

PRELIMINARY

UNEDITED

TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

FOR THE PERIOD:

3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5, 1980

The House met at 3.00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please! I am sure hon. members would like to welcome to the galleries today several groups of students and teachers from the district of Fortune-Hermitage, from the Victoria High School in Gaultois, the Seal Cove Intergrated School in Seal Cove and the John Watkins Central High School in Hermitage. Welcome!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I have distributed - I think it is distributed-a statement that I want to give now and I want to apologize. When the copies were being taken off some of the back-up information was not copied to go with each statement so it will be copied momentarily so that some of the back-up information will be a part of it.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to respond to statements made by the Auditor General in his report for the financial year ending the 31st of March 1979. Various ministers will over the next number of days be dealing with the matters which are relevant to their departments raised by the Auditor General. Today, tomorrow, Thursday, and hopefully by Friday we can have the responses to all the comments made by the Auditor General on the various departments clearly on the table of the House.

Today I want to deal specifically with items number 27 and 28 on page 21 entitled Executive Council. First, Mr. Speaker, let me say I was aware that both items mentioned were under close examination by the Auditor General. Obviously I could not take any action until his report was

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PREMIER PECKFORD:                   tabled in this House, although  
on a number of occasions I could add that I thought perhaps  
I should but then, on reflection, I did not know what the final  
version of the Auditor General's Report would be, so then I  
thought it better to wait until the report became public and  
then to take what action I could after that.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Obviously, I could not take any action until his report was tabled in this House. Now, however, action can be taken. Second, let me say I believe the Auditor General is correct in his judgement on both expenditures: Public funds were used to pay for activities which turned out to be political rather than governmental.

Item 27 - this expenditure of \$56,000 was paid to Devine Advertising Systems Limited after approval had been given by Cabinet and Treasury Board, and I shall very soon have copies of the Treasury Board and the Cabinet Minute in Council and the contract and the presentation of a memorandum to Executive Council which will sort of clear up the legitimacy or otherwise of the approvals when they were given. Fifty-six thousand dollars was paid to Devine Advertising Systems Limited after approval had been given by Cabinet and Treasury Board. In addition, the contract was signed between Devine Advertising Systems Limited and the government. However, what was approved as a legitimate government expense consistent with approval given by Treasury Board and Cabinet, proved not to be what was received. In fact, the work performed was political, not governmental. It can be argued, I guess, that parts of the work done by this company was in 'the gray area' and that parts of the work therefore was more governmental than political. However, overall, my judgement - and I do not have all the reports that were submitted by that company - is that the work was political. There is no question about that. There are a number of parts of the overall that might be in the gray area, but overall there is no question that it was political. Consequently I intend to do all in my power to have this expenditure recovered. And we can later, Mr. Speaker, get on to the various alternatives that are open to government so to do.

Item 28 - once again, this expenditure was political and improper. McConnell Advertising was paid for work at a P.C. convention.

One of my first acts on assuming the Premiership was to examine the payments to McConnell Advertising. As a result, a freeze was

PREMIER PECKFORD: placed on further payments that the company said the government owed until additional justification was supplied, and there are still outstanding claims that have not been paid.

At the present moment McConnell. Advertising has claims outstanding which government has not paid. It is my intention to have government recover the \$20,885 paid to McConnell on this item. This perhaps can be done through monies now owing to the company. In any case, everything will be done to ensure that the Public Treasury and the people of Newfoundland recover this loss.

In addition to these actions, Mr. Speaker, I have today written the Chairman and I would imagine the Chairman has the letter now and members of the Public Accounts Committee - I have written the Chairman and the members of the Public Accounts Committee requesting that the Committee give the highest priority to these items when the Committee meets on this Report.

Mr. Speaker, I want to assure this hon. House, as I did last session, that this administration is committed to open and honest government. Now I regret, even though it is not part of the statement, that I had to make this statement today obviously because it affects a previous time and perhaps other individuals, but since I have taken over I have tried, and all of the ministers have, and I think we can be proven to be right on that, that this administration is committed to open and honest government. To this end I am totally and absolutely committed, and I table copies of the Order in Council issued - and I am sorry that the copies were not given out; it was my fault because I had it put on another part of my desk and when the copies were done during dinner they did not realize that this was supposed to be part of it - it is Minute in Council 791-'78, which you can get a copy of from the Table.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Memorandum to Executive Council by the then President of Treasury Board requesting the contract but in terms and conditions that were legitimate and governmental that the reports that came in were not - and a copy of the contract as a part of the company. I do not know if there is any other information right now that I can provide but I will provide any and all information that I can scrounge to the Public Accounts Committee and to anybody else who wants to see it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. D. JAMIESON: Mr. Speaker, I want to borrow a phrase from the President of the Privy Council: 'This is a sad day for Newfoundland.' Here we have a situation where we have a government which has repeatedly said that it is, and again it is said in the statement today, committed to open and honest government. I do not wish to cast any aspersions upon the honesty and the integrity of the Premier and his

MR. D. JAMIESON: colleagues in making such a statement, but, Mr. Speaker, this is a very deplorable revelation and one cannot help but ask whether it would have seen the light of day under the commitment to open an honest government, if in fact it had not been disclosed in the Auditor General's Report. That, I think, is one of the fundamental questions which really has to be answered.

The Premier has indicated, and I think with some justice, that he was awaiting the actual wording, but I believe there will be other statements this day which will indicate that on other matters, which the Auditor General reported upon yesterday and which under normal and approved practice he had already conveyed to the Department's concerned actions were, in fact, initiated before the report came out. I am anticipating what I expect will be a statement and the hon. Premier has said that over the next days there will be indications as to what actions have been started or are being contemplated with regard to various comments of the Auditor General.

But, Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that that is the important issue here. It seems to me that we have, in this statement by the Premier, another indication of the determination of this administration to put as much distance as it possibly can from its predecessor, and to suggest that in some way or other a curtain rang down following their leadership convention and that all previous actions and all previous conduct were separate from and distinct from what has started with the assumption of leadership by the hon. the Premier.

Mr. Speaker, one can at least admire the Premier's candor in indicating that this whole issue was one which was, in fact, approved by the Cabinet of which, in fact, he was a member. I am not privy to whether he was a member of Treasury Board at the time or not -

PREMIER PECKFORD: Remembering always that when the accompanying documentation is copied - now you are misleading - because the accompanying documentation bears no relevance to the subsequent reports that came in under that authorization.

MR. D. JAMIESON: Then I will reserve any such criticism until such time as we have seen the documentation. In fairness to me, Mr. Speaker, I think it ought to be pointed out that I am operating on the basis of the statement which the Premier himself made in the House and which we have all heard him speak. And the truth of the matter

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MR. D. JAMIESON: is that indeed it was a governmental decision and therefore no matter how much it may now be a question of saying we are going to recover the funds or it was inappropriate or it was an improper kind of action,



MR. JAMIESON: the truth of the matter is that it did in fact take place not once but twice. Now, Mr. Speaker, one thing which is clear, apart from the now getting to be quite desperate efforts by the government to separate itself from the predecessor administration, is the fact also that the government is seeking, as it were, to cut these things off at the pass by making open declarations as soon as the Auditor General's Report is presented and then gratuitously saying that we are asking the Public Accounts Committee to investigate. What else is the Public Accounts Committee set up for? And has anybody got any reasonable expectation that they would not in fact automatically put this kind of issue at the very top of their examination?

I repeat therefore, Mr. Speaker, first of all that the Public Accounts Committee will, I have no doubt, members on both sides will want to deal with this issue, but I also want to make it perfectly clear that this party, the Opposition, feels no constraint as a result of this statement today from pursuing this matter in the normal way through Question Period and in any other appropriate manner that is open to us, and that if in any sense it is anticipated that this will put it on the shelf, as it were, until such time as the Public Accounts Committee gets to deal with it, then that is a false assumption and we intend to pursue this matter very vigorously. I repeat, Mr. Speaker, that it is a sad day because once again we have evidence of why it is that the public of this Province has, apparently, a reasonable and legitimate concern for having a kind of disregard and disrespect for all politicians and this is the very kind of thing which the Premier has on repeated occasions said he wants to avoid. It is the very thing which we on this side have been seeking, through our co-operation, to bring about. But it is a most blatant form on the surface at least - and when I get the other documentation if there is anything to the contrary I will be more than happy to say so - but it is the most blatant form of

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MR. JAMIESON: political patronage and political manoeuvring and the utilization, by the Premier's own admission, of public funds for political purposes. And this I think is something which the Public Accounts Committee will certainly wish to examine, but I also emphasize again that we will wish on this side to pursue through the various avenues that are open to us.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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Tape No. 109

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MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Mr. Speaker, I have, I must say, a somewhat dull and technical—because it deals largely with accounting procedures but, be that as it may — statement with respect to the Auditor General's criticism of certain practices within the area of responsibility of the Department of Justice.

The first heading deals with the Auditor General's Report under the heading of Assets and Liabilities, pages 7 and 8 in his report, notes 13 and 14. A recent meeting between senior officials of this department and senior officials of the department of the Auditor General discussed the weaknesses now identified in the report. The Auditor General's staff advised of a number of measures that have already been taken to remedy the deficiencies and the accounting practices and it was acknowledged that substantial progress had been made in recent years. It was recognized that a substantial revision of court accounting and administrative procedures was required because of the tremendous increase over the years in court activity and this had not been accompanied by corresponding increase in human and physical resources. Consequently many current systems are outdated and are presently under review. Two positive measures have been taken to correct the deficiencies in the existing system. A new accounting system for the provincial court has been designed in collaboration with the Auditor General and the Internal Audit Division of the Department of Finance, and, secondly, a pilot project at one provincial court, and that is at Holyrood, shows the system to be practical and one that embraces acceptable accounting practices. The operation of the Traffic Court in St. John's has been changed from a manual to an automated operation which it is hoped will greatly

MR. OTTENHEIMER: improve efficiency and capacity and, it is hoped, will satisfy the concerns of both the Department of Justice and of the Auditor General.

The Auditor General has comments also under the heading current account revenue, page 18 in his report, note 24. And there I wish to inform hon. members that the Department of Finance, Central Cashier's Office are presently installing what is described here as a sophisticated cash register - so I am glad to see my colleague has sophisticated cash registers-for the joint use of the Registry of Deeds, Companies and Securities and the Vital Statistics Division of the Department of Health. The Registry of Deeds, Companies and Securities has been instructed to prepare written procedures for the receipt and deposit of revenue and to devise a system for the joint use of the cash register. There is every indication and hope that the system can be developed and will remove the objections raised by the Auditor General.

The Auditor General also has comments on page 33, note 45. In this respect the accounting deficiencies in the Registry of Supreme Court Accounts results from a substantial increase in the number and value of estates administered by the registrar, an increase not matched by a corresponding increase in human and physical resources. Positive steps have been taken to bring the accounts to a current condition by the appointment of an accountant. The Auditor General will be asked to resume his audit at the earliest opportunity.

And finally, on page 34 the Auditor General has comments under note 46

MR. G. OTTENHEIMER:

pertaining to the department and there many of the deficiencies identified by the Auditor General in the provincial court accounting system have, in our opinion, been remedied by the introduction of an interim accounting system which will remain in effect until a completely new system which is currently being tested as a pilot project at Holyrood provincial court has been introduced to all provincial courts. The new system is expected to be acceptable to the Auditor General.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

The hon. the member for Grand Bank.

MR. L. THOMS:

Mr. Speaker, I am quite sure this is an oversight on the part of the Minister of Justice (Mr. G. Ottenheimer). Usually, especially in ones as technical as this - I notice the Premier passed one out, but -

MR. G. OTTENHEIMER: I sent the hon. gentleman a copy. In fact, one for the Leader of the Opposition and one for the hon. member.

MR. L. THOMS:

Well, Sir, it is not here. You did not bring one to me personally and it is not on my desk.

MR. G. OTTENHEIMER:

It was placed on the hon. gentleman's desk.

MR. L. THOMS:

Well, then, somebody took it. It is not on my desk.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. L. THOMS:

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, it is a fairly technical report. The Report of the Auditor General was passed out, I believe, yesterday afternoon. I have had an opportunity to look through it briefly. I must say that some of the things contained in there, particularly in connection with the Registry of the Supreme Court and with the Registry of Deeds - there is something like \$2 million, I believe, in fees going through the Registry of Deeds. And, you know, the thing that scares me is the opportunity that is there because of an inadequate system of accounting, well, for somebody to dip into the till. I mean, there is that - because there are no proper provisions for giving receipts. And receipts that



MR. THOMS: did, but they were running some three years behind all the time, and the Auditor General just does not have the staff to keep up with it. And I think this is one of the problems we see in this report and why we get such a report as this.

In the final analysis, of course, the university went out and got permission to hire their own accountants, their own auditors so that they could have up-to-date accounts. When I get the statement made by the minister I will certainly peruse it more carefully and I could probably have a private word on any of the matters contained therein.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. NEARY: Confession is good for the soul.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

DR. J. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I think you have recognized me.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

DR. J. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a brief statement concerning certain paragraphs relating directly to my department which were included in the report the Auditor General tabled yesterday. I do this knowing that the House would want to have as rapid a response as possible to the Auditor General's Report and the people of this Province also. I do regret that I do not at this moment have copies to give the hon. members opposite. I just had an opportunity to read this and review it immediately before coming to the House, and indeed I was a moment or so late, but as soon as I have read the report I will have copies made and circulated.

Paragraph 20, Mining and Mineral

Rights Tax . With respect to the non-payment of royalties, based on the escalation section of the statute, the Departments of Finance and Justice are and have been taking appropriate action through the courts to recover these amounts. I understand that litigation is still in progress. The matter of establishing the legal liability of the company for tax has been

DR. J. COLLINS: the subject of protracted correspondence and discussion amongst officials of the Department of Finance, Justice and Mines and Energy. Several submissions by the company's legal representatives were considered and referred to our legal advisors in Justice for comment. While the Department of Finance was eventually advised that the tax was payable, it was acknowledged by Justice officials that it would be exceedingly difficult to determine the amount of such tax. To date we have not been able to determine the amount, if any, of tax collectable. The examination of the records of the company concerned is continuing.

Paragraph 21, Forest Management Tax.

The Department of Finance, based on the information available to it, has issued assessments in all cases where the holders of parcels of forest lands or cutting rights



DR. J. COLLINS:

thereon have been identified. If the assessments are not paid in the prescribed time limit, the enforcement provisions of the act will be invoked and the lands in question will be subject to seizure.

The absence of a compulsory land registry system has seriously impeded the progress and identification of land holders. The Department of Finance has taken all actions open to it to collect the taxes due. Paragraph 22 - Retail Sales Tax - the last of the 17 new positions in the taxation division was filled in mid-February 1980. The effects of the addition of these new enforcement posts on the arrears situation has not yet been fully apparent, but the statistics received from the taxation division covering the month of December 1979 indicated a net decline in arrears of approximately two hundred thousand dollars. The total retail sales tax arrears at January 30, 1980, including interests and penalties, amounted to some \$11.2 million.

It should be noted that we have requested Treasury Board for authority to write off some \$2.2 million of arrears on retail sales tax which are considered to be un-collectable. These arrears were owed, in most cases, by companies which had become bankrupt and had no residual assets.

We have halted the escalation of retail sales tax arrears and have, as I indicated earlier, achieved a modest reduction in the last month. In order that the arrears are reviewed in a better perspective, I would like to inform the House that the revenues from retail sales taxes for the eleven months ending on 29th of February, 1980 totalled \$202,300,000.00. Our collection officers collected a total of \$6,017,000.00 of retail sales tax arrears for the ten months to 31st of January, 1980 and for the same period our tax auditors raised assessments of some \$9,850,000.00.

DR. J. COLLINS:

Paragraph 29 - Audit of the General

Service Payroll System - In late 1977 the Department of Finance instructed two professional accountants on its staff to investigate payroll procedures. Their report was submitted early in 1978 and a copy was forwarded to the Auditor General. Based on that report, the Department of Finance formulated certain procedures to correct some of its internal control weaknesses which the team had discovered and at the same time to provide government with a standardized payroll system.

DR. J. COLLINS: At about the same time, the Auditor General informed us that it was his intention to complete a full review of the pay system of government and had engaged a consultant to participate in the review. Because of the Auditor General's announced intention to review the payroll system, the department decided to postpone the implementation of the procedures recommended by its staff accountants pending the receipt of the findings of the Auditor General's review. When these findings were communicated to us, we again reviewed our own staff recommendations and concluded that if we proceeded to implement them, most of the weaknesses indicated in the Auditor General's review would be eliminated.

To put into place the recommended new procedures required, amongst other things, that new posts had to be created and the payroll division reorganized. The new positions must then be classified and finally filled through the Public Service Commission. All these things take considerable time to process and we have reached the stage when recruitment is about to commence. We hope to be able to implement the proposed changes in procedures early in the fiscal year 1980 - 1981.

I now table this report.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please! If I might, before I recognize the hon. the Leader of the Opposition, I think I should point out to hon. members that the Standing Orders, 53.1(4) states that on Wednesdays the question period shall commence not later than 3:30 p.m. Is there leave to proceed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: By leave.

MR. SPEAKER: By leave.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. D. JAMIESON: Mr. Speaker, we can begin the Question Period because in view of the absence of any copies for us over here, it is impossible to comment upon such a complex statement.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. D. JAMIESON: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. the Premier.

Would the hon. the Premier indicate to the House when the report of the Public Utilities Commission with regard to the proposed rate increases as recommended by them as, I believe, something of the order of 6 per cent is going to be considered, as I believe it must be, by Cabinet, and will he, in light of the almost unanimous desire on the part of consumers to forego or not to have to undertake this, another increase in the cost of living, will the government reject the recommendation of the Public Utilities Board?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Obviously, Mr. Speaker, I cannot respond one way or the other definitively on whether the government will reject or approve the increase sought that is a matter which will take discussion by Cabinet. The Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. L. Barry) just informed me that there is a submission from the power corporation and from the Department of Energy on its way to me now and within the next seven days we will, of course, discuss and debate the pro's and con's of the recommendations that the Public Utilities Board have made, and then obviously inform this hon. House of our decision. So, number one, within a week to ten days we will have that report before Cabinet and the decision made. Secondly, whether we will reject or approve

PREMIER PECKFORD:

that recommendation will remain unknown to any of us until such time as Cabinet has fully dealt with the recommendations and the repercussions that flow therefrom.

MR. D. JAMIESON: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): A supplementary, the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. D. JAMIESON: In view of the Premier's answer, for which I thank him, would he also, however, indicate, if he is in possession of the information-and perhaps the Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. L. Barry) might be the more appropriate one; I have no particular preference-what the deadline is, given the fact the bills must be made out and the process of assessing literally, I suppose, more than 100,000 households must be done? What is the point at which the word must come down from on high as to whether this government is going to be concerned for the consumers or whether it is going to allow the increase to go through?

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

MR. L. BARRY: Mr. Speaker, under the Electrical Power Control Act, Cabinet's decision must be made within fifteen days or else the report of the Public Utilities Board applies.

MR. D. JAMIESON: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. D. JAMIESON: Fifteen days of its receipt by, presumably, the appropriate minister, in this case the Minister of Mines and Energy?

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

MR. L. BARRY: There is some ambiguity in the legislation as to whether it is receipt by the minister or actual receipt by Cabinet. My objective is to have it within fifteen days of its receipt by me.

MR. D. JAMIESON: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): A final supplementary, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. D. JAMIESON: I am sure that the hon. minister must know the timetable. Given the fact that the billing procedures have to start, and presumably this too is one of his new sophisticated calculators or whatever it was the Minister of Justice (Mr. G. Ottenheimer) referred to, so there must be a deadline apart altogether from the legal one, so that does the minister know at what point-if the bills are to go cut under their old form or their new form, what is the deadline under which he is functioning?

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

MR. L. BARRY: Mr. Speaker, I have had no indication from the Hydro Corporation that if the decision of Cabinet is made within the fifteen days set out in the Act that there will be any problem from their point of view.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Justice (Mr. G. Ottenheimer), Sir. In view of the startling revelations in the Auditor General's Report just tabled in the House yesterday, and in view of the fact that that is not the first time that these matters were raised in this House by members on the Opposition benches, and in view of the fact that the government set up smoke screens and diversionary tactics to distract from these matters when they were raised in this House last session and the session before, would the Minister of Justice indicate to the House what advice if any, he has given his colleagues in

MR. S. NEARY: connection with the matter that was the subject of a Ministerial Statement by the Premier in the House today?

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. G. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, bearing in mind obviously that this material came officially to attention yesterday afternoon, I have instructed officials of the Department of Justice to consult with appropriate officials in the Department of Finance and to advise upon what means, what legal means there are to recuperate the money in question. Now, the outcome of that obviously I do not know; that is being looked into.

MR. S. NEARY: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary, the hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. gentleman knows and anybody with an ounce of common sense in this House knows, there is a possibility of criminal charges being laid in this particular case. If it was done in private business or industry or outside of this House, or even inside of the House, it would be considered to be fraudulent. I have here in front of me the memorandum that was made to Cabinet and, as the Premier indicated in his Ministerial Statement, the money was not used for the purpose for which it was asked for and approved for by Cabinet and that, in my opinion, Mr. Speaker -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The hon. member has a question? I direct him to ask it.

MR. S. NEARY: - is fraudulent and I ask the hon. Minister of Justice if he will ask either his officials in the Department of Justice or the RCMP Commercial Crime and Fraud Squad to - and this is not over-reacting; this has

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MR. S. NEARY:                   been going on too long and has  
been gotten away with too long, - would he ask to have a police  
investigation or set up a Commission of Inquiry under the  
Public Inquiries Act to have this whole matter investigated?

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):           The hon. Minister of Justice.



MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, to put the matters into perspective, that this material came to the attention of the House and myself yesterday and since then I have instructed officials of the Department of Justice to discuss with, and to consult with officials of the Department of Finance to recommend and to identify what measures are available with respect to recouperating the money.

The information now available, that is, the information available to me, is the same as the information available to all hon. members and that is on page twenty-one in the Report of the Auditor General. That information - one does not know what if any additional information may become available - but on that information I am not aware that there are any grounds for criminal prosecution or police investigation. I am not and nobody can, because nobody knows what additional information may or may not become available. The information as it is now suggests the possibility - I certainly do not wish to prejudge, it would be quite improper, you know - the possibility that there is a breach of the Finance Administration Act, which is quite separate. But the information I now have suggests that that may or may not be the case. But there is no - the information available to me at this time does not suggest reasonable, probable grounds for action within the criminal area.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A final supplementary, the hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, we cannot have two sets of standards in this Province. People have been charged with fraud for less than we see here before us, much less. And what I am asking the minister - I accept the Premier's ministerial statement, it was very good. It is a good political manoeuvre and a good political tactic, but in my opinion this whole matter should be investigated to see if criminal charges should be laid and I am asking the Minister of Justice in all fairness to the people of this Province, and for the protection of the public treasury, that he ask - maybe no charges will be laid but that he ask for an investigation to look into the possibility, to see if criminal charges should

MR. NEARY: be laid in this particular matter and if not we will just let the matter rest. But I do not think it should just be stopped at the Premier handing it over to the Public Accounts Committee. They are going to do their job anyway.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

The hon. member, I believe, has a question?

I would direct him to ask the question.

MR. NEARY: Well, Mr. Speaker, you are allowed a preamble, are you not?

MR. SPEAKER: You are not allowed to express opinions according to the Standing Orders.

MR. NEARY: Well, Sir, I am asking the hon. Minister of Justice, in all fairness to the people of this Province and as Attorney General, not as Minister of Justice, as Attorney General and Minister of Justice - or Minister of Justice rather, not as Attorney General; because it is as Attorney General, I think, the minister gives advice to the Cabinet; as Minister of Justice he enforces the administration of justice in this Province - in all fairness to the people of this Province and for the protection of the public treasury, will the hon. gentleman undertake to launch an investigation, a police investigation into this whole sad affair to see if criminal charges should be laid?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, there may be a matter of semantics or a difference of language, I am not sure. What I did say was that the information I now have does not give me reasonable and probable grounds to order a police investigation. I am aware of the fact that there may well be other information, or there may not be other information, but the police investigation comes when there is reasonable, probable grounds to suspect a breach of the Criminal Code, not of any law. There are other remedies for other things.

MR. NEARY: What is fraud?

MR. OTTENHEIMER: It is the Department of Finance and the Comptroller General who is responsible for actions under breach of the Financial Administration Act. I am not saying there will not be a police investigation, I am not saying there will be a police investigation, what I am saying is that these decisions have to be -

MR. NEARY: You have to order it.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Now please, the hon. gentleman -

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

MR. OTTENHEIMER: It is a fairly complex matter

MR. OTTENHEIMER: and it is easy to be misunderstood in it. A judgement one makes in that respect is based on the knowledge one has. The knowledge that I have now, as of this moment, does not suggest a police investigation. The knowledge I may have at a different time, I will have to act within that context. I can only speak with respect to the knowledge that I have now.

It would be quite wrong to make a judgement anticipated on knowledge which might or might not become available, which might or might not exist. But the knowledge I have now -

MR. NEARY: How do you get the knowledge?

MR. OTTENHEIMER: - does not provide reasonable and probably grounds for a police enquiry.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER(Simms): The hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans. I indicated a final supplementary - unless the hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans (Mr. Flight) wishes to yield to a supplementary.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I am dissatisfied with the answer given by the hon. gentleman and I wish to debate the matter tomorrow afternoon during the late show.

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

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Lands and Forests and it arises from the Report of the Auditor General with regard to the non-collection of the forest management tax.

My first question, Mr. Speaker; the Forest Land Management Tax was proclaimed in 1974 and it goes, I think, from the sublime to the ridiculous, or vice versa. The Auditor General has to report to this

MR. FLIGHT: House that in 1979 certain companies, certain holders of land exceeding 300 acres were not identified. Some were identified in 1979. In the previous five years, after the proclaiming of the legislation, there were still unidentified owners. So would the minister indicate to the House whether or not all the holders of land in excess of 300 acres have now been identified?

MR. SPEAKER(Simms): The hon. the Minister of Forests, Resources and Lands.

MR. POWER: Mr. Speaker, I will be making a full ministerial statement tomorrow on the contents of the Auditor General's Report.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary question. The hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, in the Auditor General's Report it is also indicated that of the at least eleven holders of these in excess of 300 acre lots, four or five have specifically ignored any request from the Department of Finance, or Forestry or whatever department is responsible, to pay the assessments that were applied against them under this legislation.

Now the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), in his ministerial statement, said that if the assessments are not paid within a prescribed period of time certain action - enforcement provisions of the Act - will be taken. Would the minister indicate what the prescribed period of time is since this legislation has been in effect for five years? The prescribed limit of time, is it in excess of five years or what is, indeed, the prescribed limit of time? And will the minister indicate to the House now what he intends to do about the companies which are ignoring the legislation. these holders of excess property over

MR. FLIGHT: 300 acres - what is the prescribed length of time, and what does the minister intend to do about collecting the arrears accrued to this Province in the past five years?

MR. SPEAKER(Simms): The hon. the Minister of Forests, Resources and Lands.

MR. POWER: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated to the original question, we will have a full ministerial statement tomorrow answering those questions which the member has just asked.

MR. FLIGHT: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A final supplementary. The hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans, followed by the hon. the member for Lewisporte (Mr. White).

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, as the minister knows, that Land Management Act was enacted in this Province more to guarantee good forest management of the lands held by the major paper companies and other holders than it was for the purpose of producing revenue for the Province. I want to ask the minister if, in his opinion, the two paper companies in particular, where it is a known fact they are holding land, sitting on lands that have been exempt, that the Province has exempted from tax under that Land Management Act - and that would indicate that the Department of Forestry believes that the land management, and forest management, as practiced by those paper companies is, indeed, perfect, since if it were not there would have to be tax paid - is the minister satisfied that the Land Management Tax, as practiced by these various paper companies in this Province, or other holders of large tracts of land, is indeed perfect to a point that no Land Management Taxes should be paid on those holdings?

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. the Minister of Lands and Forests.

MR. C. POWER: Mr. Speaker, again, as I indicated in response to the first and second questions, tomorrow there will be a full Ministerial Statement discussing all aspects of collection of and non-collection of taxes as it relates to the Land Management Act and Tax Act. That will be made tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the member for Lewisporte.

MR. F. WHITE: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. L. Barry). I wonder if the minister could tell the House what security arrangements or other arrangements are made with oil drilling companies to ensure that details of findings or discoveries are kept as close to the government as possible and that the results are not made known outside of Newfoundland before they are made known here?

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

MR. L. BARRY: That is a good question, Mr. Speaker. The situation, not just with respect to oil companies but with respect to mining companies or any resource company that spends considerable amounts of money on obtaining information about provincial resources, is that this information becomes proprietary information, or property of the companies involved, subject to the laws of this Province, which means that we cannot, for example, distribute the information freely to others without following our regulations and our laws or without the agreement of the companies concerned. Any release of information, therefore, is usually co-ordinated and released at the same time by us, as by the oil companies - or for mining companies, the same procedure would apply. However, Mr. Speaker, these are large organizations. There are a considerable number of individuals within those organizations who end up with information the same as government ends up with information concerning the exploration that is going on offshore.

MR. L. BARRY:

Quite frankly, I have been concerned that there have been leaks of information, and this, Mr. Speaker, I can see - my concern is caused by the fact that before we are authorized or have reached agreement with the companies to have information released to the general public, you can see a day or two days before the announcement the stock market beginning to react or beginning to move.

So, Mr. Speaker, we believe we have succeeded in keeping a very tight and confidential control of information within the government, and we have very few people who have access to the information. I do not believe that there have been leaks from government employees or anybody within the provincial government, but I have had concerns that there have been leaks from areas where the information has gone. And the information does not just go to one company; there is a consortium of companies, as you know, operating out there.

It is unfortunate, Mr. Speaker.

It, I think, justifies the earlier statement I made that anybody who is not familiar with the stock market should be very cautious in getting involved, because the ordinary individual does not always know what is going on behind the scenes.

If I can get any evidence that there is direct, deliberate or even negligent release of information in an improper manner, I will be making that information known to the regulatory agencies such as those regulating the Toronto Stock Exchange, the Vancouver Stock Exchange, the Montreal Stock Exchange, the New York Stock Exchange, and it is from those bodies that then the penalties will flow and the practices and



MR. BARRY: procedures will be brought into effect to see that that type of thing does not happen in the future. But if the hon. member can give me any evidence that there is any such deliberate or negligent precipitous release of information I will act on it immediately.

MR. WHITE: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): A supplementary. The hon. member for Lewisporte.

MR. WHITE: Mr. Speaker, the reason I asked the question was because it has become obvious to a lot of investors in Newfoundland who have told me that the stock market starts to go, futures are being bought up days and days before the government makes its announcement here in Newfoundland, which leaves the Newfoundland investor again on the tail end of the stick. We do not even have the oil yet and yet Newfoundland is already losing out because of this situation. Could the minister tell the House if there is any other way that he can make the announcement faster or leak it from his department or do something that would give Newfoundlanders a fair chance at this game?

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

MR. BARRY: Mr. Speaker, it has been put to me before that if this sort of thing is going to go on then the leaks should come from us so that people in this Province can take advantage of them before they can take advantage of leaks otherwise.

MR. NEARY: Why do you not do like Frank use to do (inaudible)

MR. BARRY: I do not think that we can act in that type of irresponsible manner. We have to respect the confidentiality of information. I might say that from what I have been hearing the local investors have not been any slower to get access to some of these leaks than your non-local

MR. BARRY:

investors.

MR. WHITE:

They are not getting them from Newfoundland though. They are getting them from Calgary.

MR. BARRY:

That is right. As far as I know it is not coming from Newfoundland. There are sources on the Mainland that they are plugged into. I regret it, but that is the situation. The stock market regulations are there. The use of insider information to promote your own stock or to make money behind the scenes is illegal. Any corporate officials caught engaging in such an activity are subject to severe penalty and if we can find out that this is in fact happening we will take severe action to stop it.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

The hon. member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Social Services and it concerns the Paddon Memorial Home in Happy Valley, Goose Bay. It is my understanding that a situation has developed in Happy Valley whereby the Director of Nursing and the rest of the nursing staff have submitted their resignations due to a conflict between the administrator and the nursing staff at Patton Memorial Home. I am wondering if the minister could bring us up to date on that particular situation in Happy Valley?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Minister of Social Services.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. Minister of Social Services.

MR. HICKEY:

Mr. Speaker, I can confirm that there is a problem in Happy Valley Senior Citizens' Home. The Director of Nursing has resigned. The three staff nurses - I am not sure that they have resigned, they have indicated

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MR. HICKEY: a resignation in support of the Director. There are thirty-two residents in that home, two receiving nursing care, and those two have already, as I understand it, been moved to the hospital. Medications are being dispensed by the public health nurse. The dispute is between the nursing staff and management. We do not have complete details but it centers around the question of whether the institution should be run on a medical basis wholly and solely or whether it should be run on a basis of social need. I just want to state that the position of this government with regard to senior citizens in such institutions is that the social needs should certainly be filled, the medical needs should be filled, but that people in such institutions should be allowed to live

MR. HICKEY: their lives to the fullest capacity that they can, to the fullest capability that they can, and any suggestion or any effort to make a kind of hospital out of a senior citizens' home is certainly rejected outright. It seems that this is the area of disagreement and, as I understand it in talking to the Administrator today, there is no reason or cause for concern on behalf of relatives who have people in that institution and it is hoped that the matter will be resolved shortly.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): A supplementary, the hon. member for Fogo.

MR. TULK: I think, Mr. Speaker, that the minister should be aware of the fact that I believe the nurses have submitted two weeks notice and they are working on that notice. I would also like to ask the minister if any of the other staff employed in that hospital, the non-medical staff perhaps, are in any way involved in the dispute and if they have submitted any grievances to the Board of Directors of that home, and, if so, what the reaction of the Board of Directors was?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Social Services.

MR. HICKEY: I am not aware, Mr. Speaker, of the area now that the hon. gentleman is involved in in relation to his question. As he can appreciate, those institutions operate for the most part at arms length from government and government only becomes involved when it is absolutely essential. It is an inter-faith institution -

MR. NEARY: What about the licencing?

MR. HICKEY: - run by a board of directors. Why do you not put a cover on it, 'Steve'? It is run by a board of directors and we only get involved really when a crisis situation, or when a situation bordering on a crisis situation develops where we are asked to, or where we have to get involved for the general well-being of the residents. Now I am not aware that there might have been grievances, I am not aware that there have been; I have certainly not been and my staff

MR. HICKEY: have not been made aware of it. This is a matter that would be dealt with by the board of directors and/or the administrator. But I will undertake to find out.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): A final supplementary, the hon. member for Fogo.

MR. TULK: I thank the minister for his commitment to indeed look into the situation and see what the problem is between the administrator and the nursing staff and also to look in and see if the board of directors are paying any attention to the nurses' grievances there. I just want to ask the minister one final supplementary and that is in his opinion has the situation reached crisis proportion in Happy Valley, in the Paddon Memorial Home?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Social Services.

MR. HICKEY: No, Mr. Speaker, As I have indicated already, our discussions with the people at the home indicate that everything is basically normal. The people who require nursing care have been transferred to the hospital. This is the latest information that I have. The dispensing of drugs to residents who require them is being done by the public health nurses in the area and therefore those are the critical areas that are affected by the nursing staff at this particular time. So there is no crisis situation that I am aware of.

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

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, just a quick question in view of the fact the time is almost up, a question to the Minister of Labour and Manpower. I wonder if the minister can inform the House just what is happening to this committee that was supposed to look into minimum wages in the Province? Have they submitted a report yet or when does he expect a report - this year, next year? Just what is the situation?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Labour and Manpower.

MR. DINN: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for asking me the question. As a matter of fact, yesterday afternoon the Labour Standards Board presented their report to me on

MR. J. DINN: minimum wages in the Province.  
I will be reviewing that report along with the information that will be provided to me by the chairman of that board and when I do, of course, I will bring the report and make a submission to government and government will deal with it at that time.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!  
The time for Oral Questions has expired. I should bring to the attention of hon. members once again, Standing Orders 53.1(4) which further states that the ordinary daily routine of business shall end not later than 4:00 p.m. and at that time the Private Members motion shall be called by the Speaker. So unless there is agreement by the House to continue with the routine business, I will therefore have to call the Orders of the Day. By leave.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No, no!  
MR. NEARY: We have already lost an hour.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: Motion 1.  
The hon. the member for Torngat Mountains.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. G. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, I move on the resolution.

WHEREAS there is a lack of specialized medical expertise in Labrador and on occasions patients are required to receive medical attention from Specialists on the Island portion of the Province which is only accessible by air and which is also extremely costly;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador make available ambulance services for patients in Labrador comparable to services provided on the Island portion of the Province.

Mr. Speaker, I may go a little bit further and say in respect to students from Gaultois and other areas in Hermitage Bay that there are remote areas on the Island portion of the Province that have similar medical disadvantages as Labrador has. So although this resolution is particularly dealing with Labrador, I want to assure this

MR. G. WARREN: hon. House that I am also including in my resolution any remote area in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, in 1949 Newfoundland became a Province of the Dominion of Canada. At that time, Labrador was included as a part of the Province of Newfoundland and at that time and up to today, Labrador is still a part of this Province, and under no circumstances should it be treated differently.

Mr. Speaker, back in 1974, the hon. Dr. A. T. Rowe, Minister of Health, introduced an ambulance programme for the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. The first paragraph in the introduction of this paper states: "The progress of the new programme is not only to make ambulance service more readily available to our people but to remove any real financial hardship to users of ambulance services by making them available at low cost." Now, Mr. Speaker, that was in 1974, nearly six years ago. Since that time we have had two or three provincial elections and we still have the same government in power. However, this same government has not changed this paper, is still using a discriminatory attitude towards people who need medical attention in Labrador and other remote areas of the Province.

Mr. Speaker, when a patient in Grand Falls has

MR. G. WARREN: to come into the Janeway Hospital - I am talking, probably, about a ten-year old child now - is transferred into the Janeway Hospital in St. John's, that patient's parents, whether the child is escorted by a nurse or by the parents, that family has a burden of a maximum of fifty dollars. That is a maximum of fifty dollars. Probably it could be down so far as twenty, twenty-five, thirty or forty, but a maximum of fifty dollars.

If a patient in Black Tickle, Labrador has to be referred into the Janeway Hospital, that patient, again if it is a ten-year old kid, that patient has to pay air transportation into Goose Bay. From Goose Bay, usually the patient will be taken to the Melville Hospital in Goose Bay by ambulance, which is forty dollars more by the ambulance in Goose Bay. The following day, if the patient needs to be referred to St. John's, the following day that patient will be transferred again by ambulance from the Melville Hospital to the airport at another forty dollars. Then that patient, depending on the condition of the patient, if it is a patient with broken legs or a stretcher case, it means four seats on EPA. It means a seat for the escort and three seats for the passenger, for the stretcher case.

Now, I think we all know that the transportation from Goose Bay to St. John's by EPA per seat is somewhere in the vicinity of \$125.00; one way, that is just one way. Now, the patient gets in there and the ambulance will come and pick the patient up at the St. John's airport and take the patient down to the Janeway Hospital. Another fee. All in all, that patient from a little community on the Labrador Coast, probably the family only has an income of eight or ten thousand dollars, will pay in the vicinity, one way, of approximately \$800.00 to \$1,000.00, if it is an extreme case, a stretcher case.

Now, Mr. Speaker, for a similar patient in Grand Falls, the family pays \$50.00 - a patient in Black Tickle, Lab-





MR. WARREN: some congratulations to this government and in particular to the International Grenfell Association that on the coastal section of Labrador the IGA does have an ambulance service going from the small nursing communities into a hospital for just minor surgery. Now this is in place, fine, but you only can get as far as Goose Bay or as far as St. Anthony, depending on which area on the Labrador Coast you live. However, out of these approximately 1,000 patients, 350 of those patients, give or take a few, are referred by doctors in Central Labrador. I am talking about Labrador City, Wabush, Churchill Falls and Goose - Happy Valley. Approximately 350 patients per year are referred to hospitals either in St. Anthony, St. John's or Corner Brook, wherever else.

Now, out of those 350 patients that are referred, one out of every six to eight are stretcher cases. One out of every six or eight are stretcher cases, which mean this is where the crux of the burden is. The cost is for four seats on Eastern Provincial Airways.

Mr. Speaker, in the last session of the House I made a few references in my maiden speech to Labrador. I think I gave a fairly good speech concerning the problems in Labrador and the hon. House Leader on the government side got up and he started waving his hands and talking of all the recommendations that this government has approved in a royal commission on Labrador. I believe he named pretty well two-thirds of the recommendations were approved and were acted upon. And, Mr. Speaker, there is a recommendation in there, made up in 1974 by the royal commission and the recommendation says, "The commission strongly recommends that the Province provide medically authorized air transportation service free within the Province to all residents of Labrador." Now, Mr. Speaker, that is a recommendation passed by the royal commission which cost this government a heck of a lot of money. Now here is a recommendation that affects

MR. WARREN: every single person of these 38,000, because we do not know what day any person in Labrador or any other part of this Island will need medical attention outside of Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to refer to different parts of this Royal Commission to show the hon. House why the Royal Commission made such a recommendation. One paragraph says, "Helicopter service cannot replace fixed wing aircraft. However, it is highly desirable to have helicopters available to areas only seasonably inhabited and to reach settlements without airstrips at break-up and at freeze-up times." Now, Mr. Speaker, we have several helicopter companies in Goose Bay, we have Labrador Airways with a fleet of aircraft in Goose Bay, but these are not available to pick up medical cases unless there is some reassurance that those companies will be paid for the medic's way back.

Mr. Speaker, in Manitoba, in the Northern part of Manitoba there are approximately 100,000 people. The Government of Manitoba at the present time is providing free transportation to all residents that need medical attention to larger centres in Manitoba. To all of those 100,000 residents, if they need medical attention, they will receive

MR. WARREN: free medical attention and it cost the government in 1974 roughly in the proximity of \$250,000.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to go back to another book here that the present government has great admiration for. In fact, I think this year in their budget there is some \$110,000 allotted to this special group in Labrador to come up with some assistance for the government to work with.

Now, this group, again I think it was in 1978 - this is four years later, after the royal commission. So we know now that this recommendation was not even looked at. We know that this recommendation was not even considered. We know that - Mr. Speaker, do I have thirty minutes or twenty?

MR. SPEAKER: Twenty.

MR. WARREN: Twenty minutes? Okay. We know that four years down the road not a thing has been done with this recommendation. So we get the Labrador Resources Advisory Council sending in a report to the government on December 4, 1978, a little over a year ago, and here is what they said: "Another issue of serious contention with the air fare penalty for additional health services by travelling with doctor's orders" - and this is what I said at the beginning, if it is referral by doctors. Now as far as I am concerned, if any patient wants to leave Labrador to come out and see a doctor here on the Island, well, he he pays his own shot. It is deserving that they pay their own shot because we have doctors in Goose Bay and along the coast and in Labrador City. If they are referred by a doctor, fine!

Now, To Another Hospital For Services not Provided in Labrador: Here is what this report says, and I presume Cabinet has discussed it.

MR. WARREN: "It is a scandalous thing when, number one, first of all a patient cannot receive any specialized care in Labrador." Because as the Medical Association referred to, there are not enough specialized doctors in Labrador to perform the surgery or whatever the case may be. "However, he has to be removed to another hospital to obtain such care on doctors orders but he has to pay for that travel himself or herself and it is indeed a serious issue".

Now, I have been preaching it in the last session and I have been saying it again this evening, the Labrador Resources Advisory Council has said - an arm of this government in Labrador - they have said it. So, what else can we say? What else do we expect? People in Labrador need medical attention and if the facilities and expertise are not there and doctors advise the patient to come out to larger centres on the Island, then why cannot this government bring in a resolution and say, 'Okay, John, you have to go to St. John's, you have to go to the Janeway Hospital or to the IGA Hospital in St. Anthony for an operation because it cannot be performed in Goose Bay, we will take care of your transportation.

"An obvious solution is to obtain such specialized medical care in Labrador if possible," but our medical care in low right across the Island in proportion to our doctor/patient ratio, so we are not asking that all specialists go to Labrador. We are not asking that any patient with any kind of a calamity be taken care of in Labrador. We are not asking that, we are asking that they be able to obtain suitable medical help, as is possible for any resident, from St. John's right down to Nain, Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Butt): The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. JAMIESON: Now you are on a subject you really know something about.

DR. J. COLLINS: I know of many subjects.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to respond to my friend. I do this really in place of the hon. Wallace House, the Minister of Health, who himself is not available today, as he is ill. I do not think it is anything too serious and we anticipate his return to the House shortly.

It is a great pleasure for me to respond to the hon. member, however. And as he stated his motion concerns, "WHEREAS there is a lack of specialized medical expertise in Labrador and on occasions patients are required to receive medical attention from Specialists on the Island portion of the Province, which is only accessible by air and which is also extremely costly"; he puts forward the motion, "that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador make available ambulance services for patients in Labrador comparable to the services provided on the Island portion of the Province."

Now, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has put his finger on a very serious problem. This is not a problem that anyone would take very lightly. It is a matter of real concern, and I speak for my colleague, the hon. Minister of Health (Mr. W. House), and I speak for this government and I certainly speak for myself. However, I would like, Mr. Speaker, to try to put this in a somewhat broader context because ambulance services is just one part of the spectrum of health services. It is an essential part and a very important part, but nevertheless it is just one part of the whole spectrum of health services and I would like just to, for a few moments, mention some points about health services in Labrador.

DR. J. COLLINS: I would like first to just touch on manpower. At the present time there are approximately twenty physicians and surgeons - twenty medical people - in the part of the Province on the mainland, i.e., Labrador. Now, I am not exactly certain of the total population of Labrador at the present time, and I do not think anyone is absolutely certain, but it is something in the order of say 30,000, perhaps 32,000, something in that order. So it works out at about one doctor per 1,500 of the population and this compares, I would say, with about one doctor for something like, say, 900 on the Island portion. There is a significant disparity there but nevertheless it probably is not as great a disparity as people imagine. I think people imagine that the number of doctors in Labrador is considerably smaller than it in actual fact is.

Now these doctors are spread throughout Labrador, that is in Northwest River - Goose Bay Bay area, in the Churchill Falls area, in Labrador City area and also there is a doctor, and I believe my information is current on this, there is a doctor in the nursing station in Nain and I think one in Cartwright.

MR. WARREN: Part-time.

DR. J. COLLINS: Part-time. Now in addition to these doctors there are approximately 200 nursing personnel in Labrador. This includes about twenty-five to thirty public health nurses and also includes nurses working in hospitals and other nurses with other duties as well as nursing assistants.

MUN Medical School, with the International Grenfell Mission, has a programme called The Outpost Nursing Training Programme which assists these nurses and this programme is, I think, generally considered to be of considerable help in the nursing staffing of the various nursing stations on the Labrador coast and elsewhere.

DR. J. COLLINS:

We also, and hon. members know this, that we have a Medical School in the Province which is of fairly recent date and I think it is a matter of some regret that there are no students from Labrador presently training at the Medical School. And one would look forward with anticipation and hope that that will be remedied in the not too distant future. I think that this is a point that should be made and I hope it will be remedied.



DR. J. COLLINS: I would like to now turn, Mr. Speaker, from the medical and nursing personnel to the hospital and other facility status in Labrador.

The International Grenfell Mission, of course, has hospitals in North West River and also in the Goose Bay area. The Melville hospital in Goose Bay has forty beds and the one in North West River forty-five beds. In addition to that they also have a hospital at Churchill Falls somewhat smaller, I think something in the order of twenty-five beds.

There are along the Coast quite a number of nursing stations. I would like to just enumerate these to show that the Coast is pretty well served in this regard. There is one at Cartwright, there is one at Hopedale, there is one at Makkovik, Mary's Harbour, Forteau, Nain, Black Tickle, Charlottetown, Davis Inlet, Harbour Deep, Port Hope Simpson and -

MR. G. WARREN: You are leaving out Rigolet.

DR. J. COLLINS: I am sorry - in Rigolet.

These nursing stations are not isolated, they are connected to the hospitals by radio-telephone system and the nurses in these stations can have the benefit of medical advice any hour of the day or night. Also, most of these nursing stations have available beds for overnight care.

At the present time, the government is planning three new clinics on the Coast, one in Postville and one in Rigolet; the one in Postville is going to cost something in the order of \$308,000, the one at Rigolet will be somewhat more expensive than that, and the expectation is that these will commence in the very near future; in addition there will be another - hopefully it will start later in the year, it is planned that way - at Makkovik, and that will cost something in the order of \$850,000. These will be very sophisticated clinics and very much needed in those areas.

MR. G. WARREN: Is there not one for Forteau scheduled for this year?

DR. J. COLLINS:

As far as I know there is not.

I do not know whether there is one in the planning stage, but there is not one to commence this year.

Now, these clinics, of course, are not solely financed by the provincial government. This is done under a DREE arrangement on a 90/10 basis, but they will be very valuable assets to the medical facilities, the health facilities on the Labrador Coast.

I would like to now just mention, Mr. Speaker, a point that gets a little bit nearer the hon. member's concern, that is the transportation system available to the residents of Labrador who need health services.

The International Grenfell Mission has a plane available at North West River and, of course, there is also one in St. Anthony which is available for use along the Coast. When such planes are not available, for whatever reason, in case of need the government will undertake charters to take care of patients who need transfer.

As the hon. member mentions, for the Labrador City - Wabush area, because they do have commercial airlines there, there are not smaller aircraft kept on tap there for transport purposes and the commercial airlines are used for that purpose.

There are in Labrador, attached to the activities of other departments of government such as Transportation and Communications, I believe, and Lands and Forests, helicopters, at least for some times of the year, and I believe that these helicopters are available in case of need. I think the hon. member suggested that these were not available. I think that in case of emergency when there are no other ways of transferring patients that these helicopters can be used.

MR. G. WARREN:

Not to come down to the Island.

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DR. J. COLLINS:

Right. Well, if they needed to go to the Island, probably they would be transferred to fixed wing aircraft.

DR. J. COLLINS: This would be a much more efficient way of getting them over long distances.

Mr. Speaker, turning now to the specialists. The hon. member, I think, put his finger on another very important point, that is, the availability of specialists and I think the hon. member probably knows that it is not just the availability of specialists in Labrador which is a concern to government at this time. The availability of specialists throughout the whole Province, the Island portion as well as the Labrador portion, is a matter of concern to government and we have had discussions with the Newfoundland Medical Association and with the Medicare Commission to see if we can get some measures in place to head off any crisis in this regard and hopefully to correct the situation as it is.

But there are, actually, in Labrador City at the William Jackman Memorial Hospital there are surgical specialists there, I think there are two.

MR. WARREN: (Inaudible) not enough.

DR. J. COLLINS: I agree with the hon. member, I wish there more. I wish there were forty there, but I am just pointing out, I am just telling the House what is available. I am not saying that these are sufficient, I am just merely pointing out what is available. In addition to the specialists resident in Labrador albeit they are just a small number, there are also visiting specialists who go to Labrador, both to the Labrador City/Wabush area and also the Goose Bay/ Northwest River area. These are specialists usually arranged by Memorial University, although some of these specialists are actually in private practice in various parts of the Province. The Coastal area is served by specialists both from M.U.N. and also by specialists from the National Grenfell Mission. Memorial University also has in place a telephone

DR. J. COLLINS: system, a dial up telephone system, connected to all of the hospitals in Labrador so that at any time a specialist's advice is required, it is available through this means. And I think that this also is a very valuable service.

Mr. Speaker, hon. members, I think, will remember that last year Memorial University carried out an experiment in tele-medicine, this is using satellites, and this was a very successful experiment and Memorial University now has in a proposal to the federal government for funds to put this in place on a permanent basis. This would allow the use of audio-visual means of specialist consultation. It is not a total substitute for a specialist on the ground but it is certainly a very good alternative if the other is not available. So I would hope, and I think Memorial is hopeful, that federal funds will be available to put this project in place.

Mr. Speaker, just mentioning now the arrangement, I do not think I have too much to add to what the hon. member brought up there. If there are transfers of patients by the IGA aircraft or by a charter aircraft if the IGA aircraft is not available, I do not believe there is a charge to the patients. That is my understanding, that this is at no cost to the patient. Now if the patient does have to go by commercial aircraft, by EPA, there is charge to the patient and if the case is a stretcher case often there is more than just one seat, there may be two, probably three because an escort is almost always necessary: sometimes there could even be four. I think more usually there is three, one for the escort and two for the patient. And this clearly can amount to quite a costly undertaking

DR. J. COLLINS: for the patient. The Department of Health, as I said at the beginning, is very concerned about this and would like to do something about it and actually has some plans to remedy the situation. But this is what I want to emphasize: now I think the hon. member mentioned that in Manitoba where they have 100,000 people in the Northern part, they have a free air ambulance system, and if I remember correctly he mentioned the figure of a quarter of a million dollars. Well, I would think that if we wanted to put in a free air ambulance system

DR. J. COLLINS: in Labrador, that would be peanuts, that would not scratch the surface. I have not the figures here, but I would suggest that if one patient needing transfer from Labrador City to perhaps St. Anthony, or perhaps Grand Falls or perhaps St. John's, can face a bill of something like \$1,000.00 or perhaps \$1,500.00 to take care of all the needs for air ambulance in Labrador would reach much higher than a quarter of a million dollars. I would think it would cost very, very much more than that.

And this is the bottom line, Mr. Speaker, this is the bottom line: Where is this government going to get the extra funds to face this problem, this expensive problem, as well as other services required? Are we to cut down services already in place to put in there? It is not a case of discrimination, Mr. Speaker. Can we take away services that are in place now which are needed? Clearly not. Not even the hon. member would require that. This would require additional funds.

This government is working on an extraordinarily tight budget and it has done so for years. We have hopes to remedy the situation. We have hopes to have increased revenues, much increased revenues to take care of this type of service, but not only this type of service, many other crying needs in this Province. We will only get those increased revenues largely off-shore and this is the point that we want to make to hon. members opposite. We hope that they will understand, we want to make this to them very sincerely. We want to make this point to the people in this Province totally and we hope our friends in the media will bring this message across.

We will not be able to bring in the services that our people deserve and require unless we achieve very

DR. J. COLLINS: very large revenue sources from the natural resources available to this province and we will only get those resources by one means, that is if we can organize our natural resources to fulfill our needs. This is a point of the most crucial importance for everyone to understand and I appeal to all the hon. members of this House to bring that message clearly and widely to the people in this province, and to our friends in Ottawa, their friends, our friends in Ottawa—because this message has to go through.

We need vastly increased resources, not only to take care of our needs, but if our own resources increase, to get rid of our equalization payments. We will not have any choice in that regard.

They will no longer be available to us. But we need those increased revenues very, very critically. We will only be able to ensure them if we can manage our natural resources as we feel they should be managed and we can only do that if we achieve our rightful measure of ownership.

This is the bottom line. We are not taking this stand, this government is not taking this stand because it wishes to take it for some sense of self-aggrandizement. We will only be able to do what is required, what our people deserve, what they are asking us to give them, we will only be able to do that—and they are not asking more than any other citizen in this country is asking. They are just saying, "give us what any citizen of Canada rightly deserves" and we are saying we will try to satisfy that very reasonable need — when we have the ability to do it. We cannot give up our resources as we have done so often in the past and lived to regret it. We cannot do that any longer, we must have our natural resources to take care of the rightful needs of our Province. We can only do this through proper ownership and proper management.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Here! here!

MR. SPEAKER (SIMMS)

The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. S. NEARY

Mr. Speaker, I think I have heard it all. "The bottom line," says the Hon. and learned doctor, the bottom line is that we do not have the money to look after the sick people of this province, that is the bottom line, I say God help the sick people in this



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MR. S. NEARY

Province. We just heard a senior  
minister in the cabinet, a doctor, get up in this House and make the most  
foolish, nonsensical statement I have

MR. NEARY:

ever heard in my life. If the oil does not start to flow in from the offshore, people have to die. I would say, Mr. Speaker, what has to happen is not for the media to get the message out that we have to get oil and get the message up to Ottawa, That is not the message that has to go out. The message that has to go out is that this government has to get its priorities straight.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: We have before us, Mr. Speaker - how hypocritical! How hypocritical can they be! - we have before us an Auditor General's Report pointing out, to the members of this House and to the people of this Province, millions of dollars uncollected in Retail Sales Tax, and the minister gets up and says, "Where will the money come from?" It should come from the beer barons and the owners of the bistros and the night clubs and the cabarets that owe this money to the provincial treasury, buddies of the members of the administration. And I do not know but my hon. friend's bistro is included in it.

SOME HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: Seven or eight million dollars owing and the minister is over there talking about a paltry quarter of a million dollars. Seven or eight or ten million dollars uncollected in Retail Sales Tax!

DR. COLLINS: (Inaudible)

serious debate.

MR. NEARY: A serious debate! The hon. gentleman turned it into a sham. The hon. gentleman evaded the main issue in this resolution. The main issue is an ambulance service, treat the Labradorians, the residents of Labrador, the same as residents of the Island of Newfoundland

MR. NEARY:

and not discriminate against them. That was the issue. And the hon. gentleman talked about a nursing programme, talked about no students over in the Medical Health Science Complex from Labrador, talked about all the nursing stations and all the hospitals including the one in North West River, but the hon. gentleman did not tell us that the government is planning on closing that one up next year. He talked about the Grenfell planes and if they are not available one can be chartered and it will be paid for. And then ended up by saying, "The bottom line is that we do not have the money to provide this ambulance service." We have the money in this Province to contribute to a golf course in Gander. We have the money in this Province to send the Norma and Gladys off on its binges around various parts of the world and North America.. We have the money to give Bob Cole \$65,000 that he is not entitled to. We have the money to pay for a Tory convention out in Gander. Mr. Speaker, that should be investigated by the commercial and fraud squad of the RCMP. It is fraudulent. It is a straight fraud on the treasury of this Province, on the public treasury, straight fraud and the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ottenheimer) tells us it is not going to be investigated and the minister wants to know where the money is going to come from. Read the Auditor General's Report and the hon. gentleman will find out the bottom line. And never mind getting up and talking about oil. All this crowd can think about is oil. Oil! Oil! Oil! We have been hearing it for years, oil! In the meantime people die because they are not getting proper services. The health services are being downgraded and neglected. Hospital beds are being closed. Hospitals are being closed up like the one in North West River. The

MR. NEARY:

people of Labrador are being discriminated against and the hon. gentleman gets up and drags the oil into the debate. How did the hon. gentleman manage to get oil into this debate?

Mr. Speaker, you would never say, Sir, we had a fishery in this Province to listen to the administration. All they can think about is oil. Even when we had Mockey Night down at the stadium this year down arrived the Premier dressed up as an oil sheik. They must dream about it night and day. All they can think about is oil. In the meantime, every service in this Province is being neglected and downgraded, much

MR. NEARY: to the shame of the administration. And that hon. gentleman - no wonder, Mr. Speaker, is it any wonder, any wonder that people of this Province are so discouraged and disillusioned when they hear not only from - you cannot say from the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), but from a medical man who puts a price tag on people's health, saying we do not have the money to do it? We can do everything else. We can increase members' salaries 40 or 50 per cent.

DR. J. COLLINS: You do not want that?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, it is not a matter of wanting it. I am just pointing out to the hon. gentleman it is a matter of getting your priorities straight.

DR. J. COLLINS: I will tell my officials to straighten your priorities.

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman should tell his officials a few other things, too, that I will remind the hon. gentleman of before this session is over.

MR. THOMS: Maybe his former deputy minister can tell us a few things.

MR. NEARY: Yes, that is right. If we can only get that deputy minister to talk, we might be able to find out a few things about the minister's department and what a shambles it is in, what a mess.

MR. WHITE: We have had more deputy ministers of Finance than any other province of Canada.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that my hon. friend has brought a motion into this House asking the House and the government, if this motion is approved, asking the government to give the residents of Labrador the same treatment, no more, no less, than everybody else in Newfoundland is entitled to. That is all it is asking, a very simple matter, and the hon. gentleman got up and spent 20 or 25 minutes evading the subject. I am sure if we wanted to, Mr. Speaker, that every member of this House, if he wanted to, could get up and tell a hair-raising story or a heart-rending story about a case that he knows about in Labrador. I spent three and a half years as Minister of Social Services in this Province and I guarantee you that I could tell you a few stories,

MR. NEARY: and since then, since I have been over here in the Opposition, I have had numerous requests from people in Labrador who say that they cannot get the treatment they are entitled to. They cannot take their little child to St. John's three or four times a year because they have to buy three seats on EPA and they cannot afford it. Enough to make you sit down and cry.

MR. THOMS: I know a case where they had to buy ten seats.

MR. NEARY: Yes, ten, sometimes ten seats. I know people in Labrador City - and the hon. gentleman was up trying to boast about the fact there are a couple of specialists in the hospital in Labrador City - well, I know people in Labrador City who are earning good money, earning good money, who have to bring their little child to St. John's and to Montreal several times a year. I do not care how much money you are making, do you think that these people can stand that? And the hon. gentleman gets up and ends up his few remarks, "The bottom line, the bottom line is that we do not have the money".

MR. WHITE: Take it out of the helicopter contract.

MR. NEARY: The bottom line is, Mr. Speaker - and the hon. gentleman mentioned helicopters - look at the Auditor General's report and see who used and misused and abused the helicopters.

MR. WARREN: In Labrador, too! In Labrador, too!

MR. NEARY: Another justification for a police investigation; charges put in twice for helicopters used by the Premier and a couple of his flunkies from Gander who were down there allegedly studying the salmon rivers in Labrador, and here you have sick people, people with sick children looking up watching the helicopters overhead going off -

MR. WHITE: Frank Moores,

MR. NEARY: - to Michael's River with the Premier and his entourage - not the present Premier, the previous Premier and his entourage - going off fishing, salmon fishing, and boozing her up down in Adlatok. That is what the people of Labrador had to watch, as my hon. friend is aware. You would not know but it was the landing of Normandy, the beaches

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MR. NEARY: of Normandy, the helicopters overhead, but not carrying sick people; as my hon. friend indicated, carrying the most crooked Premier, the most corrupt in Newfoundland's history,

MR. NEARY:

who headed up the most corrupt and crooked administration in Newfoundland's history, and carrying some of his cabinet colleagues with him. And some are in the present Cabinet. The present Premier did not get rid of them all. There are a couple of hangovers still in the existing Cabinet. A couple of hangovers. And the hon. gentleman will live to regret that he hung on to these two gentlemen, one in particular, the one I referred to today, too busy looking after his \$1,000 dog house that A.B. Walsh built for him. That is what they are interested in, not providing ambulance service for the people of Labrador. Too busy watching their colour television sets. A.B. Walsh provided twenty of them one Christmas.

MR. THOMS:

Twenty-four.

MR. NEARY:

No, twenty. That is all they are interested in, oil, dog houses, colour television sets! And the hon. gentleman has the gall, the audacity and the nerve to stand up in this House and say, 'Oh no, we cannot look after the sick and the dying, we cannot provide ambulance services for residents of Labrador because the oil is not coming ashore yet'. Well, you would swear that the oil has been coming ashore for the last seven or eight years the way that this crowd has mismanaged the affairs of this Province, the extravagance and waste of the administration that the hon. gentlemen supported, and they think they can sweep under the rug. It is all starting to come out now.

We have been saying it in this House for the past six or seven years and do you know the diversionary tactic they used, Mr. Speaker? The diversionary tactic; 'Oh, it is all smear. You are lowering the decorum of the House. How do you expect



MR. NEARY: honest people to get into politics?' And when that did not work they blamed it on John C.Doyle.

And John C.Doyle, by the way, whom they consider a fugitive from justice, did less, much less than commit a fraud on the public treasury by taking public funds and spending them on a poll for a Tory convention, much less. And the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ottenheimer) sits there and tells us, 'Oh, no, well, there might be a violation of the Financial Administration Act, there may be a violation of that but no, I do not think it warrants a police investigation'. The Minister of Justice knows better than that.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: If the hon. gentleman will permit, I did say, 'based on the information I now have.'

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the only way you can get the information is to have an investigation. I mean, how stunned does the hon. gentleman think we are? And I have a great deal of respect for the hon. gentleman.

MR. THOMS: On the information you have now you could order that. Just look at that.

MR. NEARY: On the information that was tabled today. Look, Mr. Speaker, I have seen royal commissions look into television sets, I have seen royal commissions look into distribution of welfare funds on Bell Island, I have seen royal commissions look into everything-far, far less important, insignificant than this information tabled in the House today, and the hon. gentleman sits there and tells us there is going to be no police investigation.

MR. STAGG: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. STAGG: The hon. gentleman, yesterday, interrupted me on a point of order when I thought I was quite relevant in the Throne Speech.

MR. THOMS: You have never been relevant.

MR. STAGG: The hon. gentleman is supposed to be speaking about medical services in Labrador and he has been talking about everything but. So I think he should be directed to the rule of relevancy.

MR. NEARY: To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: That is not a point of order, Sir. I am talking about fraudulent misuse of public funds and I am telling the minister where he can get the money to run this ambulance service.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: On the point of order, I rule that there is a difference of opinion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I would remind the hon. member, too, we are the discussing the motion at the same time.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would submit to the hon. gentleman, Sir, that he go over the estimates, go over the budget with a finetoothed comb, and I am sure in ten seconds flat the hon. gentleman could find a quarter of a million dollars, if that is what is required - and we are not sure of the figure - or more. The hon. gentleman could find more if he wanted it.

MR. S. NEARY: Look, Mr. Speaker, there was enough spent on Mt. Scio house to provide an ambulance service for six months to the residents of Labrador. Where is that list until I - I could not believe it. Twenty linear feet of some kind of wood for shelves -

MR. G. FLIGHT: \$2,000.

MR. S. NEARY: \$2,200. The hon. gentleman asked me 'Where is the money going to come from?' First of all, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to the hon. Premier and to the ministers and to the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), the spokesman for the government on this particular resolution, that four security guards be removed from the Premier's house. Why does the Premier need four security guards? Why? Why does he?

AN HON. MEMBER: To look after the dogs.

MR. S. NEARY: Is he looking after the former Premier's dogs up there?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. S. NEARY: One domestic worker; \$9,100. Look, Mr. Speaker, \$122,000 spent on Mt. Scio house. Furniture, \$33,000. That could transport an awful lot of sick children, of crippled children who cannot get specialized treatment in Labrador. Could it not, Mr. Speaker? Your Honour cannot answer me.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. S. NEARY: Carpet, \$14,070. I will tell you something, Mr. Speaker, that I just finished building a house that I moved into only three weeks and I wish I had \$122,000, Not only would I build it and furnish it but I could have a nice little holiday in the bargain.

MR. SPEAKER (Baird): Order, please!

AN HON. MEMBER:

How much did it cost you?

MR. S. NEARY:

How much did it cost me, that is my business! That is my business! And if the hon. gentleman wants to know I will tell him privately. But I guarantee you this, that I would be able to live comfortably for the rest of my life.

MR. SPEAKER (Baird):

Order, please!

I would like to remind the hon. member to stick to the point we are discussing, please.

MR. S. NEARY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The point we are discussing is the one raised by the hon. gentleman who is speaking on behalf of the government, who says the bottom line is that we do not have the money and we have to wait for the oil to come ashore. In the meantime, people will suffer, in the meantime people can stay down in Labrador and in the remote parts of Newfoundland, in Grand Bruit and in LaPoile and in Petites, and they can stay there and rot as far as we are concerned because we cannot do anything until the oil comes ashore. What a joke! What a joke, Mr. Speaker!

Mr. Speaker, I would submit to the hon. gentleman that instead of getting up in this House and telling the people of this Province that they should continue to suffer, the residents of Labrador should not get the same treatment as sick people on the Island of Newfoundland because they cannot afford to get to specialists or get to hospitals in the urban centres or in St. John's, that they should stay there and rot - that is the message that should go out, not the message that, 'Oh, we will wait until the oil comes ashore'. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that it will not be long before the people of this Province will see through the phony arguments and the gigantic bluff that this administration is running, that they cannot do anything without oil when it is only

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MR. S. NEARY: a matter of just looking at the Estimates in the Budget and getting their priorities straight and eliminate the fat and the extravagance and the waste still in the Budget. And I will show the hon. gentleman when we get to the Budget.

DR. COLLINS: Would you permit a question?

MR. S. NEARY: Yes, I certainly would permit a question.

DR. J. COLLINS: This is an extremely serious matter that the resolution is on. The hon. member has had his fun now. We do not object to that but before he finishes, he only has a minute or two left, would he actually support us in our attempt to get increased revenues to cure this very real problem? I am sure the hon. member's heart is in the right place.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, there is no relationship between the two things. No relationship. What the hon. gentleman should do - and I am quite serious, and that is why I am so emotional about this issue as I happen to know the situation, the hon. gentleman is not familiar with it. He has not been exposed to it to that degree. He has not hardly moved outside St. John's, I suppose, for that matter. But there are people in this Province -

MR. THOMS: He was in Corner Brook at a Cabinet meeting.

MR. NEARY: - who are suffering, undergoing hardship, people dying because they cannot afford to get to a specialist.

DR. J. COLLINS: That is why I am asking you for your support.

MR. NEARY: Cannot afford to get to a specialist or a hospital.

DR. J. COLLINS: That is why I am asking you for your support.

MR. NEARY: If I were the hon. gentleman, instead of trying to be hypocritical, instead of trying to use little political manoeuvring and political tricks, the hon. gentleman should go down tonight, take the Budget home with him and go through it. Wipe out the Norma and Gladys, wipe out a few golf courses, and wipe out some of the foolishness in the Budget and then we would be able to provide an ambulance service to the sick people of Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: (Baird) The hon. the Minister for Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development.

MR. J. GOUDIE: Mr. Speaker, I think perhaps my first words should be of congratulations to the hon. member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren) for having brought in this resolution. I would remind him that it is not the first time that this particular topic has been debated either inside or outside the honourable House of Assembly. But it is one which is of grave, I think, and very real concern to himself, to other members representing Labrador districts and I would suggest to the Government side of the House as well. I think what I should do first is remind the hon. member for Torngat Mountains of one particular thing. He made a statement which was incorrect and I do not wish to predict anything but he may be in trouble with the Labrador Resources Advisory Council after his statement.

MR. THOMS: Who is going to be in trouble?

MR. J. GOUDIE: Just hang on now. Just wait until I am finished now. He suggested, Mr. Speaker, that the Labrador Resources Advisory Council -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please;

MR. J. GOUDIE: - is an arm of this government.

MR. WHITE: And very rightly so.

MR. J. GOUDIE: That is incorrect. They receive money from this government. They submit their budget on an annual basis to me as minister responsible for that particular funding. That is the extent of it. They have drawn up their own constitution. They go their own way. Now some hon. members may disagree with what the Labrador Resources Advisory Council is trying to do, but to suggest that they are an arm and follow the directions of this Provincial Government, or the Federal Government for that matter, is completely incorrect and completely wrong.

MR. HISCOCK: Organizers for the government party, that is all.

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MR. J. GOUDIE:

Pardon me?

MR. HISCOCK:

I said they just have a couple of candidates who actually run for the P.C. Party. They have nothing to do with -

MR. J. GOUDIE:

Well, I assume Mr. Speaker, that any resident of Labrador



MR. J. GOUDIE: has the right to seek political office as do members from outside of Labrador who represent Labrador seats.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. J. GOUDIE: In any event, Mr. Speaker, I think we are discussing a very serious matter here and I just wanted to make a few comments on the topic. Correct me if I am wrong - any hon. member of the House - but I believe that in the case of a medical emergency in Labrador, and I am talking just emergency only, nothing else, I believe the criteria is that if that emergency occurs - this is going to sound rather ridiculous but it is the way it is - if this emergency occurs within three hours of an EPA flight departure, then that patient and the accompanying nurses or doctors have to book seats on that aircraft. In the case of a medical emergency occurring outside of these hours, then service is provided. That is the way I understand it.

MR. THOMS: You have to admit that is terrible.

MR. J. GOUDIE: It is terrible, yes. I agree with the resolution, no question, and as a member of Treasury Board I would love nothing more than to vote \$250,000 or \$500,000 to provide this type of service. Now whether or not it is going to come in for consideration during the Treasury Board discussions for this Budget, I do not know. I guess that will be revealed during the discussion on the estimates of the Department of Health, I would think. But I would, Mr. Speaker, and I am sure all hon. members on this side of the House as well as members on the other side of the House, would like nothing more than to say, "Yes, here is the money, let us do it."

Now, the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. S. Neary) suggested that there are a number of ways in

MR. J. GOUDIE: which money can be found to provide funds for this type of service. He criticized particularly the helicopter service as it is utilized by this government both on the Island part of the Province and in Labrador. I would like to remind him, although he is not in the House, of another abuse, if that is what it can be called, of a helicopter service and that is the use by the Canadian Armed Forces of so-called survival camps in Labrador, in Eagle River, in particular, where helicopters, I have seen them, fly daily in and out with loads of passengers bringing back fish, some survival, bringing back fish to be transported to other parts of Canada and perhaps the States for all I know. And that occurs on a daily basis in Labrador, by the Canadian Armed Forces funded by the Federal Government.

MR. WARREN: last Summer

MR. J. GOUDIE: Every year, and it will be going on again this year - survival camps, Mr. Speaker, survival camps.

MR. THOMS: And that justifies our wasting money on it.

MR. J. GOUDIE: It does not justify it, I am just suggesting that if the hon. member is looking for areas in which to save, then perhaps the Federal Government might be interested in putting in some money to provide this type of service as well. Both governments are elected to represent and serve peoples of this country. Does that mean that only the provincial government is responsible for providing funds for this type of thing or -

AN HON. MEMBER: Yes.

MR. J. GOUDIE: - it is -

MR. THOMS: Constitutionally.

MR. J. GOUDIE: Alright, constitutionally, but what about morally? That is another question.

The member had a question, I think.

MR. HISCOCK:

The question that I ask is does the provincial government licence or give permission for licences and lodges? If the minister is saying that it is not a survival camp and is not being utilized the way it should be then revoke the licence.

MR. WARREN:

Right on. Right on.

MR. J. GOUDIE:

My colleague suggests that it is being done, I do not know that I am not responsible for that particular - yes, this provincial government licences these camps but

MR. GOUDIE:

is there not also a responsibility, Mr. Speaker, on the part of the licensee to live up to the terms and the conditions of that particular lease or proposed operation? It goes both ways. Enforcement is another very large factor. I understand that the trout fishery and the salmon fishery in this Province or in any other province, in terms of enforcement, are the responsibility of the federal government. That is what I understand. I know there are federal fisheries officers in Labrador, stationed at Happy Valley-Goose Bay who have no way of monitoring this. They only inspect the aircraft that come back at a certain point but these helicopters can go and come wherever they please. So there is a problem there as well. But that is entirely off the subject and one hon. member was reminded earlier to be relevant, Mr. Speaker. But I did want to make that point about the Labrador Resources Advisory Council.

I would suggest as well, Mr. Speaker, in terms of health services being offered in Labrador - my colleague suggested a number of services which are being provided - that additional services are being provided almost annually now. In the member's district itself, in the community of Makkovik, I do not know if the new nursing clinic has been finished but I know it was begun last year which I think it going to be, I am sure it will be, an improvement for the delivery of health care in Labrador. I think it might be important to - well, perhaps not important but relevant - to point out something else about health care in Labrador. I understand from the news this morning, I think, that a committee is meeting in Happy Valley tonight to discuss the medical services or lack thereof, depending on which way you look at it, in the Happy Valley-Goose Bay area which came out of a

MR. GOUDIE:

television interview and some press releases some months ago. I think the International Grenfell Association is to be commended for the type of work they have done in Labrador over the years from day one until the present day. Granted, there have been lack of facilities in the past and there is still some lack of facilities now. And lack of specialists, as the hon. member pointed out, is another very large problem. But I think the impression was left from many of the newscasts and many of the public comments by other people that the IGA with their delivery of health care in Labrador were scoundrels, they were negligent in their duty. And I think that is completely wrong.

I can give stories. Just as one example, Mr. Speaker, if we want to talk about health services, what they are now, what they should be and what they were in the past. One of the prime fund raising techniques used by Sir Wilfred Grenfell, when the Grenfell Mission was being established, was the use of a young lady from near Rigolet in Labrador whom he took with him on his various sojourns to Europe and to parts of the States and used her as an example of what medical services had been in Labrador. At the age of fourteen she had been exposed to cold temperatures overnight, in her home, unable to get firewood. Her father was away. Her pregnant mother froze to death. Her legs were amputated with an axe and the next year Sir Wilfred Grenfell took her on his fund raising tours and raised millions of dollars

MR. GOUDIE: just on that one lady.  
The late Kakina Mucko, by the way, was her name,  
to prove to people all over the world that these  
medical services were needed. And, obviously,  
improvements have taken place since then but again  
I repeat, I agree with the motion and wholeheartedly  
support the context of it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. GOUDIE: Now the question comes,  
how do we find the money? My colleague, the Minister  
of Finance (Dr. Collins) and the member for LaPoile  
(Mr. Neary) exchanged some views on that. Being a  
member of Treasury Board I am not holding out too much  
hope right now, but then, again, we have not gone  
through the whole budgetary process yet.

I really have very little  
more to say on the subject other than that, Mr. Speaker.  
The member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren) made  
reference to the Royal Commission on Labrador and some  
of the recommendations made therein. I should point out  
to hon. members, I guess, I intend tomorrow, if the  
opportunity presents itself for me to take part in the  
debate, to present to my colleagues in the House of  
Assembly, and for distribution throughout Labrador  
following that, a list of the recommendations which  
have been implemented. I think there were 288  
recommendations made during the hearings of the Royal  
Commission and nearly that many, nearly all of them  
have been implemented, if not totally, then to certain  
levels of implementation.

AN HON. MEMBER: Snowden do it?

MR. GOUDIE: Yes, that is correct.

There is a booklet a little  
thicker than this that I will be distributing as well  
so that all hon. members will have a chance to examine

MR. GOUDIE: it, criticize it and offer alternate suggestions, if that is the way it works out.

I think one other comment before I take my seat, Mr. Speaker. I have said repeatedly that I agree with this resolution and the intent of it; to provide better means of transportation of patients from Labrador to larger centres on the Island part of the Province, either St. Anthony or other areas. What I would prefer to see, if I had my druthers, shall we say, is to have a referral centre in Labrador itself, preferably, in my opinion, in the Happy Valley - Goose Bay area. It is the centre of communications and transportation for all parts of Labrador and I think that would be the answer. I realize there are some difficulties with that, and the medical people in this hon. House could offer better reasons why, but I understand that is it difficult, for instance, to get specialists in many fields to travel to any part of the country, let alone Labrador, where there is a small enough population base that their services are not fully utilized.

I guess part of the satisfaction of being a specialist in the medical field is not only to administer medicine and to practice medicine, but also to get some kind of personal satisfaction from what is being done by that specialist. And I understand that is a relevant point which is considered by specialists when they are offered opportunities for work in remote areas. I am not suggesting that the specialists are to blame for not going there, I realize there are financial considerations as well.

But there are many factors to be considered, I think is what I am suggesting, and whether or not the solution is to provide funds to fly

MR. GOUDIE: people from Labrador to other referral centres in the Province or to have a referral centre in Labrador. I prefer the latter. I commend the hon. member for his resolution and would hope that the budgetary process will allow us to do exactly what he suggests.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER(Simms): The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. STIRLING: Mr. Speaker, I really cannot believe what I have heard this afternoon. I said to my colleague when he introduced the resolution that the debate will only last for one speaker. The debate on this resolution will last for only your introductory twenty minutes because immediately the Minister of Health (Mr. House) or the Premier will jump up and say, 'This cannot be true. This cannot be true, I am sorry. With apologies to the members representing Labrador, thank you for bringing it to our attention that we are treating the Labradorians differently from the way we are treating people in Newfoundland'. I said, 'It will not last longer than your speech and then we had better be prepared for what is going to happen



MR. STIRLING: for the rest of the afternoon, because I am sure the Premier will not sit through listening to this kind of discrimination, and I cannot believe what I just heard. I cannot believe. I said that the Minister of Health (Mr. House) will be really disappointed that he has been found lacking because he did not know that this condition existed. I was sure they would say, "Oh, look I am sorry, that is an oversight. Let us go back, let us go back, back to the little booklet. Here is what the little booklet says: 1974, the purpose of the new program is not only to make ambulance services more readily available to our people but to remove any real financial hardship to users of ambulance services by making them available at low cost for all of Newfoundland." For all of Newfoundland, and Labrador is part of Newfoundland, for all of this Province. I was sure that the minister would be apologizing and embarrassed, embarrassed to say, "You mean my officials are not doing this now? You mean that somebody from Labrador has been treated differently from the people in Newfoundland?" And the Premier, I was sure, would make a statement. The Premier has said in the last Throne Speech and again in this Throne Speech about how important it is for us to preserve our way of life, how important it is for his government to be accountable. I cannot believe what I heard! The Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), pinch-hitting for the Department of Health, because as soon as he stood up I said, "Well, here it comes. Here is the announcement, it is in the Budget." I could not believe it, absolutely could not believe it, and while I was sitting here, you probably realized, I read through this little booklet again and I found maybe a key. The answer may be here for this government. I found the key. Here is the key to a number of questions. Does this program assist in paying for ambulance expenses incurred outside Newfoundland? No, this program is designed to assist residents of Newfoundland in the Province of Newfoundland. That is the key to it.

MR. NEARY: Maybe Quebec is right after all.

MR. STIRLING: That is the key to it. You are treating the people in Labrador as if they were from another province.

MR. STIRLING: Mr. Speaker, we owe, those of us who are resident on the Island portion of this Province, really owe a debt of gratitude to the representatives in this House from Labrador who are trying to get across a message. The Premier gets up and says, "I am a fighting Newfoundlander. We own the offshore." Well, what about the Labradorian? What about the Labradorian who sits up there and says, "You are exploiting my country. You are exploiting the offshore. You are exploiting the minerals, and you will not even take our kids and give them the same treatment as the kids on the Island of Newfoundland."

MR. NEARY: Hear, hear!

AN HON. MEMBER: Do not get your blood pressure up.

MR. STIRLING: I will get my blood pressure up and so should more people get their blood pressure up, because the -

AN HON. MEMBER: You should go to Labrador where they cannot get treated.

MR. STIRLING: - because the people in Labrador, the people in Labrador should have a priority. You get somebody here saying, "Why can we not get specialists to go to Labrador? Why can we not get other Newfoundlanders to go to Labrador." Mr. Speaker, because one of the reasons that this government and this House must take as a priority that everybody in Newfoundland has equal opportunity, equal rights, whether they live in a remote part of the Island of Newfoundland or a remote part of Labrador. They have the absolute equal rights, and that is what this resolution is saying. We should not be debating it. There is nothing to debate. My God! The Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) gets up and says, his very argument, I refer it back to the Minister of Finance; he said, "Oh, look, if we had to pay for the transportation, the ambulance services for all the people in Labrador who need to come to Newfoundland on a referral basis, come to the specialists in other parts of Newfoundland", he said, "if we had to do that, it would cost much more than a quarter of a million dollars, much more than a quarter of a million dollars". But do you know what he is saying? He is saying that this government in Newfoundland cannot afford \$250,000 or much more, so who has to pay it?

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MR. STIRLING:           The person who has to pay it is the resident of Labrador, and you wonder why they are looking to Quebec, and you wonder why they are making speeches, and you wonder why the community priorities for development of Newfoundland make the kinds of comments in Labrador, the people from Labrador.

MR. L. STIRLING:

Do you know the comment they made about (We who are living on the Island? Here is the comment that they make the people who are supported by the government, who are financed by the government, here is the way that they think the government views Labrador, "Labrador is a valuable piece of real estate to be developed for the benefit of the Province with any resulting spin-off benefits to fall to the Labrador residents if they may like scraps under the table." That is the same group which the member for the government there says is the organization that he believes speaks for the people in Labrador. Well, that is what they had to say, that is what they think and is there any wonder? We should all hang our heads in shame. Do you realize what we are saying, what the Minister of Finance (Dr. J. Collins) just said? The government of Newfoundland can not afford it so we will make the people in Labrador pay the shot. And is he talking about ten dollars, twenty dollars? Most of the members from the St. John's area do not have that kind of a problem because they can get transportation services, they can get ambulance services but is there either one of us resident in Labrador who would not gladly mortgage their house, would not gladly go on dole, do anything to get a child to adequate services? And yet, for the Island of Newfoundland, for Conception Bay South, if it is over fifty dollars the government picks up the tab, or from Holyrood or from Bell Island or from Botwood, even from Stephenville they pick up the tab, but for the people in Labrador, the people in Labrador are told that they have to pay. Now who really pays? The people who really pay are the children. And there are some medical people on the other side and I know that the member from Exploits (Dr. Twomey) has seen cases in Newfoundland where, because of neglect, early treatment not taking place, early treatment by specialists, things having to do with all kinds of problems, children have grown up with all kinds of

MR. L. STIRLING: deformities, all kinds of problems that they did not have to have. And is there anybody in this House of Assembly who wants to say to somebody in Labrador that if you have to make a decision about sending the child to get something looked at because there is no specialist, to spend thousands of dollars to get to the Island of Newfoundland - I am glad the Premier is back because he can conclude this, he can get up right now and I would even sit down for him to say, "We are not going to let this continue another five minutes."

Mr. Premier, I am not sure that you are aware that what we are debating is a resolution -

PREMIER PECKFORD: Oh, yes, I am.

MR. L. STIRLING: I am not sure that you are aware that what is here is discrimination between one part of the Province in Labrador and another part of the Province on the Island of Newfoundland.

AN HON. MEMBER: Rubbish!

MR. NEARY: Who uttered that foolish word, rubbish?  
What is rubbish! Suffering, sick people and children - yes, some rubbish alright.

MR. L. STIRLING: Mr. Speaker, if there is one priority that I am sure that the Premier, and I do not know who else he speaks for on the other side of the House, but I am sure that if there is one thing that he can agree on, that we can all agree on on this side of the House, is that the health of our children in this Province of Newfoundland, including Labrador, the health of our children is the number one priority, bar none. More important than any other thing that we have, the health of the children.

MR. STIRLING: In this case we have a situation -

DR. COLLINS: So the health of children (inaudible).

MR. STIRLING: Speak up!

DR. COLLINS: I said according to you the health of children is important. I am glad you told me.

MR. STIRLING: You as a doctor should know above everybody else.

DR. COLLINS: I am most pleased that you told me.

MR. STIRLING: You are now displaying that you know as much about this subject as most other subjects that you have spoken on in the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. STIRLING: Now if you would like to take a look at Hansard you will probably find out after this is recorded that the disgust expressed by the other side is that I said he knows about as much about this subject as everything else he speaks on and it is your judgement of what he says about the other subjects.

Mr. Speaker, I think that this debate has probably gone on long enough. Surely there can be no difference of opinion that the number one priority in this Province has to be health, the number one priority of any government. The number two priority, if there is a one priority and a two priority, has to be to give equal opportunity to every person throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, and you are not giving equal opportunity in this Legislature. I cannot believe it. I just do not understand, Mr. Speaker, why there is not an immediate agreement to this resolution.

The Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) gave a very good explanation of the services that are now available in Labrador - and then ignored completely the point of the resolution. Mr. Speaker, there is nothing more that I can say on this subject, because nothing more needs to be said on this subject, except that we expect the same priorities for Labrador as we now say that we want for Newfoundland. Because otherwise the people from Labrador have to come to the conclusion

MR. STIRLING: that they have to start making their own demands because nobody on the Island part is listening. If we cannot get absolute agreement in two minutes that this subject has to be corrected, if we cannot get agreement from the government, "Yes, okay, we will vote for it, it is in the budget, \$250,000 and it is in the budget; it is a top priority," if we cannot get that kind of agreement, how are we ever going to convince people to live in Labrador, to give their children the opportunity to grow up in Labrador because they will be damning them to be living where they cannot get medical facilities.

Now as my colleague has said, he has not asked for an overnight establishment of all the facilities in Labrador. He has agreed with the member for Naskaupi (Mr. Goudie) and he has agreed with the Royal Commission Report and he has agreed with the Labrador Resources Advisory Council that that should be the aim, you should get specialists in Labrador. One of the reasons you are not going to get specialists in Labrador is that you do not provide the same services in Labrador as they can get on the Island of Newfoundland. What he has said, very sensibly, is that the person living in St. John's, the person living in Labrador City, the person living in Nain should be treated as equals. That is all this resolution says, that the fellow here should spend fifty dollars and the fellow up there should spend fifty dollars.

MR. STAGG: (Inaudible).

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: Go out to your meet-the-candidate meeting and ask some questions.

MR. STAGG: Read your coverage in the Evening Telegram.

MR. STIRLING: Mr. Speaker, I know that people on the other side are just as surprised as I am to find that this is being debated. I am sure that the member for Humber East (Ms Verge) and the member for Bay of Islands (Mr. Woodrow) will not be very happy if this resolution is defeated. I am sure that they feel that the people in all parts of this Province, and certainly the children of this Province as a number one priority,

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MR. STIRLING: are entitled to exactly the same  
rights whether you are in St. John's or Corner Brook or Nain.

MR. WARREN: And grown-ups too.



MR. STIRLING: My colleague says, "Grown-ups, too".

Maybe you can say to a grown-up, "If you want to move to the Northern part of Labrador you can see certain of the advantages and the disadvantages," and an adult can make up his own mind but we cannot do it to the children. A child does not have a choice about where he is born or who his parents are. What we are saying in this House my colleague, as I said, we all owe him, both sides of the House, owe him a debt of gratitude for bringing this to our attention, an opportunity to say to the people of Labrador and to the people of Newfoundland who want to live in Labrador, it is our intention, it is the intention of this House of Assembly to make sure that there is no discrimination, that we are going to try to provide, not only in this area but in every other area, equal opportunity. We are going to provide them the opportunity to have the best in education, the best in facilities. If we cannot at the moment, if we cannot for the very moment provide the hospital facilities or the specialists or the educational facilities, then we are going to be able to bring them to the facilities at no more cost than a resident of St. John's. Otherwise you treat everybody in Labrador and everybody in remote Newfoundland as second-class citizens, and I am sure that there are many people on the other side of this House, if there is any one item that we have to get unanimous agreement to put in the Budget as a top priority it is the \$250,000 to give them the same ambulance service as the people have in the rest of the Island.

MR. NEARY: Cut out the nineteenth hole.

MR. STIRLING: We could almost get that this afternoon if the Premier would like to ask for it. I cannot understand him sitting there. I was expecting in the same way that he came in and said, "Look, I found out that somebody was robbing the government. It happened to be in the PC Party and I am in the PC Party, but I would not mention that in the statement, but the PC Party was doing something they should not be doing. I am stopping it right away, I am stopping. It was just brought to my attention. I am stopping it." I expected him, as I said

MR. STIRLING: to my colleague, "You are going to make your opening remarks and you are going to be interrupted by the Premier or the minister saying -

MR. NEARY: But the policy is you can rob the Public Treasury (inaudible).

MR. STIRLING: I cannot understand it. There is no consistency. We had a beautiful Speech from the Throne about the concerns for the people of Newfoundland and the future and we are going to finance it from the oil. And in the last Throne Speech, the way of life in Newfoundland must be preserved. In Newfoundland we have to preserve our communities, our way of life. I want to go out and catch my rabbits. I want to be able to go out and cut me finger while I am catching rabbits. I am a true Newfoundlander. Well, what about the people in Labrador!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. STIRLING: You cannot sit there like a dummy while this important subject is being discussed, a very basic right, a basic right of an individual to give his children the best in medical attention. Are you going to force him to say, "I cannot afford it", so he will not send the child? The people of the medical on the other side, they know, they have seen cases where youngsters have come in because they have been neglected, they have not had the specialist treatment at the right time. Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe that it is for anything other than just being purely stubborn. The people of Newfoundland are starting to see, the people of Newfoundland are starting to see a pattern come through with this new Premier. If he thinks about it first, it is the greatest idea and 'I am a great Newfoundlander'. If he does not think about it, if he has to be reminded by the people from Labrador that you are treating Labradorians as second-class citizens, then he is not concerned about it. And, Mr. Speaker, I am sure, I am sure that having had this brought to the attention by the members from Labrador that the Budget will include the money so that we treat the people from Labrador the same as we treat people from the Island part of Newfoundland. Otherwise this House of Assembly will have to hang its head in shame, and particularly the Premier who has led this Province into this present century.

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MR. SPEAKER (Butt):

The hon. member for Exploits.

DR. TWOMEY:

Mr. Speaker, hon. members.

I would first like to compliment the member from Torngat Mountains (Mr. G. Warren) on his comments, his criticisms and his pleas. I am sure that the majority of your

DR. TWOMEY:

constituents, if not the majority of the Labradorians will entirely agree. I know there are many other factors apart from the air ambulance service, but this seems to be the primary object of our debate here tonight. Having lived in a degree of isolation in the past—in 1947 I happened to go to the Southwest coast—when I think back many of the problems at that particular time were similar to the ones that you now experience in Labrador and I can remember the agony and ecstasy of the problems and their resolutions or their failures back in that time. I can remember when there were problems that I thought were entirely beyond my capability or control, when I wished and prayed that I could have the opinion of a consultant or a specialist or even one other physician to help me in reaching these decisions. I did not. And I could even carry it to the very personal degree of where I myself had a problem, I extracted one of my own teeth and I could not remove the second one and I remember waiting for days with was what I considered at that time a rather unpleasant toothache, and having to hire a boat in Harbour Breton and go across to Grand Bank and ask Dr. Burke to extract that offending tooth.

I can also remember another problem when at the time I felt certain that I was going to develop an acute appendix. There was a very wild storm, unpleasant weather on the Southwest coast and I remember sitting it out and going over the books and thinking of experiences I had heard and read about in the past. I am sure that you are speaking about similar problems when you comment on the ambulance service in Labrador.

DR. TWOMEY: I must say that I have to agree with many of the comments that were made this afternoon and I think it is right and proper that we, as a government, should take some steps to formulate plans that will bring Labradorians into equal status with Newfoundlanders no matter where they live. It is my understanding that plans are being considered at this particular time to take such steps. I do not know if they will suit the requirements or the ambitions of you as a spokesman for your people. However, I believe there is going to be a step forward in the very near future. I cannot give you anymore details because the final plans have not been yet formulated.

But I think there are other problems apart from the transportation of patients by aircraft or by boat or by any other means whatsoever. There are the problems of bringing professionalism and specialization to the Labrador. I know that they are specialists in surgery, in anesthesia and internal medicine. I do not know of the numbers but I believe they are far below the numbers that are required. I am not trying to digress from my subject but there are a few figures that might be of help to you and to the other members who are going to take part in this debate this afternoon it will give them at least some food for thought. And I base these figures they are my own, entirely my own on statistics available from the Canadian Medical Association on the number of specialists required for X number of people in a town, community or anywhere else. I have picked out the ones that I figured were essential for the Labrador and I picked out the radiologists, approximately three; general surgeons, approximately five; pediatricians, three to four; orthopedic surgeons, one to two; obstetricians

DR. TWOMEY:

gynecologists, two to three; ear, nose and throat specialists, one; optomic surgeons, two; psychiatrists, five; and interns, five to six. These figures would be ideal. When I say ideal, you are not going to get 100 per cent agreement on this, but they are the figures that have been recommended by special committee on medical manpower in Canada.

I know that there are other problems that you encounter, but at the moment you are looking for some means to get the acute emergencies or the specialized cases out of Labrador itself. There is only one way at the moment, generally speaking, and that is by air. And I feel myself very definitely that some degree of subsidization should be paid to these individuals or some service to bring them up to the level of service that can be expected in the remote areas of this Province.

I compliment you on the introduction of your motion. Keep up the good work. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (BUTT):

White Bay.

The hon. member for Baie Verte-

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, I rise to say a few words on this motion that was brought in by my colleague from Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren) today. In so doing I must admit that I have not had the opportunity to hear all the debate that has taken place on this motion. I was forced by circumstances to deal with a few other matters earlier this afternoon, so I did not hear, for example, all of my colleagues remarks nor did I hear all the remarks made by the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins). But I want to begin by saying, Sir, that I do not believe there is any

MR. RIDEOUT:

more important issue that we could be dealing with in this Legislature on a Private Member's Day than the type of resolution that my colleague from Labrador has brought before us. The resolution itself is very simple. It is not asking for very much in 1980. It is just simply saying that on occasion people who by their own choice and by their own right make their homes in the Labrador portion of our Province, on occasion those people are required to leave Labrador and to come out to the Island portion to receive specialist medical attention. And it goes on to tell us that on such occasions those people incur a cost that none of the rest of us who live on the Island portion of the Province have to endure. And the motion very reasonably asks this Legislature, asks the government, I suppose, in essence is what it boils down to, to take into account the special circumstances, the special costs, the special problems of isolation and geography that those citizens of our Province face and to come up with a special plan comparable to what you would find or comparable to what citizens in other parts of the Province would have access to, to come up with a special programme comparable to that, not any greater. They are not asking for anything special. They are not asking for any more. But taking into account all the factors that I have mentioned, to come up with a plan so that those of our citizens who live in Labrador will have comparable access to the special medical facilities that sometimes, unfortunately, we have to take access to. That is, as

MR. T. RIDEOUT:

I understand the motion, Sir, that is the plea of the member for Torngat Mountains on behalf of not only the citizens that he represents in the Torngat Mountain district, but also on behalf of all our Newfoundland citizens who live in Labrador. Now I consider that to be a very reasonable, a very sensible, a very presentable position for a member of this Legislature to make to the Legislature and through the Legislature to the government of the Province. Those of us who are fortunate enough to live on the Island portion of the Province, I believe can take advantage of a special ambulance programme that the government of the Province introduced some four, five or six years ago. And let me here, Sir, give credit where credit is due and to compliment the government for introducing the kind of programme that those of us who live on the Island now can take advantage of. As I understand it, no matter how long the trip in an ambulance is, I believe the maximum amount that you have to pay for the ambulance is \$50.00. For example, if you lived in La Scie, which is thirty-five miles away from Bay Verte, and you have to be transported by ambulance from La Scie to Bay Verte, a distance of thirty-five miles, then you will pay the flat rate of \$50.00, or it could be less. If you are in Bay Verte Hospital and there is need to transport you to Corner Brook, for example, you will still only pay a maximum of \$50.00. As a matter of fact, when I was an active member of the Kinsmen Club of Bay Verte, one of my duties was to drive the ambulance and I remember one occasion that I had to take a patient from Bay Verte through, directly by ambulance, to the General Hospital here in St. John's when there was a problem with flights and the patient could not be flown out of either Gander or Deer Lake. And I had to drive the ambulance right directly from Bay Verte into St. John's, which is well over three hundred miles, almost four hundred miles. And the cost to the patient, or the family of the patient in that particular case, was still only a maximum of \$50.00. What this resolution is asking the government is to introduce a similar programme whereby those of our citizens who live in Labrador, or some other



MR. T. RIDEOUT: remote part of the Province and I will deal with that in a second, have access to a similar type of programme. That is all they are asking, Sir, that they have equal treatment as far as accessibility to medical services are concerned, especially in as far as accessibility to specialized medical service is concerned because they had the ordinary medical service in most parts of Labrador, but accessibility above the average, accessibility to specialized medical service. They are asking us that they have the same treatment, even though they live in Labrador, as those of us enjoy who live on the Island portion of the Province. Now I cannot think of any more reasonable, sensible resolution. Of all the resolutions I have seen come before this Legislature in the last four or five years that I have been here, I cannot think of one more reasonable, one more humane, one that we ought more to pour our hearts out to give our unanimous support to than this particular resolution. I believe what happens now, if a person, as I understand it, has to be transported for specialized care from Labrador to

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MR. T. RIDEOUT: the Island portion of the Province, whether it be St. John's, Corner Brook or whatever, in most cases there are at least two seats on an aircraft required. If it is a stretcher case there are certainly two at least they -

AN HON. MEMBER: Four seats.

MR. T. RIDEOUT: Four seats, is it? They have to fold down the seats and put in the stretcher. So the cost of four seats -

MR. WARREN: \$125 one way

MR. T. RIDEOUT: \$125 one way.

MR. WARREN: Per seat

MR. T. RIDEOUT: Per seat. Four seats, Sir, must be paid for before that patient can get from, say, Goose Bay into St. John's, whereas those of us who live on the Island portion of the Province can take advantage of the Government ambulance care programme - and a very good one it is. I have already given credit where credit is due - those of us who live on the Island portion of the Province can take advantage of the programme that is already in place so that our people do not have to endure that very high cost, I would say, Sir, a cost that many ordinary people just cannot afford to pay. They obviously have to go unduly in debt in many cases in order to be able to afford to pay the four seats that are necessary. Then the patient may be in such poor condition medically that a member of the family, or a nurse or a doctor or somebody like that has to travel with him. I have seen that happen too, where the patient has to be accompanied by either a member of the family or a member of the professional medical services like a nurse or a nursing assistant. Then there is the extra seat that has to be paid for. In many cases I have seen bills come back where the day's wages, or in the case of coming from Labrador to St. John's it is at least two days' wages. If a nurse comes in from Goose Bay to St. John's with an ambulance patient from Labrador, then there are at least two days' wages, there is a hotel bill that has to be taken care of: I have seen

MR. T. RIDEOUT: those bills. So what in effect it boils down to, Sir, is that in getting a patient from Goose Bay or Labrador City into St. John's for specialized medical treatment means that maybe four or five or six hundred dollars has to be expended by the individual in order to be able to take advantage of that specialized medical treatment that he needs. Those of us who live on the Island portion of the Province do not have to endure that unusual and burdensome, very burdensome, financial condition. We just do not have to do it. We can take advantage of the on-road ambulance programme that the government has in place and for a flat rate of up to a maximum of fifty dollars we can send a patient anywhere. We can send him from Baie Verte to Corner Brook, or Baie Verte to Grand Falls, or Baie Verte on through to St. John's, as I have already said, that I had to do myself in one particular case. So, therefore, it is impossible for me to conceive that this resolution would not receive the unanimous consent of both sides of this House. Of course there are dollars involved. I did not hear all that the Minister of Finance had to say this evening, unfortunately, and he said the bottom line was dollars and maybe the dollars are not there. But certainly heavens there must be in an expenditure of a \$1.25 billion or \$1.5 billion, which our Budget may be this year, there must be some place where we can find \$250,000 to finance this kind of necessary, very vital health programme. It must be there. The government has done away with the Special Action Group, for example. That is going to save a couple of hundred thousand dollars. I do not know what the budget was last year but there are certainly a couple of hundred thousand dollars that are going to be saved there. The government is tightening up in other areas, so they told us in the last Budget that was presented to the Legislature, so there must be ways, there must be ways that the government is going to be able to find the extra \$250,000 that is necessary to provide this kind of air ambulance service to those of our fellow citizens who live in Labrador. I just cannot accept a statement that we cannot find that kind of money. Every dollar counts when you are

MR.- T. RIDEOUT: making up a budget, I realize, it is not that great an amount of money that we cannot look at areas where we are already spending and try to redirect some dollars so that those of our citizens who are living in Labrador can have access to the specialized medical facilities that those of us who are living in the rest of the Province have. I believe the government should take this resolution very seriously. In debate there is always the inter-change of politics and so on, but this particular resolution should appeal to anybody, no matter where

MR. RIDEOUT: he sits in this legislature or no matter what his political affiliation is. There are 50,000 of our people living down in Labrador who through no reason of their own every now and then may have to, because of circumstances, come in here or come somewhere else on the Island. And if we cannot find in a budget of \$1.25 billion the necessary funds, around \$250,000 to be able to operate that kind of programme then, Mr. Speaker, I have to say that I do not believe that we are very good at being able to establish priorities and make the health care of those people the number one priority - let us look at other stuff after. If we have to cut out or cut back or do whatever has to be done, let us do it so that those people will have access to the medical facilities that they need without causing the undue hardship that obviously they have to go through now if, as my friend has told me in one particular case, it cost \$2,100 to get a patient from Labrador into St. John's for specialized medical services.

MR. F. ROWE: Sure, everybody supports the resolution except the doctor Minister of Finance.

MR. RIDEOUT: Now unfortunately, as I said, I did not hear all the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) had to say but - I really cannot say without looking at his remarks - but certainly the Minister of Finance must be able to find that kind of money so that those people can take advantage of the programme.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make another point or two before I finish supporting this worthwhile motion, that is, that if we have people living in remote communities on the Island portion of the Province who have to endure the same kind of financial hardship that those of our citizens who live in Labrador have to endure, maybe not to the extent, maybe not to the degree

MR. RIDEOUT:

that they do but people living in isolated communities like Harbour Deep, for example, people living in isolated communities on the South Coast, there comes a time when they may have to even charter an aircraft in the Winter months to get out of those communities. Now Harbour Deep is not really such a good example because, of course, Harbour Deep is served by the IGA at St. Anthony and the IGA have their own air ambulance service. And I assume, Mr. Speaker, that there are taxpayers' dollars going into - and I am sure, I do not assume, I am sure there are taxpayers dollars going into the support of the IGA medical system that we have in Northern Newfoundland and in Labrador - so there is discrimination here again. Those of our citizens who live in Harbour Deep and isolated communities can get transferred by air ambulance from Harbour Deep to St. Anthony. Almost any day of the year that a plane can fly they can get there. Those parts of Labrador, I would assume, especially Southern Labrador and Northern Labrador that are served by IGA can get transported by the IGA air ambulance into St. Anthony any time of the year that the plane can fly. Those people in Labrador, though, who live in Goose Bay-Happy Valley or live in Wabush or in Labrador City or Churchill Falls do not have access to the IGA air services so, therefore, they have to pay through the nose if they want to come from Labrador in here for specialized medical treatment.

I think we should put all else aside for a little while - not saying that the wheels of government must stop-until this is straightened out. There will be a budget hopefully in two or three weeks or four weeks time and I would commend very strongly to the Minister

MR. RIDEOUT:

of Finance (Mr. Collins) that he search very sincerely for the \$250,000 that is necessary to support this kind of programme. I do not think it would be too difficult to find it. If the minister came into the House and said that we must do away with two or three consultant firms, I think we would agree with that on this side of the House, I think all the House would agree with it. I think if the minister came in and said, "We have got

MR. RIDEOUT: to spend a little less money on Computer Services,' then I think we would agree with that. If the minister came in and said, 'We are going to have to take a quarter of a million dollars of the Highways budget even. There is going to be one mile of road this year that we cannot reconstruct or upgrade', I do not think there would be a person in this House who would say, 'No. Mr. Minister, do not do it'. Because that money is going to go to ensure that those of our citizens who live on the Mainland portion of the Province have equal access to and costs them no more than those of us who live on the Island portion of the Province. Mr. Speaker, that to me is a very sensible position, that is why I think the resolution is a very sensible and reasonable resolution and I honestly cannot see for the life of me how anybody, next Wednesday evening about this time when this resolution comes to a vote, I cannot see how anybody in this Legislature will be able to stand up and vote against that resolution.

The Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) has our permission now to - or our blessing, he does not need our permission - but our blessing to go anywhere he wishes in his budget and find a quarter of a million dollars so that our citizens in Labrador can have equal access to the specialized medical treatment that they may need, God forbid, but that they may need some time or other, on the Island portion of the Province. Mr. Speaker, I support the resolution.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER(Baird): The hon. the member for St. John's Centre.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!



DR. NCHICHOLAS:

Mr. Speaker, I should like to compliment the hon. the member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren) on this resolution. I remember the first time I went to Labrador, it must have been, I think, 1963, and I visited the hospital in North West River. I have been interested in many ways in the medical services in Labrador since that time; I think because, number one, I get quite a number of patients from there during the year.

Two years ago last August I had the pleasure of going from Lewisporte to Nain on the C.N.coastal boat. I must say that was one of the most beautiful trips I have ever made. I was very impressed and had a delightful holiday. But it did occur to me, in stopping in the various settlements, that the residents there did have a problem in the small communities. And I said to my wife on a number of occasions, 'I would hate to get a serious illness while I am here'. And I could visualize if that happened in the middle of Winter, that it would be a very serious problem indeed.

I do not think this is a thing that you can blame on a government or on a medical service; I think this is a matter of isolation. I think it is our duty to deal with the problem and the isolation to the best of our ability. But there is no point in our

DR. MCNICHOLAS: thinking that we are going to get medical services in Labrador, on the isolated parts of Labrador particularly, that we can get here in St. John's.

I do not know quite what the answer is. I think if people decide or are forced to live in isolation, as the hon. member for Exploits (Dr. Twomey) mentioned on the Southwest coast, you just have to put up with some of the problems that go with isolation. That does not mean for a moment that it should be ignored. We should do the best we can to improve these and I feel that is being done. It might be being done a little bit more slowly than some people would like, but we have to have patience.

I have been in medical practice here in Newfoundland, now, for a long time, over twenty years, and I have seen a tremendous improvement in the Island of Newfoundland during that period. And I am equally sure that there is going to be an improvement in the medical services in Labrador, and gradually, over the years, that that is going to improve. And even in my time I know it has improved. There are hospitals there that were not there when I came here. There is one in Churchill Falls and Labrador City. I know there was a hospital in Goose Bay. But all of these services are gradually improving. I think we will have to have patience.

Mr. Speaker, I see it is six o'clock. There are a few other points I would like to make. I move the adjournment.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. member has adjourned the debate.

It being six o'clock this House stands adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, at 3:00 p.m.