on the negotiations between the teachers and government, but what I will try to do before 6:00 P.M. is I will call the Department of Labour and Manpower and get an update for the hon. member before 6:00 P.M.

MR. LUSH: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. LUSH: I just wonder if the Premier can indicate to the House why the delay in negotiating contracts within the Public Service? For example, I think the teachers' contract expired in August, either the middle of August - I would expect it is the end of August. And another one in point was the contract of the nurses - I think that one was close to a year, maybe over a year before it was negotiated. So can the Premier indicate why these delays in negotiating contracts within the Public Service? Because I believe it results in having negative effects on labour relations within the Province.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I cannot give any specific reasons, I can only give a general comment, a general response to that kind of question. As I understand it, in just a general way, it is just part of the normal negotiating process that there has been a fair amount of

PREMIER PECKFORD: back and forth negotiation on some vital issues which the various unions considered important and other issues which the government considered important. That is the reason. In recent years it has not been that unusual, albeit we would like to see it resolved a lot earlier for negotiations of this sort to go on after an agreement had expired. And I agree with the hon. member that in some instances it might be that it negates against proper, wholesome if you will, labour relations between the government and some of

Premier Peckford: its employees. But I think it is something that both sides have been sitting. There has been no stoppage, if you will, of negotiations, it is just today the negotiations are more complicated than they were five years ago. There are a lot more issues and there are a lot more things being laid on the table, and that is what I would give in a general way in pending additional specific information which some of the people in Treasury Board might have.

o o o

MR. SPEAKER (MR. OTTENHEIMER): The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to move, Sir, that this House go on record as expressing their sincere appreciation to the Speaker, to the Premier, to the Leader of the Opposition, and to the members of the Legislature, and indeed to the people of Nova Scotia for coming out recently in support of the Newfoundland seal hunt. I would like to make the motion, Sir, if somebody on the government benches would second it. And in stating our appreciation, Sir, we should tell the people of Nova Scotia how grateful we are, especially to the members of the Legislature, to Mr. Roland Thornhill, who is a former Newfoundlander as members will know - Mr. Thornhill was Mayor of Dartmouth and is now a minister in the P.C. Government in Nova Scotia and to the Leader of the Opposition for supporting the Newfoundland seal hunt, and giving us a friend and an ally, Sir, at a time when the propaganda and the criticism was most savage and at a peak by the anti-seal protesters. I believe, Sir, we would be remiss in our duties and our responsibilities if we did not recognize the fact that the Legislature of Nova Scotia came out in support of the seal hunt right at a time when we needed a friend. We would be remiss in our duties if we did not dispatch a message. Perhaps, Your Honour, if we can get a seconder for the motion could send a message to the Speaker of the Legislature of Nova Scotia over in Halifax telling him how much we appreciate the support that they gave us at a critical time in our history.

MR. SPEAKER: (MR. OTTENHEIMER): Does the hon. member have leave to move such a motion?

The hon. House Leader.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, despite the fact that the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) was out of order it certainly is in order to move that motion and we can be unanimous as I know we will be in most times in the House. I would like to point out to the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary), as he has indicated, that we are certainly grateful to the Government of Nova Scotia, as he has already indicated the Government of Nova Scotia has a certain complexion which has a similarity to the government of the Province here, and perhaps we could couple it by observing the fact that in the not too distant future throughout Canada, perhaps, there will be the same complexion as well and we will have other occasions to make motions of this kind which are for the benefit of the Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The motion is that a suitable letter be written the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in Nova Scotia conveying to him and to members of the Legislature the appreciation of this House of Assembly with respect to the resolution referred to.

Is the House ready for the question? Those in favour "Aye"?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: "Aye".

MR. SPEAKER: Contrary "Nay".

Carried.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. MARSHALL: Motion 2.

Motion, the hon. the Premier to ask leave to introduce a bill, "An Act To Provide For Additional Representation For Labrador In The House Of Assembly", carried (Bill No. 18).

On motion, Bill No. 18 read a first time ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

MR. MARSHALL: Motion 3.

Motion, the hon. Minister of Labour and Manpower to introduce a bill, "An Act To Amend The Workmen's Compensation Act", carried. (Bill No. 8).

On motion, Bill No. 8 read a first time ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

MR. MARSHALL: Motion 4.

Motion, the hon. Minister of Finance to introduce a bill, "An Act To Amend The Crown Guarantee And Loan Act, 1973", carried. (Bill No. 13).

On motion, Bill No. 13 read a first time ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

MR. MARSHALL:

Motion 5.

Motion, the hon. Minister of Education, to introduce a bill entitled, "An Act To Amend The Schools Act," carried. (Bill No. 10).

On motion, Bill No. 10 read a first time ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

MR. MARSHALL:

Motion 6.

Motion, the hon. Minister of Education, to introduce a bill entitled, "An Act To Repeal The Teachers' Loan Act": carried. (Bill No. 7).

On motion, Bill No. 7 read a first time ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

MR. MARSHALL:

Motion 7.

Motion, the hon. Minister of Justice, to introduce a bill entitled, "An Act To Amend The Interpretation Act," carried. (Bill No.12).

On motion, Bill No. 12 read a first time ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

MR. MARSHALL:

Motion 8.

Motion, the hon. Minister of Justice, to introduce a bill entitled, "An Act To Amend The Chairman Of The Board Of Commissioners Of Public Utilities (Pension) Act, 1974." carried. (Bill No. 11).

On motion, Bill No. 11 read a first time ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

MR. MARSHALL:

Motion 9.

Motion, the hon. Minister of Social Services, to introduce a bill entitled, "An Act To Provide For The Registration Of Qualified Social Workers," carried.

(Bill No. 6).

On, motion Bill No. 6 read a first time ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

MR. MARSHALL:

Motion 10.

Motion, the hon. Minister of Industrial Development, to introduce a bill, entitled, "An Act To Provide For The Ratification Of The Sale Of The Stephenville Linerboard Mill And Its Conversion To A Newsprint Mill", carried. (Bill No. 15).

On motion, Bill No. 15 read a first time ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

On motion that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole on Supply, Mr. Speaker, left the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, please!

MR. S. NEARY:

Mr. Chairman, a point of information, Sir. I realize Your Honour is new in the Chair and with the way that the Government House Leader has been behaving I just want to get this on the record that what we are doing now, Sir, just for the information of members, is we are going to have to debate now and then go through item by item, or the department by department head later, is that the procedure we are going to use? A member can speak now as often as he wants on this. Because we are in Committee of the Whole a member can take forty-five minutes if he wants to, he can come back and speak another forty-five minutes, is that the procedure we are using now?

AN HON. MEMBER:

You can take the seventy-five hours.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. member for LaPoile, forty-five minutes up to seventy-five hours. What is debated now comes out of the seventy-five hours.

MR. S. NEARY:

Yes, I understand it comes out of the seventy-five hours but we can speak as often as we want. We are in the Committee of the Whole, the whole thing is wide open now, we can debate as often as we want. As soon as we hear the minister's introductory remarks then if my colleague, our financial expert wishes to respond

MR. S. NEARY:

he can respond as

often as he wants.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Chairman, the hon. member for

LaPoile (Mr. Neary) knows the procedure, The resolution is read and the resolution is that a bill be introduced in the House.

Then we go through the headings and the Committee of Supply is

the same as any other committee and a member can get up and speak.

The fact of the matter is that we all have to realize that this is

a matter of Interim Supply and the supply has to be approved

as soon as possible and, of course it is up to the House as to

whether or not it wishes to on this committee. Because whether

or not it is approved it is going to dictate whether or not the

government can pay its bills after March 31st. So, anyway, I think

we can proceed Mr. Chairman because we are on the business now



MR. W. MARSHALL: of this matter which has been called and hypothetical questions of the nature raised by the hon. the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) are really not in order to be addressed to the Chair anyhow

AN HON. MEMBER: Why do you not just throw the Speaker and the Chairman out and take over yourself.

MR. W. MARSHALL: You are being facetious now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (Mr. Cross) Order, please! Order, please!

The hon. minister

DR. J. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, it is an unexpected pleasure for me to introduce the bill. I will do so and make a few preliminary remarks. In actual fact, as has been noted, it is not now the introducing of a bill it is the resolution at this stage and if I may just read the resolution first for information of the hon. members of the committee because there seems to be, although I am not too sure what seems to be is so, there seems to be some confusion as to what we are doing and how we do it. In any case what we are doing at the moment is I now move the following resolution: "That it is expedient to introduce a measure to provide for the granting to Her Majesty for defraying certain expenses of the Public Service for the financial year ending the 31st of March 1980 the initial sum of \$34,120,000."

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, hon. members of the Committee realize that we will now, introduce an Interim Supply Bill. It will be recommended that an Interim Supply Bill be introduced and hon. members also know that this Bill is essentially for the continuation of projects and programs of an ongoing nature. It has been traditional that this be so, that the business of Government can not wait from the end of one fiscal year until the Budget comes down, it has commitments and these commitments must be met. Prior to the Budget coming down there is a period when Interim Supply is requested and this is primarily for ongoing projects.

DR. J. COLLINS:

Now, this Bill accordingly is usually given a quite speedy passage and the reason for this is that the items are essentially the same votes which will be in the main Budget. The headings under which this money will be voted will come up again in the main Budget and the details of the vote can be debated at the time the main Budget is brought down. Incidentally, it is for that reason that the time we spend on Interim Supply does come out of the time that is allotted to the main Budget - to the main Bill for supply - and that time is seventy-five hours, so what is taken out of - the time taken on the Interim Supply Bill will come out of that seventy-five hours.

Now, Mr. Chairman, that is the usual situation. This year there was a slight change or there is a change, I will not say slight, it is more than a slight change, there is a change in that because not only is the Committee being asked to consider funding ongoing programs, but it is also being requested to supply some monies for new programs and the new programs are those in the Department of Transportation and Communications and I am sure my hon. friend and colleague the minister of that department will go into these in detail. But I might just say at this stage the reason why the monies are being requested for these new programs is to allow these programs to be commenced at an early stage so that full benefit can be taken of the total road construction and maintenance season rather than awaiting a date when good weather has passed. Before starting these programs we would like, and this is the reason for proceeding in this way, we would like to start these projects these transportation, these road construction and maintenance projects at the earliest possible date so as to not only complete the work in time but also that many people in the Province may avail of the needed employment.

Mr. Chairman, it is the established usage in Canada for Interim Supply to be requested for the initial three months of the new fiscal year and the Supply Bill which I trust will be brought in, the Interim Supply Bill which I trust will be brought in, is for that period for the initial three months of the year that would be April, May and June. The members of Committee will note in the schedule that

MR. W. MARSHALL: the amount, and it is stated in the Resolution also, that the amount being requested is for \$354,000,000 approximately, and that is essentially, although not absolutely, precisely, that is essentially the sum or I should say that is essentially one-quarter of the sum, of the amount, that can be expected to be required to discharge the obligations of Government over a full twelve month period. In other words, by and large, what is being requested in the Interim Supply Bill which will subsequently be introduced following the passage of the resolution if the resolution is passed, the amount is essentially one quarter of the sum

DR. COLLINS: that would be required for the full year. There are details available and I will certainly supply them to the best of my ability as we go down through the schedule and I will leave my remarks essentially at that except if I may be so presumptuous at this point to say that I would think that all hon. members of the committee would not want to use up this period for dissertations, not directed to Interim Supply. Interim Supply is the spending of public funds. These are funds that we have the responsibility for expending on behalf of the citizens of this Province. They certainly deserve consideration and I am not sure that in all instances sums voted in the past have been given the consideration they deserve. I do not mean to imply that previous funds were voted incorrectly or anything of that order but I would just like to say that there are details here and if I can supply them I will certainly do so and if there are any points about expenditures that need further amplification I will seek the amplification for the hon. committee.

MR. DOODY: Bravo.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir.

MR. SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all I certainly want to congratulate the new Minister of Finance on his appointment to the finance portfolio, a very difficult assignment as I am sure he realizes much better than I do having never been in it. Although he has been there just a short time I am sure already he has been told a fair amount of the bad news and some of the realities which will face him when it comes time to prepare a budget. What he is doing today is very easy. If the senior civil service say that they need \$354 million to keep her afloat for the next three months I would think that any new Minister of Finance would basically accept their word. He might want to dot a few

MR. CHAIRMAN:

i's and cross a few r's and do some checking but basically I would think that the job he is doing today is going to be a Sunday school picnic compared to the job he is going to face when he has to wrestle with the provincial budget itself. That is another subject but for the time being, Mr. Chairman, my heartiest congratulations and complete best wishes to the new minister. I have a particular fondness for him because I attribute to him a good part of the reason for having a very healthy son these days. I do not want that to be misinterpreted but he delivered the son at the Grace Hospital and I would think that when his experience with the budget is over he may wonder why he is not delivering babies now instead of budgets. He has had tremendous success with the first and I can only wish him at least half the success with the second. If so his batting average will be very good in terms of other Minister's of Finance whether Tory or Liberal and I do not at all envy him the job.

MR. SIMMONS: Now then to the subject at hand, Mr. Chairman, the Interim Supply motion. This particular Interim Supply resolution cannot be construed as being completely routine. It will be brought before the House as being a routine bill asking for some supply to see the government over the hump until the budget is brought down but the question that the minister did not address himself to, and I realize he will have a number of opportunities, the question he ought to address himself to, in fairness to the House and the people of the Province, is when he expects to bring down a budget, whether the budget will come in the next two or three or four weeks, or whether there are some extenuating circumstances, and I am not talking about political circumstances, I will come to these, but whether there are some extenuating fiscal circumstances which might preclude his bringing down a budget in the near future.

I remember one of his predecessors, the now Minister of Mines and Energy a year or two ago when he was then Minister of Finance, giving to the public, and in particular to the House, an explanation as to why the budget would have to come down late in that particular year and I believe as I remember it was some time well into April before we got the budget, but there was a very good set of reasons for it at that particular time, related to the decision to close or not to close the Labrador Linerboard mill, as you will recall. And that was the explanation given to the House and the people of the Province by the then minister, the now Minister of Mines and Energy.

We are all familiar in this Province, particularly those of us who follow politics and who followed the recent contest in the government party for

MR. SIMMONS: the leadership of the party, we are all aware of the sequence of events which has brought us here today, two days before the end of the fiscal year to debate what kinds of money we should make available on public services in the coming year.

We are all aware that because of the sequence of events we are not able today to have a budget. That should not beg the other question which is somewhat behind us now but it needs to be said. A lot of people in this Province have been wondering out loud about the responsibility, or lack of it, on the part of the former Premier in particular, whose decision it was to set in motion the political events which he did in his own party at the time he did, and why he could not have done it in December, January or some other more opportune time if he had, and his administration had, the interest of the Province at heart. Because anybody sitting in Cabinet would have been aware that a chain of events was being set up, not the least of which was a delay in bringing down the budget, a delay well beyond the end of the fiscal year, making it impossible for the administration in government to exercise its first responsibility, its responsibility to the people of the Province. And if there was ever a case, Mr. Chairman, where it was - not as the former Premier said, "My Province first, my Party second, and me third," - if there was ever a case where he had it the other way around, My Party first, and my Province second or third, I believe that is the case where the only thing that mattered was not the present financial situation of the Province or the employment situation,

MR. SIMMONS: the state of the economy or what the government was going to do about it, it was not the government's responsibility to the people as the elected administration that took precedence, it was the business of getting on with solving the political machinations within his own party. And that, I say, Mr. Chairman, since it is past now, there is not much we can do about it, but I think for the record we should point out that we are here today and if we are here Saturday or Sunday, as I hope we are not, that if we are here next week this time debating this bill, as I generally hope we are not, Mr. Chairman - it is not our particular intention to be on this side, I am not suggesting that for a moment - but if we are here because it takes that much time to give due consideration to the Supply resolution, then I hope we do not hear that it is because somebody on this side of the House is not prepared to pay the welfare cheques or not prepared to allow the bills to be paid. I believe it should be clearly understood that the reason we are here today - two days - What an insult to the people of this Province! Two days before the end of the fiscal year the first financial peep from this administration as to what kind of money they want to spend this year, two days before the year is upon us. And why? Because whoever in government was advising the former Premier and the administration on the matter of the House schedule and the need for a Budget was not giving much priority to this very important issue and was much more concerned with the other issue, the political issue, which to some degree they settled. And I say to some degree, only to some degree. They were here, Mr. Chairman, today, doing what we ought to have been doing certainly a month ago. I am not talking about Interim Supply, I am talking about a Budget which we should have had in hand something like the end of February or March. Two days before the end of the fiscal year we



MR. SIMMONS: finally get around to dealing with it.

Mr. Chairman, I give notice that one, we have no intention of filibustering on this one and two, that we have every intention of getting some of the answers about the proposed new programmes before we agree to vote this sum of money.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I mentioned the possibility of some political circumstances which might dictate this Interim Supply Bill at this time and of this particular amount. We are talking, Mr. Chairman, \$350 million or so. We are talking about a third or a quarter - more than a quarter, I hope - of the projected Budget for the new fiscal year, 1979 - 1980.

Now, Mr. Chairman, in view of the lateness in time, so near the end of the fiscal year, in view of this administration's anxiousness to demonstrate to the public of the Province that it can manage their affairs well, prudently, I would have thought there would be a certain urgency to bring out a Budget. This after all says nothing at all, Mr. Chairman, except for a few dollar figures. This says nothing about the fiscal direction of the Province during the year to come. This says nothing about the relative points of emphasis, what emphasis fiscally there is going to be on resource development, on the provision of services, what kinds of emphasis are going to be in the capital area, what requirement will be on us for the year in terms of debt management, what requirement relative to the total fiscal requirement in the forthcoming year. It says nothing about that. And I believe, Mr. Chairman, that the new Minister of Finance (Dr. J. Collins) would do this House a great service if he would take it upon himself if he has not already done so the assignment of bringing a Budget into this House at the earliest possible opportunity.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:

I know it is going to take a little time, but his predecessor in the position, his immediate predecessor, the now Minister of Justice and Education (Mr. Hickman) said in the press only in the last three to four weeks that 85 per cent of the Budget is already predetermined; 85 per cent was the figure he gave, Mr. Chairman, and he allowed in his comment, Mr. Chairman - which is in print, I remind him - that within that other 15 per cent there would be some latitude for the new Premier to put his stamp on the administration in terms of the direction he might want to go in, but he made it quite clear that because of our commitment to ongoing programmes, fully 85 per cent of the Budget is essentially predetermined now, and I happen to agree with him. And a look at the Budgets of the last two or three years will indicate that to be the case. Unless there is some great new source of revenue this year that we have not heard about, some great new windfall from Ottawa, unless that be the case the fact of the matter is

MR. SIMMONS: that the new Minister of Finance will find that he has very little room in which to manoeuvre and he has probably got fifteen or so per cent which is up in the air and these are the words not of me so much as of the former Minister of Finance himself, who in a public statement on the subject three or four weeks ago said that very thing.

That being the case, Mr. Chairman, and having in mind that the senior people in the various departments have had their estimates and their trimmed estimates and their trimmed twice estimates up to Treasury Board many times I am sure since last November or so when the process began, I would think that all that remains now to be done is for the new Premier, the new Treasury Board, to indicate to the people who do the fine pencil work on the budget, where it is they want a figure altered, here and there and one added to and perhaps a new line inserted for some new programme that the new Premier might want to have as part of his new direction that he keeps telling us about.

There is very little, Mr. Chairman, in the forthcoming budget that is not already known, relatively little, and I would hope, Mr. Chairman, that for these reasons the Minister of Finance will be able to indicate to us that a budget will be forthcoming within the next three to four weeks.

Now, Mr. Chairman, why do I take time on that particular point? Because, Mr. Chairman, I have a sneaking suspicion that it is not the government's intention to bring in any budget in the next three or four or five or eight weeks, and that is why I say, Mr. Chairman, I do not view this as any routine Interim Supply bill. It is being paraded to us in that fashion but I say to you now,

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Chairman, this may well be the nearest thing you will get to a budget before the people of this Province decide who the next government will be. Now I ask you, Mr. Chairman, to consider that possibility. And that is what I mean when I talked a few minutes ago about the political circumstances which may well be dictating the size of this Interim Supply bill right now.

Three months supply,

Mr. Chairman, will take this government fully to the end of June. Now that is plenty of time, Mr. Chairman, to have an election or two. Indeed, Mr. Chairman, I believe our position on the matter is very clear. We would like to have the election right now. We think one of the first things the Premier should have done after he visited Government House was visited Government House again and asked for a dissolution so that the mandate, Mr. Chairman, that he or his successor would have after the election would be not a mandate of 331 people, all but 200 of whom were reluctantly in that group, not just the mandate of 200 enthusiastic supporters, plus another 131 who saw him as a second or third choice, I am sorry I will rephrase that, not just the wish or the mandate of 200 enthusiastic supporters, 130 people who saw him as a second or third choice and then the other one who saw him as the fellow who might win. That is some mandate, Mr. Chairman. How would you like to have that for a mandate? That is the mandate that allows this Premier to come in and say to us, "All we want is \$350 million, that is all, just to keep her going." \$354 million.

The first thing this Premier

MR. SIMMONS:                    should have done, Mr. Chairman, is had the gumption, had the intestinal fortitude to submit the very narrow mandate he got from his own political partisans to the people to see if they were prepared to confirm that mandate. But you see, Mr. Chairman, the Premier's chair is comfortable particularly

MR. SIMMONS: if you are mainly preoccupied with sitting in it, particularly if you have not been there long enough to be aware of the problems which somewhat take the bloom off the rose, which somewhat bring you down to earth, which somewhat suggest to you that besides sitting there and enjoying the view there is a job to be done. So in the first few heady days of office I would think the Premier's Chair for anybody in this House would be a fairly heady experience. I am sure even the Minister of Fisheries would agree with that in the few times he has thought about the possibility, the very few times. His picture in the paper was magnificent. I suggest if there are further ads from the Department of Fisheries, instead of that little mugshot which only shows part of the product, he should go for that full-length one complete with folder. I think that is a terrific photo.

AN HON. MEMBER: Was that fish he had under his arm.

MR. SIMMONS: That was a fantastic shot. It was premier like, almost presidential like.

MR. DOODY: You can count yourself out of that one.

MR. SIMMONS: Later explain that one to me will you?

MR. WHITE: He had a better band too 'Bill', a better band than you did.

MR. SIMMONS: Now you know what it is like to be let down musically. Mr. Chairman, the Premier ought to have gone to the people and there is still time, but as I was saying in his first few heady days of office I can understand that he would want to enjoy the seat because it might not be his that long, if he calls an election - indeed, if I were giving some friendly advice, and the Premier and I have been friends and working colleagues over the years.

The member for Harbour Grace (Mr. Young) is a friend of mine. His wife was most kind to

MR. SIMMONS: me and some other MHA's over in his home some months ago when we were over there playing hockey. He may have some misgivings but I regard him as a friend of mine as well. The questions I asked him had to be asked. It is not his fault he inherited the mess in Public Works. It is not his fault at all.

MR. DOODY: Did all our members get the same courtesies?

MR. SIMMONS: They are not complaining anyway. They are not complaining. Some of them may be rolling over in their graves but that we do not know. It is going to take more than six feet of earth to cover up the problem he has got with them now. I tell you it will take a lot of shovelling. My friend the Premier, the member for Green Bay - if I were, Mr. Chairman, giving the Premier some friendly nonpartisan advice I would say to him do not go now, do not go to the people right now, do not do it. You have been the Premier now for a week, just about a week, not quite a week yet and if I were you I - if I were giving him friendly nonpartisan advice I would say look you have this week just about under your belt, take next week, that will be two and see you into April month, take the other three weeks in April, that will give you five weeks and take the four or five weeks in May which will give you nine weeks and take another week in June and that will give you ten weeks and then go, because then you will have ten weeks under your belt and if the worse comes to worse you will at least get your unemployment insurance when it is all over, with ten weeks under your belt. And that, Mr. Chairman, it seems to me is the only good reason the present Premier can have for hanging on. As a partisan I give him other advice, go now. You should have gone yesterday, you should have gone the day you were sworn in as Premier because at least, Mr. Chairman, the day he was sworn in as Premier there was a certain euphoria around the Province, there was a certain feeling for this young fellow who had made good.

MR. SIMMONS: Newfoundlanders are a fair minded people and they all took pleasure in the fact that their third Premier since Confederation is a reasonably young man who had risen politically in a very short time. But the euphoria, Mr. Chairman, - if you were graphing the euphoria, Mr. Chairman, it would look like an Egyptian pyramid. And there was the day he was sworn in, right up there on top, and there is the euphoria.

AN HON. MEMBER: That is relevant.

MR. SIMMONS: Oh very, very relevant. His best chance, Mr. Chairman, was the first day and his chances have diminished every day since and in terms of partisan advice,



Mr. Simmons: Mr. Chairman, and friendly advice to him, I would say now, right now.

MR. WHITE: He should have taken the House Leader's advice.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes he would like to take the House Leader's advice, and I think at the moment he is tending towards the House Leader's advice. He is tending towards the House Leader's advice. But, you see, Mr. Chairman, if he takes the House Leader's advice too long, and here is the brunt of what I am saying, Mr. Chairman, if he takes his House Leader's advice too long he is going to have to bring in a budget, and then he has got to deal with the House Leader in another way. This is the same House Leader who thinks our debt is too high.

AN HON. MEMBER: Right.

MR. SIMMONS: This is the House Leader who thinks we should sock it to everybody. You should cut back on all kinds of social programmes.

MR. NEARY: He kicked up his heels on the \$110 million spent on the blasts.

MR. SIMMONS: This is the House Leader who thinks that this administration made a botch of it on the Churchill Falls, and made a speech to that effect when he was down in another place.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS: Now, Mr. Chairman, can you visualize the dilemma of that particular House Leader if we were debating a full budget today, a budget which would reflect the new direction of the new Premier? What would the House Leader do then? He would squirm that is what he would do, or he would do as he said he is going to do on the radio, he would go downtown and spend time at his law practice.

AN HON. MEMBER: Now! Now!

MR. SIMMONS: All hats are off today, Mr. Chairman.

MR. NEARY: Is this not a conflict of interest situation then?

MR. SIMMONS: All hats are off today, Mr. Chairman, to that gentleman for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall). Can you see anything less selfish, Mr. Chairman? Can you see anything anywhere less selfish than a man who takes his salary, mind you, that is the law, takes his salary from the House, but only takes half his salary as minister which, you know, together that only comes to \$28,000 or \$30,000 a year.

MR. NEARY: He owns half of Royal Trust.

MR. SIMMONS: He is only going to take his member's salary, only half of his minister's salary. He is only going to take \$25,000 or \$28,000 out of the public purse, because, Mr. Chairman, he has told the public he is only intending to do a part-time job anyway, because he wants to go downtown and practice law.

MR. NEARY: \$100,000 a year down there.

MR. SIMMONS: How touching, Mr. Chairman! How touching, Mr. Chairman, that a man in this day and age would be prepared to work part-time for the people for only \$30,000 a year. How touching!

AN HON. MEMBER: Shame!

MR. SIMMONS: How touching! Your heart bleeds.

Now, Mr. Chairman, the Premier is back in the House, and my strong advice to him is to go to the people now and let them tell him whether they want to confirm the rather slim mandate he got a week or so ago, let them tell him that they agree with the 330 people who felt that he should be leader, and the one who did not care if he was going to be a leader or not as long as he was a winner.

MR. NEARY: He wanted to beat the 'Moore's' crowd.

MR. SIMMONS: And then, Mr. Chairman, we will be able to come back in and have a proper budget. And here is my point, I do not believe, Mr. Chairman, it is this administration's intention to have a budget before the election if they can get away with it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS: And that depends, Mr. Chairman, on whose advice is followed over there, the 50 per cent who want the election or the 50 per cent who know the realities out in the country, and know they should not have an election from a partisan standpoint.

MR. NEARY: Marshall or Ryan, which one will be signing the -

MR. SIMMONS: If, Mr. Chairman, the advice is followed to have an election -

MR. NEARY: Ryan or Marshall?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order!

MR. SIMMONS: If, Mr. Chairman, the advice of the House Leader's group is taken, if the advice of the House Leader and the other few over there who want an election is taken, then they will be able, Mr. Chairman, to pay the bills, you see, for the next two or three months while they get the election over. This is their scenario now, Mr. Chairman, they will get the election over. And then old sock it to them 'Marshall!

MR. WHITE: He will sock it to the people then.

MR. SIMMONS: - will come in then, Mr. Chairman, -

MR. NEARY: Witch hunt Willie.

MR. SIMMONS: - the election is out of the way, we do not have to go through the charade we had in 1975 where we had a budget before the election just to suck them all in and fool them all, and then another budget after the election to sock it to them.

AN HON. MEMBER: That is right.

MR. SIMMONS: No the House Leader says, we will not have to go through that charade, we will just have one budget. we will go to the people first,

MR. SIMMONS: we will not let our good doctor, the Minister of Finance, call this a budget because it is not pretty enough, there is no picture on the cover.

MR. NEARY: No goodies.

MR. SIMMONS: But, Mr. Chairman, if the scenario of the House Leader on the government side is allowed to follow through we will just as surely have two budgets this year as we had in '75, the one with the pretty picture before the election, and the other one with the pretty picture outside, but not a very pretty picture inside, after the election. This year this will be budget number one, that is the one they will run the country on until the election is over if his scenario is allowed to prevail, and then of course, and there is where his scenario really gets dreamy, then if they win -

AN HON. MEMBER: That is a big if.

MR. SIMMONS: - if they win then they come in with a budget in the Fall. Like the Fall of '75. And I remind you, Mr. Chairman, you were not here before '75, Mr. Chairman, but you were here for the second budget, the Fall Budget of '75, and I remind you, Mr. Chairman, some of the things that budget did.

Well I should tell you what the first one did. The first one announced some hospitals, the second one announced some non-hospitals. The first one said, "Come By Chance you are our saviour, Come By Chance we are going to have a petro chemical plant." The second budget said, "Bad news. Bad news." The first one said, "\$110 million on the Lower Churchill." The second one said, "Too bad! Too Bad! Shut her down."

MR. NEARY: I voted for that by the way.  
I got fooled by that crowd. Sucked in.

MR. SIMMONS: This, Mr. Chairman, only time  
will tell whether it is a budget or not a budget. I suggest  
to you right now in the mind of the Government House Leader  
this is the only budget you will see this side of an  
election.

Now, you see, Mr. Chairman,  
there is some confusion; there is some doubt in the mind  
of the Government House Leader as to when he can pull off  
this election. He would like, Mr. Chairman, somehow in his  
mind he thinks that if he could blame us on this side somehow  
for being obstructionists and that kind of thing, he thinks  
somehow all the people in the Province would suddenly feel  
"Oh my goodness, we have to give poor old 'Billy' and poor old  
'Brian' a chance". The poor fellows, they were in there,  
you know, they were in there and that crowd on the other side  
were actually talking back to them in there. Shocking!  
giving them a rough time they were, would not give them  
unanimous consent. That is the strategy, Mr. Chairman, if  
you can call it a strategy. That is what it is all about.  
Every day he gets up, every day he gets up in this House  
and tries to intimidate us some more. He, the gentleman,  
Mr. Chairman, he, the person who was going to see that the  
House functions, he who believes that one of the first  
priorities of a Government House Leader is to co-operate  
in good Christian fashion, Mr. Chairman - go over and get  
up behind the curtain with 'Stevie baby', the Opposition House  
Leader, and have a friendly chat and say, "Steve, you know  
boy, we got a problem with this Interim Supply Bill".

MR. NEARY: He would have to get his rabies  
shot before I would go behind the curtain with him.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, he could say to 'Stevie', "You know this is (yesterday) Private Members' Day, but you know you are a reasonable fellow, 'Steve', forego Private Members' Day today. What say instead we get on with the business. The people out there need some welfare cheques. We need some new programs in transportation. We need to get some bills paid. What do you say, 'Steve? Take it back to your fellows." Is that the reasonable approach he takes? No, Mr. Chairman, because he did not forget, Mr. Chairman. In his cold methodical mind, he planned it that way - his cold, methodical, small, cold, methodical mind. He planned it that way.

If you ever want to watch, Mr. Chairman, an unsubtle youngster at work, watch the Government House Leader. If there is anything more unsubtle, Mr. Chairman, I do not know what it is. His childish little games of the last two or three days where his Premier has tried, Mr. Chairman, very hard - tried very hard to see to it that an atmosphere of relative non-partisanship prevails in the early days of his administration. And what is his Government House Leader doing three inches away from him? Knifing him every chance he gets. The first day the Premier comes in to make a statement we all wanted to hear very much, and what happens? - the first discourtesy to the House by the cold, small mind from St. John's East (Mr. Marshall). And what happens yesterday? - another one. And what happens today? - the same thing. These silly points of order, Mr. Chairman. You get the feeling, Mr. Chairman, that when he went to church on Sunday, instead of taking his hymn book, he took Beauchesne with him. He is suddenly the expert on Beauchesne. He knows all about the points of order. Too bad they did not give him a few quarts of something other than order.

March 29, 1979

Tape No. 579

GH -4

MR. SIMMONS:

Now, Mr. Chairman, let us be clear. Let us be clear who the obstructionist, who the deliberate obstructionist is in this particular House. Let us be clear who the deliberate obstructionist is. And we say to the new Premier and to this House

MR. R. SIMMONS: that we in caucus fully resolve, fully resolve, that we intended to play ball and we resolve still to do that despite the childish intimations from the Government House Leader. He can try all the little childish immature antics he wants, the fact of the matter is that we happen to think that this House is more important than the part-time member for St. John's East. We happen to think that this place is more important than the overpaid, underworked Minister from St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) and he was right when he decided only to take half of the ministerial salary but he was not completely right, he should have decided to take none of it, he was only half right because he is gypping the people, Mr. Chairman, he is gypping the people.

All right, here is your Budget. There is your Budget. There is probably the only Budget you will get this side of an election if the Government House Leader has his way. And that is why, Mr. Chairman, that is why and I hope at this point and I got the time I will wait until they are all ready, that is why, that is why, Mr. Chairman, I hope and I want the Minister of Finance (Dr. J. Collins) to hear this, that is why I said at the beginning; one, we do not intend to filibuster; two, we intend to get some answers; and three, the answer we most want is a commitment from him about the Budget, because that, Mr. Chairman, is going to decide in very real measure how much time we take to scrutinize this Interim Supply Bill.

AN HON. MEMBER

Hear, hear.

MR. R. SIMMONS: And that is not a comment related to filibustering at all, it is this - we have to decide if this is a routine Interim Supply Bill we will treat it as such and we will allow its passage fairly quickly, we will recognize there is no particular need to ask questions now that can be more properly asked when the full Budget is before us.

On the other hand, if we recognize or have reason to suspect that this is, in effect, the Budget, we will treat it as a Budget and we will give it the once over. We will give it a thorough going over whether it takes us from now until tomorrow or from now to next week or the week after that. If this is going to be under guise



MR. R. SIMMONS: if this is going to be the only Budget we are going to see this side of an election, we intend fully, Mr. Chairman, to take as much time as we need, perhaps the whole seventy five hours.

Now, Mr. Chairman, why, why would the Government House Leader and those of his bent of mind, if anybody else can be that bent of mind, why, Mr. Chairman, why, Mr. Chairman would these people advise the Premier along the lines I have suggested? Why, in the name of goodness, would they do it? Because, Mr. Chairman, they realize from their rather jaded point of view they realize certain realities, certain realities. They realize somewhat their debt position, or the Province's debt position. They realize as the Minister of Finance formerly, the now Minister of Justice (Mr. Hickman) said just two or three weeks ago that most of the Budget is preset anyway fully eighty-five per cent of it. You cannot play around with it. It is like a completed chess game. It is done, you cannot move, but the other fifteen per cent is all they got to work with, and that they have come to the conclusion, that is hardly enough to provide the plums that are necessary to buy the electorate one more time.

You see, Mr. Chairman, in the Spring of 1975 they brought in a goodies Budget and then in the Fall they brought in the other one, the sock it to them Budget where they took back everything they had given in the Spring. Now, Mr. Chairman, just in terms of living with yourself, just in terms of looking in the mirror the next morning, how many times can you do that? Just in terms of walking down the streets of Newfoundland without getting rocked and stoned, how many times can you afford to do that? So now, Mr. Chairman, the brilliant strategists have come up with another angle, they are going to have not a Budget in the Spring and their so-called mini-budget in the Fall, they are hoping to have the Budget in the Fall - dreamy people that they are - and they are going to have this little budget right now because, Mr. Chairman, they cannot, they cannot Mr. Chairman, get agreement on their own side of the House about what kind of budget.

MR. SIMMONS: to bring in. And the Premier has come to the conclusion - of course, rightly so, as one great political leader said before him - that the problems of success are much easier to deal with than the problems of defeat. And he realizes that if he could only go to the country and get a mandate, then he would not worry if he had to give a couple of fellows over there not towing the line the heave-ho. But he does not particularly want to do that now. And I say to you, Mr. Chairman, that there is a real tug of war going on in Cabinet about this question of financial priorities, where the emphasis ought to be. And I will go so far as to say, Mr. Chairman, that at the moment the new Premier has not yet begun to win that tug of war. Because you see, Mr. Chairman, he has in his Cabinet no less than six other people who thought they could do the job of Premier better than he. And then, in addition to that he has some others in Cabinet such as the former Minister of Finance, the Minister of Justice (Mr. Hickman) who supported another candidate. And we can go down the line, and if you do your arithmetic, I say to the member for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter) - and by the way, your big fan skit was touching: as a matter of fact it was one of the most intelligent things to come out of that particular leadership campaign, you rank up there with Ken Prowse in my estimation. Mr. Chairman, I say to the member for St. John's North, if he would do his arithmetic, the six candidates who ran against the present Premier plus ministers like the Minister of Justice now, Consumer Affairs and the Environment - no accident that that minister is now Consumer Affairs and the Environment, no accident at all that there are three exit doors in government and he is sitting just inside the outside one. You add it all up, I say to the member for St. John's North, and you will find the truth of the statement I made a moment ago, that the

MR. SIMMONS: Premier is by no means winning the financial tug of war in Cabinet. He is Premier in name to everybody in this Province. He is not yet Premier in fact to his own Cabinet, as he is realizing. Whether he ever becomes Premier in fact is riding very much on what we are doing here today and whether the government is going to get away with this ruse of charading this as an Interim Supply Bill when in effect it is a Budget if the government can get away with it. We have some other plans on that subject. We have some very definite thoughts as to whether the government is going to get away with this, because we believe one, there ought to be an election today in this Province -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS: - and two, we believe that a government going to the people to see if it can get a new mandate should tell the people all the facts, should tell the people what its financial plan is for the coming year. The Budget could be just about ready by now.

MR. SIMMONS: They might need another week or two. We would be prepared to wait that long, but I say to the Premier "Bring in your goodies budget; bring it in. Let us debate it and then let us go to the people and see what they think of it, but let us have a budget so that when we go the people will know what it is they are voting for or against." And that, Mr. Chairman, is my number one concern about this document, Bill No. 19. Is it a budget or is it an Interim Supply Bill? Is it a budget? If it is a budget, we have plans on this side to make it a non-budget. If it is a budget, we intend that the people of the Province will know it is the Government's budget. Is it the Government's intention to call an election before a full budget is brought into this House? We are ready. We wish they had gone last week. Let me be the first to publicly congratulate my colleague on being elected by acclamation and my colleague from Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout) whatever that district will include when this outfit is finished with it, and anybody else who already won their nominations. We are pretty well ready over here.

Mr. Chairman, on that

particular subject, Mr. Chairman -

MR. NEARY: They do not have nominations over there.

MR. SIMMONS: No, they -

MR. F. WHITE: They do not have nominations.

MR. NEARY: The crowd that brought democracy to Newfoundland -

MR. F. WHITE: Do not have nominations.

MR. NEARY: do not believe in nominations.

MR. SIMMONS: Well, Steve, I think you ought to be a little kinder though. It is not a question of not believing. It is a question of being downright scared, and there is a difference. I have met a lot of fellows who believe things. I met one of the Cabinet ministers, unfortunately he is not here now, who said some very, very choice things in a fairly large group of people in a hotel in Grand Falls about one of his fellow travellers in the leadership and I find it hard to reconcile what he said.

MR. NEARY: He has not been in the House since it opened.

MR. SIMMONS: I find - oh, this minister has been in; he is still a minister as a matter of fact, and as a matter of fact the fellow he was saying it all about was the fellow who won the leadership. But you know, a fellow - I am sure he believed what he said in Grand Falls, but I am sure he also realizes what side his bread is buttered on. And it is not a question I say to my colleague from Lapoile (Mr. Neary) of not believing in democracy, it is a question of contemplating what can happen to you if things get too democratic and I am sure my friend from Humber Valley (Mr. House) in particular has reason to worry about that.

The numbers of people out there who want to run for the P.C. nomination in Humber Valley are exceeded only by the numbers who want to run for the Liberals in Humber Valley.

MR. RIDEOUT: But there will never be a nomination.

MR. SIMMONS: But there will never be a nomination. Now, Mr. Chairman, in case there are any doubts, because I can see now that people are going to be up waving their arms and saying "The Liberals do not want an election It is a stall. They want a budget brought in so that they will be able to buy some time." No, Mr. Chairman, financially,

MR. SIMMONS: in terms of the financial provisions of this Province, this Government does not need a budget to go to the people. It does not need an Interim Supply motion to go to the people. It can go on the basis of a visit to Government House and it can pay the bills in the meantime on Governor's warrants, as anybody knows. There is no need; there is no real need, I mean in political terms - there is a big real need in terms of the needs of the Province, do not misunderstand me - but there is no political need; there is no mechanical requirement, let me put it that way, no absolute requirement that we have a budget or an Interim Supply Bill put through this House. Let nobody be under any illusions there. The Premier can go down this day and call an election and, of course, the law provides that in the absence of Interim Supply or budget approval, Governor's warrants are quite in order to pay the bills in the interim period until a new government reports back to this House with those warrants and gets the de facto approval of the House for those warrants. There is no need in those terms for either this bill

MR. R. SIMMONS: or for a budget but just to lay to rest the kind of statement we are going to hear from the people on the other side about, we want a budget to stall off. Let me say to you, Mr. Chairman—

MR. NEARY: I can not see that salaries or social assistance should be held off.

MR. W. CARTER: What garbage. What foolish nonsense.

MR. R. SIMMONS: Let me say, Mr. Chairman, that we are looking forward to an election, we are quite ready for one over here and, indeed, in 1975 I remember my colleague,

MR. NEARY: We will be paying the employees.

MR. R. SIMMONS: —my colleague from Lewisporte and I were sitting in my home out in Green Bay at Kona Beach and we called some party people here in St. John's and we were amazed to find that on Friday, late in August, there were candidates in place or nominees, two or more nominees, in a total of nineteen seats, Liberal candidates or choice of candidates in a total of nineteen seats out of the fifty-one. That was on a Friday afternoon. On Monday the election was called and you remember all that Summer was like waiting for the other shoe to drop. You knew full well the election was coming, it was just a question of what day, that was our state of readiness then and we elected sixteen, the Liberal Reform elected four, that was our state of readiness then.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, as you know from the public record, Mr. Chairman,

MR. S. NEARY: We will never get caught like that again.

MR. R. SIMMONS: As you know from the public record, Mr. Chairman,

we have more than 19, I think as of today twenty-three or twenty four -

MR. S. NEARY: Nominated already.

MR. R. SIMMONS: Actually nominated, actually in place.

MR. S. NEARY: Our publicities penned, our policies ready, our candidates ready.

MR. R. SIMMONS: Indeed, one of our biggest problems -

MR. DOODY: Give me the names of the twenty-three so that I can send them sympathy cards.

MR. NEARY: I beg your pardon?

MR. DOODY: The twenty-three.

MR. NEARY: They are waiting to see what you look like, over on Bell Island.

MR. DOODY: They know what I look like on Bell Island.

MR. NEARY: When that big explosion took place over there they thought it was the hon. gentleman landing.

MR. DOODY: They thought it was you leaving.

MR. CHAIRMAN(Cross): Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, there is going to be a lot of talk in the next day or so or two or three weeks, depending on how long we are debating this Bill or this Budget which ever it is.

AN HON. MEMBER: Your time has expired.

MR. R. SIMMONS: Well, if so, I can sit down and get up again in a few minutes, there is no problem. Mr. Chairman, we are going to hear a lot in the next few days about paying bills and how all the people need their bills paid and you will never, you have never seen such urgency, Mr. Chairman, as you are going to see in the next day or so. Suddenly, Mr. Chairman, the Government is going to be really urgent to get out there and pay all those bills. Well, Mr. Chairman, I will give you an example of a few bills. They want to pay some bills, I will tell them about a couple of more they should pay, give them name, address, the whole works. I say to the Minister of Finance while he is at it - there is a man in Bay d'Espoir who has been waiting since last July for a receivable from the Government, an amount the Government owes him, I will not give his name publicly but I would be prepared to do it privately, he cannot get the money, Mr. Chairman. It is only since last August or so, he cannot get the money. The latest explanation he got is the photocopying equipment in Finance, albeit a special kind of photocopying equipment for checks apparently, the photocopying equipment in Finance is broken down and they cannot get any new equipment to photocopy until the new fiscal year. I see he has been waiting since last August for an amount of money. Now, Mr. Chairman, this is a staggering amount of money, staggering amount, they have already wasted \$30 or \$40 on postage stamps, some poor fellow who applied for a moose licence did not get it, they have not refunded this



MR. R. SIMMONS: amount yet. I can give you 300 names like that, 300 names and I say to the people on the other side of the House if you want to impress people with paying bills - start paying some, or if the moose licence one does not bother you, how about the dozens and dozens of men around this Province who worked on these welfare projects last summer and who in addition to giving labor for pay, of course, they also rented their equipment usually a chainsaw and they are all out anywhere from \$30 to \$40 to \$150.

Some of those fellows have been waiting five, six and

MR. SIMMONS:

seven months to have these accounts settled. Now, Mr. Chairman, they are going to get suddenly very efficient. They want to pay it all tomorrow morning. They have to rush out there. No problem. If they want to pay their bills, let them go down and get a warrant if it is that big a hurry and when they are doing it add on \$20 for a moose license application and a few dollars for some chain saw rentals and start treating the people who pay your salaries decently. If it were the other way around, if that fellow in Bay d'Espoir or those fellows with the chainsaws owed that to a company they would have their wages attached by now if they had any wages to attach. If they owed it to the government they would be taken to court now. That is depending on who they are now, Mr. Chairman. If they are some of the people in the Auditor General's Report, if they are one of that 170 people who operate lounges around this Province who are buddies of the administration and who have not been chased to kick in. Oh, let us put it another way, they have been chased to kick in but not to the public treasury. Why is it, Mr. Chairman, the Auditor General can tell us about \$9.5 million in retail sales tax?

Now, Mr. Chairman, we are not talking about percentages of profit because if a fellow did not make the profit obviously he does not have the percentage. But we are talking about money that he collected over the bar from you. We are talking about people who collected their percentage for government and they did not remit it. Now, Mr. Chairman, there is no excuse for that and if they were anybody other than friends of this administration they would have been shut up, they would have been closed down. If they were not the liquor barons of this Province and the beer barons as I tell you most of them are they would be closed down. And I invite you, the Minister of Finance, to look at a list of those 170 people who owe the treasury more than \$10,000 in taxes.

MR. R. MOORES: Is that true?

MR. SIMMONS: Yes I say to my colleague from Carbonear, it is very true.

MR. SIMMONS:

It is all too true. It is sadly true. Let us set up a situation, let us let a lady down here on the corner or somebody in my district in Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir have a little candy shop or a little confectionary or a grocery store and in a month she takes in \$4,000 or \$5,000 gross and of that \$300 or \$400 is retail sales tax and she does not get the return in by the tenth - she has got ten days, I believe twenty days now. She has got twenty days to get the return in. What happens to her? What happens? What happens if it is only \$400? What happens?

Well, Mr. Chairman, let us not be hypothetical about it. Let us talk about a case, Mr. Chairman, of a fellow who had a seasonal business and who in the month of December had no tax. No tax officer ever checked with him to see how much money he took in that month. Had they checked they would have found that the business he is in did not do very well in the month of December because it was closed in December. Let us talk about the case of a fellow who was taken to court by this administration for failing to file a nil return. He failed to file a nil return in December and by February 15 he was in court.

MR. NEARY: What about all the -

MR. SIMMONS: Now you say to me, Mr. Chairman, "Simmons do you have permission to talk about that fellow?" Yes, I do, Mr. Chairman, because it was me. For an nil return two months after the fact they take me to court. What do they do with the beer barons and the liquor barons who owe this Province \$9.5 million?

MR. NEARY: Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS: You read the Auditor General's Report and you will find out what they doing. Sweetheart deals. You cannot pay it all, pay us a little bit boy. You cannot pay your interest, oh that is okay, we will write the interest off for you. You do not want us to take you to court, no we will not take you to court. Of course we would not take you to court. Read the example. I call the attention of the House to the example which the Auditor General gives on the subject of retail sales tax. It is spelled out in documents over a page and a half. He tells how the department

MR. SIMMONS:

bent over backwards to help the man continue to break the law.

MR. NEARY: Probably one of these legalized bootleggers.

MR. SIMMONS: Why? Why? Because the senior civil servant had a politician leaning on him, that is why. How else can you get into a situation where \$9.5 million in receivables to the public treasury are allowed to accrue particularly when you have such a diligent crowd as this who are out finding people and taking them to court

MR. SIMMONS:

for not filing nil returns.

That is an important issue, Mr. Chairman. It is an important issue. Nine and a half million dollars - I say to the Minister of Finance he will find, if he does not already know, that most of that \$9½ million is Retail Sales Tax that is owed by beer and liquor establishments. And he will find further that most of the names on that list, indeed all of the names on the list I would say, I will cover myself by saying most of them, fully 90 per cent of them are on another list - on the Tory's bagman list. And that is why, Mr. Chairman, that is the kind of democracy we have in this Province, Mr. Chairman. You can buy it. It is for a price. Same old business we saw, Mr. Chairman, the same old thing, Mr. Chairman, we saw when we had this situation where the people including the ministers and the Premier broke the law with respect to public tendering for the road down the Southern Shore during the by-election. Remember that disgraceful circumstance, and what emerged? What emerged in effect was there were two laws - one for the ordinary people and another one for the ministers. And now we have it here again - our Retail Sales Tax.

The lady in Bay d'Espoir who does not pay her \$400 on the 20th of the month gets a call from the tax officer within a week or two and is told to ante up or they are going to close here up; they are not going to renew here licence. But, if you own a liquor establishment, a beer establishment, and if you financially scratch the back of this administration -

MR. NEARY:

Or a hotel.

MR. SIMMONS:

- or a hotel, what happens?

What happens then?

MR. NEARY:

Make a deal - negotiate.

MR. SIMMONS: The price is right - the price is right. Now, Mr. Chairman, I can anticipate we are going to hear another lecture on all we hear is scandal, scandal, scandal. But, Mr. Chairman, it so happens - it so happens, Mr. Chairman, that it seems no matter how positive you want to be you had better not ignore the realities and it is not my word. It is the Auditor General. I take the word of the Auditor General. I take his word. No minister has said in the House that this is wrong what he said here about Retail Sales Tax. Nobody said he is wrong when he talked about the Department of Transportation's breaking the law. Nobody said he is wrong when he says that a certain helicopter company has been paid twice for doing the same work. Mr. Chairman, I have to talk about the realities if these are the realities. I did not create them. The friends of the Minister of Finance created them. The friends of the Premier created these realities. I am only trying to see that something is done about them and then the putative chairman of the whitewash version of the Public Accounts Committee on the radio this morning tells us things are getting better. What does he mean - somebody is getting a bigger rip-off? Is that what he means? "Things are getting better", he says. Yes, he says they are only - yes, they are only breaking the law -

MR. NEARY: That is about the worse report, I would say, in the last two years.

MR. SIMMONS: He says they are only breaking the law twenty ways now; he said, it was twenty-one ways last year - oh yes, only \$9½ million now; only \$9½ million outstanding in Retail Sales Tax, he says.

He misled the public; he misled the public, Mr. Chairman; he misled the public when he refused or ignored to draw to the attention of the public this important statement in the Auditor General's report on

MR. SIMMONS: page eight: "During my ten years as Auditor General, it has become increasingly apparent to me that" - I am reading the wrong statement, I will get the right one in a minute - here we are. Page six: "In this year's 1977-78 audit I have decided not to report certain items which those still of concern to me have been dealt with by the Public Accounts Committee." And the Auditor General has confirmed to me that he is still of concern and yet we have the chairman of the Government whitewash committee on the radio this morning saying, "Well look, the Public Accounts Committee solved that problem so he did not have to talk about it any more." The only reason he did not talk about it is in print. He did not talk about it because while it is still a problem, he thought he would give the Government a year to do something about it. Now, did they do anything about it, did they? Well, you only have to look at what is happening in Public Works, according to what he talks about. Now remember, he has put a restraint on himself, Mr. Chairman. He has said he is not going to talk about certain things. He is not going to talk about anything that the Public Accounts Committee has dealt with. What does that include? It includes a Public Works scandal involving the misappropriation of \$20 million which is now the subject of a couple of police

MR. SIMMONS:

investigations and a public enquiry. He is not going to talk about that little thing. Then we are told that since he does not talk about it, it does not exist. It exists, Mr. Chairman. I know the member for Mount Scio (Dr. Winsor) would wish it would go away. He is going to have to do something more than wish if he wants, Mr. Chairman, to have an effective role to play in good, decent administration. He should go back to his first instincts which were admirable, an instinct which allowed him to say to me and other friends, and I am not revealing confidential information because he said it quite widely, an instinct which allowed him to say to many people, if there is anything rotten in the State of Denmark, I am not going to be part of it. If I find something that is less than honourable, he said on many occasions, I am going to stand up and be counted. That is what he said. Not only did he say that, Mr. Chairman, but for a while he performed in that direction. For a while, Mr. Chairman, he did things which showed me that he was prepared to do the honourable thing. But then, Mr. Chairman, he had a lesson, an unforgettable lesson in puppeteering.

Then one day somebody sat him down and explained to him how those puppet theaters work on television, that you have a person who pulls the strings, who knows the way he wants the strings pulled, who knows how to do it, who can manipulate. Then you need to have that work of course. It is not enough to have the strings just dangling there in front of the stage. You have to have somebody on the other end of the strings too. You have got to have somebody, Mr. Chairman, who is willing to have his arms and legs and mouth dangled and manipulated.

MR. NEARY: And his tongue.

MR. SIMMONS: That was his Rubicon. That was his point of no return. That is where he sold the -

MR. NEARY: His soul to the company store.



MR. SIMMONS:

Now, Mr. Chairman, he can say in the same mouthful, \$9.5 million from liquor barons, beer barons, outstanding two or three years. It is getting better he says. I wonder what kind of a prescription one would need to get glasses coloured that darkly. It is getting better. This, Mr. Chairman, is a disgrace, an absolute disgrace. Indeed, Mr. Chairman, I must confess that after a year or so with the Public Accounts Committee from November, 1976 until January, 1978 - and by the way that, Mr. Chairman, for the record was the effective life of the Public Accounts Committee, from November, 1976 until January, 1978. We were a long time getting around to the funeral but the Committee died and began to rot after January, 1978.

I must confess, Mr. Chairman, and my colleague from Mount Scio I think will agree with me that during our talks and travels together we felt we were getting somewhere with the Public Accounts Committee. We felt we were beginning to do something. Indeed our first report which was only for part of a year's work we brought in here in February, 1977 and our second report in about February or March, 1978, and we made a total I believe of twenty-eight or thirty recommendations in those two reports. I believe to my knowledge one, a minor but important change in the Financial Administration Act, the redefinition of the word 'commitment', I believe that is the only action that has resulted from the work of the Public Accounts Committee. But that itself, Mr. Chairman, is not important because the Committee is the kind of a committee that you cannot really document its work in terms of the pluses and minuses and saying, we did this today and we did this today.

What I was hoping for with the Public Accounts Committee was that we would see a gradual improvement

MR. SIMMONS: and an increase in the awareness of the public servant in the way -

MR. MARSHALL: If the hon. member will permit I want to rise the Committee because the hon. Speaker wants to announce the late show.

Will the Committee rise and report progress and ask leave to sit again.

On motion, that the Committee rise and report progress and ask leave to sit again, Mr. Speaker returned to the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Chairman of Committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supplies have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report progress and ask leave to sit again.

On motion, report received and adopted, Committee ordered to sit again on tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: I must now inform now inform hon. members of two subjects for debate at 5:30 p.m.; the first, notice given by the hon. member for Windsor - Buchans (Mr. Flight) arising from a question asked the hon. the Premier and the subject matter - the Department of Housing; the second, notice given by the hon. member for Bellevue (Mr. Callan) arising from a question asked the hon. the Premier and the subject matter - the fourth seat in the Legislature for Labrador.

Hon. minister.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, before we go back into the Committee, I think it is probably necessary to move, I know it is necessary to move a motion and I know the Opposition will concur with that when this House adjourns this afternoon that it adjourn on until 10:00 a.m. tomorrow morning and that the sitting hours tomorrow, instead of being 3:00 to 6:00 p.m., be from 10:00 to 1:00 p.m. I so move.

MR. NEARY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, we concur with that motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Motion is that when this adjourns at 6:00 p.m. that it adjourn until 10:00 a.m. tomorrow. Those in favour 'aye' - contrary 'nay'. Carried.

MR. MARSHALL: Committee of Supply.

MR. SPEAKER: Motion is that I leave the Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I am saying that I had hoped that the real effect of the Public Accounts Committee would be a noticeable improvement in the way the spending practices of the various departments were being performed, and I had some early euphoria, some optimism, on this particular point. I heard a lot of words; I heard in Committee from various witnesses and around the corridors I heard that as a result of the Committee's activities that things were tightening up and there were some more memos going out and that kind of thing.

Now, Mr. Chairman, remember that the Committee's first witnesses were called I believe in November, 1976, and then early into 1977, so that one can assume that by mid 1977 the word was around in the Civil Service, the word was around among the politicians that this Public Accounts Committee out there with four fellows from the Government side and three from the Opposition side were giving the Public Accounts a pretty thorough going-over. Indeed, almost every time I got in an elevator, some senior public servant would mention this fact to me and would say that as a result of the Committee's activities it made them much more conscious and kept the ministers and so on much more on their toes. So one could assume that by March or June of 1977, the Committee should have begun to have an effect.

MR. SIMMONS: Now then, here is a document covering the year 1977-78, right up til March, 1978, a full sixteen or seventeen months after the Committee began doing its work and what does the Auditor General tell us on television last night? He cannot see things getting much better.

So you see, Mr. Chairman, there is a blatancy here in this administration. There is a callousness, a brazeness here, which even ignores the very high profile work that their colleagues on the Committee and the three from this side were doing a year and a half or two and a half years ago; and even with that the

MR. R. SIMMONS: the then Premier being aided and abetted by his colleagues in Cabinet were able to approve that shocking deal that we talked about here yesterday involving his brother-in-law Mr. Nutbeam, a deal which had a rate of \$250 a day plus expenses as documented in this report would have meant, had the man been on the job a full year, 365 days less Saturdays and Sundays he would have gotten from the Public Treasury \$110,000. To do what? To advise the government.

AN HON. MEMBER: He could take Good Friday off.

MR. R. SIMMONS: For what I know I say to the minister he may have had all of the days off because it boggles the mind, it boggles the mind. If the man is going to advise the government on opening bridges and hospitals and water and sewer systems one assumes that these systems are in this Province. Now he worked for 136 days, during that time he drew down - I forget the figures but \$23,000 or \$25,000 in expenses which works out to about \$1,000 a week because all his is doing is advising. He is not a travelling salesman, he is not out selling hospitals or selling water and sewer systems oh no, he is just advising on opening. Now how much do you have to travel to advise, Mr. Chairman? How many water systems do you have to visit in Germany and San Francisco to find out how to open a water and sewer system? He is spending \$1,000 a week travelling so he can give advice here in St. John's on opening water and sewer systems in Newfoundland. Now how dense, Mr. Chairman! How dense did the Cabinet think we were when they approved that idea in the first place? Where was the Minister of Fisheries when this thing was being approved? Was he in Cabinet at the time?

MR. W. CARTER: I cannot remember.

MR. R. SIMMONS: He says he cannot remember. I say to him he should refresh his memory or get out his Cabinet documents for the period, December 1976, because if I were him I would be thoroughly ashamed to be actively part of that particular decision. Does it not boggle the mind, Mr. Chairman? \$250 a day plus expenses for as many days as he wanted to work. Now, Mr. Chairman, just think - I suppose they are not going to open the water and sewer system that has been in Springdale for years

MR. R. SIMMONS: and years and years or one that has been in St. John's - they are not going to open the one in St. John's certainly God! I mean it has been there long enough now to be open. So they must be talking about new water and sewer systems. That is an idea! Perhaps they are just going to open the new ones. Are they going to open the hospital that has been in Burgeo for twenty or thirty years? I would not think so. Perhaps they are only talking about new hospitals and new bridges. How much advice do you need? How many hospitals were built last year? That is a good question. How many hospitals were built last year? How many bridges? How many water and sewer systems? What kind of advice? I ask anybody, what kind of advice could you give to government on opening projects like that that would take you 136 days to give? 136 days and \$1,000 worth of travel every week that is a lot of advice, that is a lot of expensive advice. And then they say this administration does not create any jobs. You ask Mr. Nutbeam. He got a job from this administration. You ask McConnell Agencies in Montreal. They got a job from this administration. You ask Craig Dobbin. He got a job from this administration. The job was so good he got paid twice for some of the work he did. He did his job so well they paid him twice. Not only that but when they discovered the mistake they did not take any steps to get the money back. They never even tried to get the overpayment back.

MR. SIMMONS:

They rented a helicopter, paid for it twice and did not bother to get the second payment back, and they want me, they want this House to say, "Yes, you are just the fellows to spend money. Here is another \$354 million." Mr. Chairman, the only lever this government has is a very effective one with us. The only lever this government has is the fact that ultimately the bills of this Province have to be paid. They can do it on an interim basis through a Governor's warrant and that kind of thing but ultimately there are people out there on social assistance, there are people out there who rented their chainsaws to the government and have not been paid for half a year. There are people out there who are owed refunds on license applications. There are people out there in the public employ, the civil servants, who cannot be blamed, Mr. Chairman, for the mismanagement of this government. And that, Mr. Chairman, is the only lever this government has in getting this particular bill through the House.

Mr. Chairman, I am hoping to conclude in a few minutes and I am hoping that the Minister of Finance will bear in mind particularly the question I put to him about the budget. We want to know when the government proposes to bring down a budget. We think it should be quite soon. We can recognize the logistics, the problems since this government did not give its attention to it but a week or so ago. But since fully 85 per cent of the budget is predetermined anyway by ongoing programmes, as soon as they can figure out what to do with the other 15 per cent I believe they should be able to come in here with a budget within the next two or three weeks at most.

Now, Mr. Chairman, one of the items in this particular budget is education, \$96,580,000. Now that is not the figure for the whole year. That is hardly a third of the figure for the whole year. We will hear much in the budget debate about the government's emphasis on education. Well of course we heard

MR. SIMMONS:

from my colleague from Fortune-Hermitage (Mr. J. Winsor) yesterday, the other side of that particular story, that there are still many children around this Province who are attending very inadequate school facilities.

Just before finishing just a very specific point which I would like to bring to the attention of the minister and his colleague, the Minister of Education. I was very surprised to learn in the last hour, the last two or three hours, sometime this morning as a matter of fact, that this Province is the only Province in Canada which has a tax on books, the only Province in all of Canada which taxes books and that particularly surprised me. I just throw it out now because if there is some discrepancy the minister in one of his replies will have an opportunity to give me the correct information. But I am looking at a printed brochure which was passed to me from a national organization and the information tells me that this is the only Province in Canada which places a tax on books. I find that incredible. I find it incredible that in a Province which wants to have such a high profile in educational matters we are making it difficult in this particular area.

Now, Mr. Chairman, in conclusion for the time being - I realize we will have other opportunities depending on what answer we get from the Minister of Finance with respect to the budget because I say to him that is the key question and that is the only answer that matters right now. I say to him that if this is just an Interim



MR. R. SIMMONS: Supply motion, we on this side will treat it as an Interim Supply motion. If we have reason to suspect it is a budget that it is the only budget we are going to see before an election we will treat it as a pre-election budget and debate it accordingly. The minister can put all our fears to rest by answering this specific question. Why is there not a budget now? I think we know the answer to that one. But a more important questions, how soon will there be a budget? What particular factors might be delaying the budget? Are there any particular reasons such as the Linerboard reason of two or three years ago? Is there any particular reason - that was what, two years ago, yes, two years ago - the Linerboard reason of two years ago delayed the budget until late April and that was an understandable reason. Is there such an understandable reason now? If so, why, of course, has not the minister given it to us in his opening statement? Otherwise, Mr. Chairman, we will have other things to say on the debate. We do not know how long it is going to be, that will be determined in large part by the answer to the question I have given as to whether this is an Interim Supply Bill or whether it is, in effect, a budget. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Finance.

DR. J. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, it is just fifteen minutes to the so-called Late Show. The hon. member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) spoke at some length and he brought up a large number of points. I will attempt to respond to those that I feel I can do within the time available. And if not, perhaps at a later stage.

The first point I would like to cover; the hon. member referred to the salary of the House Leader and I think that we should dispose of that immediately. Now the hon. member mentions that the hon. House Leader may be receiving a total sum salary of something of the order of \$30 thousand. I do not know if that is true or not quite honestly, I always find it difficult to know what members receive. Although I was a back-bencher for a considerable period

DR. J. COLLINS: of time I really have difficulty in remembering. It is such a complicated business.

The second thing is, I have no idea at this point in time what a minister receives and I believe the hon. House Leader -

MR. HICKMAN: The lowest in Canada.

DR. J. COLLINS: - receives one half. And my hon. colleague in the Department of Education tells me that a minister receives the lowest in Canada when he receives a full salary and the hon. House Leader will receive half. Now, we should recognize and I am sure hon. members do, that the hon. House Leader receives two parts to his salary, shall we say, he receives his MHA salary or his allowance, his sessional allowance and he receives his ministerial salary. The hon. House Leader has every right to receive his full MHA salary. That amounts to whatever it does amount to the exact sum does not matter. He receives that for representing his district. Strictly speaking, he does not receive it for attending this House. He is elected as a representative. As long as he represents that district and as long as his district, his constituents are satisfied with his representation, he is entitled and will receive that salary or that allowance as an MHA. I do not think there is any doubt whatever that the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) that is the hon. House Leader is an adequate, more than adequate representative of his district.

He was first elected in a by-election a number of years ago, almost ten years ago. Since that time he has also taken his district on three other occasions quite handily and I would think that this is clear evidence that his constituents, and these are the people who matter, that they consider him a representative they have full confidence in and therefore there can be no question but he deserves the salary he gets for representing his district.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear.

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DR. J. COLLINS:

So that disposes of that aspect.

Now the second aspect of his salary is his ministerial salary and as I pointed out he has not, although he is quite entitled to receive,

DR. COLLINS: he has not asked for a full ministerial salary. The hon. member, because of his position as House Leader, will attend this House possibly more diligently than other member here. It is almost a must. I think the hon. Opposition House Leader will have the same obligation put on him to the same extent. So these two hon. members will probably be the most diligent attenders in this House, if for no other reason because that is their job to do so; so that we can say, therefore, that even though the hon. House Leader will receive the ministerial part of his salary in half measure, he will attend here in full measure, probably fuller than any other minister. I do not have to point out to the hon. members opposite, I certainly do not have to point out to the hon. members on this side, the worth of his ministerial duties. These are recognized not only by his colleagues here in the House, but one only has to read the newspaper accounts in recent times and the acclaim which was given him for his decision to accept the post in the new Cabinet. I think, therefore, that we should at this point forget about whether the hon. the House Leader is giving this administration, his district and indeed this Province, good measure for what he receives. He does this more than is necessary.

Now, Mr. Chairman, going on to some of the other points, the hon. member suggested, and I am not taking these in any particular order, that there are people in this Province in some difficulties because of slow payment of accounts by government departments. I suspect that is so. As a matter of fact, although I have no personal experience with it, I know that it is so. I have heard it myself and I think that this is to be deprecated and I give

DR. COLLINS: the hon. member and hon. members generally in the House to what extent it is in my power I will try to do something about that. I think individuals should not suffer from slow payment of bills by government departments.

MR. HICKMAN: It is now down to sixty days.

DR. COLLINS: The hon. member, hon. colleague to my left, tells me it is now down to sixty days. I do not know if that is good enough, but I am sure it is an improvement.

MR. RIDEOUT: Sir, if you could get it down to thirty days.

MR. HICKMAN: Beginning April 1st, all bills will be paid within sixty days. That is a record that no other government in Canada is going to surpass.

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, another point that the hon. member brought up was the little maneuverability in bringing down a budget, and I think he mentioned the figure of 15 per cent which is in the discretion of the Province, the rest being committed by statutory and other obligations. This may be so; I am not saying it is, but it may be so. But I would point out that that discretion on the part of the Province may actually be expanding a little because of the bloc funding that the Province is now getting from the federal government, so in actual fact our discretionary area may be expanding somewhat.

Also, in bringing down a budget, although I will not by any means claim at this point in time to be an expert - I hope some day to be an expert and I will do my best to make that as soon as possible. I do not claim to be an expert by any means at this point in time; however, I would suggest that a large part of the duties of the Minister of Finance is to make sure that we do not exceed - that our obligations - that the needs of this Province do not cause us to exceed the 85 per cent which is not within our power to do much about. I think we could easily overspend the

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DR. COLLINS: amounts that we have very little  
to say in if we are not careful. And also, the area that

DR. J. COLLINS: is within our discretion. I think that even though this may be a smaller part of the Budget, it is by no means unimportant. As a matter of fact, it will be something that will be of great importance to the Province because it is the area in which a particular administration can put its imprint on the Province and it is the area in which the administration attempts to do something about the development and the great needs of the Province. The Hon. Member also referred and I do not give him full marks for this; also referred to the Leadership race that the PC Party has just conducted. He mentioned particularly The Honourable Minister of Fisheries, but he also mentioned other contenders. I will not spend too much time with that - merely to say that I think his motive there must have been to try and drive a wedge between members, or the people on this side. I suspect that I may be thinking badly about him but I suspect that may have crossed his mind to think that way. Well, it would do no good - this side of the House is very united. We have an exercise, democracy rules. We accept the decision and I think there is no doubt that we are now a united team.

MR. SIMMONS: That is easy for you to say you were not a candidate.

DR. J. COLLINS: True. Just one other final little point in a sort of a political vein if I may, Mr. Chairman, and that is that the hon. member mentioned that the scenario may be that the Interim Supply Bill is a suck-em-in Budget I think this is the expression he used - and then we will bring in a sock-it to them Budget, and he said that this scenario took place previously in 1975. I do not think it did take place in 1975. However, he forgot one little thing there - he forgot that between the two Budgets that

DR. J. COLLINS: were brought down at that time, that a certain Mr. Trudeau brought in a whole new restraint program which every Province in the country had to take note of and that they had to make adjustments.

MR. HICKMAN: What was that man's name again?

DR. J. COLLINS: I think his name was Trudeau. The final point I would like to deal with in just the few minutes remaining - Well, before I do that though, the hon. member spent some time on the activities of the Public Accounts Committee. I do not think that this is the time to go into that in great detail, but I can assure the Hon. Members that it is the intention, to my knowledge, it is the intention that that Committee be continued, that it be emphasized.

I believe there may be an approach towards acquiring staff, research staff and so on and so forth, for such a Committees, to allow it to operate more effectively. If such a recommendation is put forward, I can assure Hon. Members that if I have anything to do with it, it will be given very serious consideration because this side of the house certainly recognizes a Public Accounts Committee has been instituted will remain and it is very valuable.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: hear, hear, hear.....

DR. J. COLLINS: Finally, Mr. Chairman, the hon. member asked about the Budget. now he asked, firstly, when will the Budget be. Well, I suppose he asked first if there would be a Budget. Then he asked when would the Budget be. He asked if there is any particular reason, any outstanding reason why the Budget might be delayed. Well, firstly, I can say this, that the run-up to the Budget is being conducted with all dispatch. Work has begun on this. It will be at an increasing tempo and that work will go forward with all dispatch.



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DR. J. COLLINS: Secondly, is there anything in particular that will interfere with the bringing down of the Budget? I think the hon. member mentioned the Linerboard Mill. The Linerboard situation did delay one Budget. To my knowledge, there is no such large outstanding issue that would do that. Finally, will there be a Budget? Ah, it is not in my hands to say if there will be a Budget.

DR. J. COLLINS:

If this House is in session there will be a budget. It is not in my prerogative to say if this House will be sitting. That is the Premier's clearly. But I think we can rely on what the Premier says and the Premier did say that if this House is performing it will be sitting. So that -

MR. NEARY: Do not threaten. Do not threaten -

DR. J. COLLINS: I am not threatening.

MR. NEARY: Throwing threats across the House and try to bully anybody.

DR. J. COLLINS: No, I am not bullying. I am not threatening. I am merely stating the facts, that I am -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

DR. J. COLLINS: - expecting to bring down a budget if the House is sitting. It is my information that the hon. the Premier will keep the House sitting if the House is performing and I think that he is not expecting the House to perform in such a way that there will not be any debate in this House. The hon. the Premier is well aware of what this House is for. He knows that there should be debate. There should be proceedings go on and as long as those proceedings are productive it is my understanding that the House will sit and I would therefore expect the budget will be brought in and I can reassure hon. members that work is going forward with great dispatch.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker returned to the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Chairman of Committees.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report progress and ask leave to sit again.

On motion, report received and adopted, Committee ordered to sit again on tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: Two matters for debate under these proceedings. The first subject matter, the Department of Housing.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Windsor-Buchans.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform Your Honour that my colleague had to leave. He was called to Buchans. So he will not be taking advantage of the Late Show.

MR. SPEAKER: The next matter for debate, the question of a fourth seat in the Legislature for a Labrador constituency.

The hon. member for Bellevue.

MR. CALLAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is on to Labrador me boys. Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have five minutes in which to pursue a couple of questions that I tried to get at the bottom of in the Oral Question Period. The question of course was why was not an extra seat or two or three added in the Labrador portion of our Province back in 1974 when the seats in this Province were redistributed and when ten new additional seats were added to this Legislature. Was Labrador not important, not considered important enough then to add an additional seat or two or three or four? Is it only now in 1979 that the P.C. Party and the P.C. government has seen the need for additional representation in Labrador?

Most of these ten seats as the member for Harbour Grace (Mr. Young) will recall that were added in 1974 were added in St. John's. That raises several questions. I wonder why were they not added in the Labrador portion of our Province or why was not the district of Bellevue for example made more manageable by having not thirty-five communities but perhaps twenty-five and therefore more seats added in the rural areas of the Province rather than adding them in the urban areas in particular of course St. Johns. Why? Why was this government in 1974 so anxious to add seats in St. John's and not in Labrador and in the other rural areas of this Province? Was it because the P.C. Party, the P.C. government, did not have confidence enough in the paid members of the St. John's City Council for them to run the affairs of the city, that they decided we want several or eight MHA's to run the city in addition

MR. W. CALLAN: to the paid Council. Was that the reason? Perhaps another possible explanation would be it was in St. John's and in the urban areas of this Province that the PC strength has always been. Or at least it was, back in 1974. Perhaps the Premier now, now that we have taken one of the St. John's seats and, of course, Mr. Crosbie was very weak in his St. John's seat back in 1975, provincially, so there was a lot of Liberal following there then and, of course, that came in full force when we elected a Member in St. John's, perhaps the Premier would go a little bit further, rather than just adding one additional seat to the legislature, perhaps now he will decide to subtract some from St. John's and redistribute them around the areas of this Province where he thinks the PC vote might be a bit higher next time around. Now I can hear the Premier's answer if he bothers to answer at all. We had an indication of that during the oral question period. You see, Mr. Speaker, what happens is - when one does not have an answer, or when one does not have a reasonable explanation, you know what you do then is drag in red herrings, barrels of them sometimes, you drag in red herrings. Well, asking that question is like asking this and asking something else. You see, rather than getting down to saying, well, the reason we did it was this and here and that and so on, no, no, you drag in a red herring and you go back and you talk about the former administration and you talk about something else. It will be interesting to hear the Premier's answer. Why, and the question is simple, why were these seats added in St. John's? I put forth a couple of propositions, possible

MR. CALLAN: reasons. Why was Labrador not considered worth adding additional seats to back in 1974? Why is it now in 1979 that Labrador has become so important? Mr. Speaker, one of the election promises, I believe, one of the leadership promises, I think that is the reason, and that is the only reason and there may be votes to be gotten from that. Anyway, I will let the Premier take his five minutes and respond. Why has Labrador become so important all of a sudden? Why was it not important back in 1974?

MR. SPEAKER: Before recognizing the hon. the Premier I would welcome to the galleries on behalf of all hon. members ten visiting athletes from Winnipeg who are here accompanied by Mr. Mike McInnis. I know all hon. members join me in welcoming you here.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I think the young people in the gallery are speed skaters and unlike the issue that the hon. member for Bellevue just raised, I will not skate around the issue, I will be very germane to the issue at hand. If the question, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. member is asking is why did not the Government in 1974 add additional representation in this House for Labrador. Well, additional representation for Labrador was added in 1974 - was added. What we are doing now, Mr. Speaker, is adding even more because everybody around the Province, and I think most people on the other side of the House as well as this side, recognized the growing importance that Labrador is playing in the whole bunch of areas of our society. So, right from the start - I have just been informed that from the start of Confederation there was only one seat for Labrador.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

it was increased to three, then to three and one-half. Now it is going up again to another seat as of this Bill that will come before the House very soon. So we are adding additional representation to a part of the Province which is starting to open up, where we are beginning to identify different regions who have different economic problems. The question, Mr. Speaker, was why were so many seats added in St. John's. I think if anybody looks at the re-distribution at that time, I do not think there was even an argument against the number of seats that were arranged for the Metropolitan Area in St. John's because of the population density. In the Labrador case, we are doing it because of geographic reasons but there is also a population argument to be used in the more urban centres, and I do not think that anybody argues

PREMIER PECKFORD: that the districts now covered in the St. John's Metropolitan Area are reasonable. There are some boundary problems where one side of the streets are in one St. John's district and the other side of the streets are in another district. That has to be resolved and straightened out and will be because under the Act that was passed through the House, there has to be a revision of this every so many years - every ten years - and, of course, three years from now that will come up again and these anomalies will be straightened out and things will even be made more equitable.

So if the question is, "Why did we not have additional representation in Labrador in 1974?", the answer is we did. What we are doing now is even adding more because we see a new reality; we see greater progression and, you know, more attention has to be paid to Labrador. So we did it in 1974; we are doing it again now in 1979. If the question has to deal with St. John's seats, everybody agrees that the present number of seats in St. John's is a reasonable number. There are some anomalies and they have to be corrected.

Thirdly, let the hon. member for Bellevue (Mr. Callan) recognize that his colleagues on the other side in consideration of the bill that will come up in the House very shortly, where we tried to even assist some of the members on the other side to provide more rural representation, they are of the opinion that the bill should just reflect an additional seat in Labrador and not correct at this point in time the anomalies that exist there, even though I am willing to consider some changes to reflect better representation in districts which we all recognize to be a part of the party opposite. So we are being extremely fair, both in rural parts of the Province as we are in urban, so

PREMIER PECKFORD: the case that the hon. member for Bellevue (Mr. Callan) is trying to make falls really on deaf ears because it does not really stand the light of day and under scrutiny when we talk about additional representation in Labrador - we did it in 1974 - we are doing it now - the St. John's seats are reasonable - number of seats - although there are some anomalies there. So I do not think the hon. member's argument is at all fair nor can stand any great scrutiny and I am sorry to inform him that this party over here and this Government will continue to try to reflect a reasonable atmosphere, if you will, as it relates to new seats being developed around the Province to give people more representation.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion that is before the House is that this House now adjourn. Is the House ready for question? Those in favour 'aye' - contrary 'nay'. Carried. This House stands adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, 10:00 a.m.