

PRELIMINARY
UNEDITED
TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
FOR THEIR PERIOD:
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
FRIDAY, MAY 16, 1980

The House met at 10:00 A.M.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

ORAL QUESTIONS:

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, we have finally reached the ultimate in life in this Province. We are now in the same category as Calgary, Alberta, as far as an increase in the cost of living is concerned. Alberta, as hon. members know, is the wealthiest province in Canada; Newfoundland is the poorest province.

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

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order, the hon. President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL: I dislike to hear the hon. member begin the morning by making a speech.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member has a question. He is entitled to a short preamble, while I should direct him -

MR. NEARY: I was just going to ask my question, if the hon. member would just restrain himself and not be so nasty. The question is for the Premier by the way. Is he aware that the cost of living in Newfoundland last month rose by 1.1 per cent, the same as Calgary, Alberta? And two of the reasons given for the increase in the cost of living are housing and the price of automobiles and electricity rates. These are three reasons given. Is the hon. gentleman aware of this and if he is aware of it what does the government intend to do about the high increase in the cost of housing in this Province?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I am aware of what is happening across Canada as it relates to inflation and what is happening in this Province. The whole question of housing, according to some of the people in the St. John's area, the Real Estate Association and others, the cost of housing has not risen appreciably and I am sure the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (Mr. Windsor) when he comes to his seat can

PREMIER PECKFORD: elaborate more on that. We are looking at the situation. There is not that much that is in the arsenal, if you will, of a provincial government to do to try to alleviate those kinds of things. Because on the one hand if you do something in one sector then you have to increase something in another or reduce activity in another. But we are aware of the situation. It is a serious situation. The major responsibility lies in the national government to try to put in place a national policy which will assist in this way and why, by the way, that I co-ordinated some time ago, and it was the hon. member for LaPoile who criticized me for so doing, that I indicated to the Prime Minister some time ago, and I had the other premiers for Eastern Canada also support me, not so much that the interest rates were eighteen and nineteen per cent at the time, but even if they came down, this was my argument, that it was going to take a fairly long time for them to get near where they had always been, at ten per cent. So that in that interim year, or two year period,

PREMIER PECKFORD: perhaps nationally we should get together and try to put some programmes in place to help the housing industry. Of course the federal government has responded to me by just saying, no, we are going to let our existing policy stand, that we think we are going to do something for home owners but they really have not moved in to try and do anything. So we are willing to participate at a moment's notice with the other provinces and the federal government to try to help as it relates to interest rates which have a direct impact upon the housing market and upon housing in general. So if that is one of the contributing factors towards the rise, then we are on record as trying to help to do something about it. On electricity rates, obviously, we are concerned about that and we are trying to keep them as low as possible. Right now there is a subsidy on electrical rates in this Province of somewhere around ten, to twelve to thirteen million dollars a year out of the provincial treasury directly to keep electricity rates down. And we will continue to try to be as responsible as we can in that direction. In the whole question of cars, of course, there is very little we can do there, in the purchase of automobiles, to help. We can just try to ensure that proper practices are being used from time to time. But we will continue to monitor the situation, Mr. Speaker, and assure the hon. member that anything is really in our power to do we will do.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary question.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman raised the matter of interest rates and the hon. gentleman was the first one to criticize and jump on the Government of Canada for the high interest rates to get a little political mileage but then when the rates went down and had gone down for the fifth week in a row, the interest rates have dropped, I did not hear the hon. gentleman complementing the Government of Canada for their policy. But what I want to ask the hon. gentleman now is if he is aware that one of the reasons for the high cost of houses, especially in

MR. NEARY: the St. John's area, is due mainly because of the executives of companies that are affiliated with the offshore oil drilling offering people high prices for their homes, for their houses. Is the hon. gentleman aware of this and if the hon. gentleman is aware of it what does he intend to do about it?

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I do not think it is firmly established that the higher price of houses this year over last year, that the primary reason is what the hon. member gives. It is a factor towards inflating prices in the housing market in the St. John's area. I do not know. We can continue to monitor the situation just to see that there is no

PREMIER PECKFORD:

gouging going on, if you will. But we are not aware - the housing market for a while seemed to take off, but I think it has sort of levelled off again now in the St. John's area. As it relates to building of homes in the St. John's area, there are a lot of serviced lots available. In the New Town area there are hundreds of serviced lots available at prices which have been established, so that there is a fair amount of that. What will then affect the building of houses - not the purchase of existing housing stock - the building of houses, will be the interest rates. That is what we have to get at. And as far as that goes, my whole argument on the interest rates, as I have told the hon. member, was not so much whether the policy that the federal government were using was wrong as it related to interest rates, I do not argue with that, what is wrong is that there is a period of time, and it could be a year, it could be two years, when interest rates are still going to be substantially higher for the purchase of homes or the borrowing of money for anything, a lot higher than it had been up to the beginning of 1979, for that two or three year period. I do not argue with the present policy that the federal government are using as it relates to interest rates. What I am saying is that those people who are going to be most affected by it should thereby get some relief in that interim period of time on the purchase of money over the broad spectrum, not just for money to borrow to build houses but on a whole bunch of other areas. But we need perhaps some temporary measures like that, and that can only be done at the federal level to be of any great meaning.

MR. S. NEARY:

A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

A final supplementary, the hon. the member for LaPoile.

MR. S. NEARY:

As the hon. gentleman knows, there is a desperate shortage of apartments and houses in this Province. In my own district of Port aux Basques there is a desperate housing shortage. Will the hon. gentleman tell the House and the people of this Province what plans the government have this year - give us a few details, be

MR. S. NEARY: specific about it - what plans the government have to construct new houses, to construct new apartment buildings in this Province this year?

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, we have a housing programme in place now in rural parts of the Province to assist Newfoundlanders. That is already in place, that was announced in the Budget - very specific - to help people get into houses.

MR. S. NEARY: Yes.

PREMIER PECKFORD: So the only areas that have not been covered are in the St. John's area as it relates to the borrowing of money and that is where our great concern is now. On the whole question of apartments in St. John's, I think the vacancy rate right now is around zero and it is unacceptable and we have to do something about it. I think there are a number of proposals now on the drawing boards to build a number of apartments in the St. John's area. Some of them have been before City Council over the last few weeks. So we have to alleviate that. That is where the great problem is right now in St. John's.

MR. E. ROBERTS: (inaudible) the Rental Tenancies Board

PREMIER PECKFORD: The Rental Tenancies Board - there are -

MR. E. ROBERTS: - (inaudible) tax system in St. John's.

MR. D. HOLLETT: that is right and municipal governments.

MR. L. THOMS: That is right. That is the big problem.

PREMIER PECKFORD: A number of weeks ago I indicated in talking about the apartment problem in St. John's - and I did, as a matter of fact, so long ago as when I was Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing - that one of the big problems in St. John's - and the government have been trying to get the city to change it - is to go from a rental value to a capital value system. That is a big, big problem in the whole question of apartment construction in this city.

PREMIER PECKFORD: The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (Mr. N. Windsor) has met on two or three occasions with the Local Home Builders Association and they have complained to the minister about the whole question of the Tenacies Board. There is a feeling by the contractors and the home builders that the Tenacies Board is more in favour of the tenant rather than the owner of apartment dwellings and that it mitigates against new ones being built.

So these are two factors that go into the whole question of the apartments but outside of St. John's there is a pretty, pretty reasonable effort being made by the government to try to ensure that Newfoundlanders and rural Newfoundland because they do not want to live in apartments anyway, they want to live in their own homes -

MR. S. NEARY: Port aux Basques (inaudible)

PREMIER PECKFORD: are able to do so. So, I think on that score we are doing a fair amount. Some of it then in St. John's has to do with the municipal setup as well as other factors but there are, I think, a number of plans on the drawing boards now to build some additional apartment buildings in the St. John's area.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. E. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. J. Morgan) arising out of the announcement yesterday or maybe the day before, anyway, the recent announcement by Mr. De Bané the Minister of DREE at Ottawa, that the plant at St. Barbe, the proposal to develop a plant at St. Barbe had been rejected at least insofar as DREE were concerned. Now, DREE do not have the right to approve or disapprove whether a plant is built, all that DREE can say, of course, is whether they will help to fund it or not and at this stage they have said no. What I want to know from the minister is can he indicate, please, whether the government's position with respect to the plant at St. Barbe has changed in any way? The minister earlier indicated in the House and I believe in letters as well that he and his colleagues strongly supported the initiative to put a plant at St. Barbe, could the minister indicate whether that has changed in any way, please?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. J. MORGAN: No, Mr. Speaker, it has not changed from the time we held the last meetings with the federal officials of Fisheries and Oceans and when we were asked to comment to DREE. For some strange reason DREE suddenly decided to ask us for comment on the St. Barbe plant and most other projects connected with Fisheries, there was very seldom a request for a comment but they asked us to comment or give the Department of DREE our opinion on a St. Barbe proposed plant. And we wrote to DREE and we also met with them, when I say we - the officials of the Department of Fisheries - and put forward a position to them that we were concerned initially with the possible effect it would have on the operations at St. Anthony. So our position was taken that we had no objections to the plant at St. Barbe on the condition that the supply of raw material would be coming from the feeder plants, I can not list them off now but I -

MR. E. ROBERTS: Anchor Point, Flowers Cove

MR. J. MORGAN: Anchor Point, Flowers Cove and these feeder plants operated, and in fact mostly if not all, by T.J. Hardy from Port au Basques and, of course, T. J. Hardy is now owned by Nickersons.

MR. S. NEARY: Get out of here.

MR. J. MORGAN: There is no, there is no -

Mr. Speaker, -

MR. NEARY: That is slander.

MR. J. MORGAN: - it is an absolute, absolute correct statement.

MR. NEARY: That is slander.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

MR. NEARY: That is slander and an attempt to smear a good Newfoundlander.

MR. J. MORGAN: It is not slander Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The hon. the Minister of Fisheries is responding to a question.

MR. J. MORGAN: I am answering a question proposed and I am not using any smear tactics, I am merely giving a fact on the situation that the feeder plants that were owned by -

MR. NEARY: That is not true.

MR. W. MARSHALL: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER : A point of order, the hon. the President of the Council.

MR. W. MARSHALL: Your Honour, has made a ruling a moment ago.

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries (J. Morgan) is responding to a question from the hon. the Opposition House Leader. Your Honour just called the hon. the member for LaPoile (S. Neary) to order, and he is flagrantly ignoring the ruling of Your Honour and, you know, I mean, the House does not belong to the hon. the member for LaPoile.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. E. ROBERTS: To the point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: To the point of order, the hon. member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. E. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, just as the House does not belong to the member for LaPoile, it does not belong to the gentleman from St. John's East (W. Marshall), Sir. My colleague is being outraged by the Minister of Fisheries' repetition of statements, which I assure the

May 16, 1980

Tape No. 1597

EL - 2

MR. E. ROBERTS: minister are incorrect. The shareholdings are fifty-fifty. Fifty per cent held by Nickersons and fifty per cent -

AN HON. MEMBER: Fifty-one.

MR. E. ROBERTS: No, Mr. Speaker, I am sorry -

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please! To the point of order.

MR. E. ROBERTS: - the shares are fifty-fifty. But, in any event, my colleague is simply being outraged by the Minister of Fisheries repeating statements which my colleague believes, and I believe, correctly believes but, in any event, believes to be untrue. I am sure my colleague, it is not that I am sure he is able to restrain himself, I know he is able to. I would simply say to the House leader, could he do the same with the Minister of Fisheries (J. Morgan), please?

MR. NEARY: Right on.

MR. W. MARSHALL: Further on that point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. W. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, the issue is purely and simply that Your Honor, drew the hon. member for LaPoile (S. Neary) to order. The issue is purely and simply that when a member is speaking or a minister is answering a question, for that matter a member of the Opposition speaking, he is entitled to be heard. The issue is also, Mr. Speaker, surely, that a legislature cannot operate when there is utter chaos, when one member tries to take the Assembly on his back, like the hon. member continually attempts to do.

MR. SPEAKER: A final submission to the point of order, the hon. the member for the Strait of Bell Isle.

MR. E. ROBERTS: We are back on the tit for tat theory and we have heard one side, now we can have the tat. Mr. Speaker, the issue is not as put by my hon. friend, who seems to have an ongoing battle with the gentleman from LaPoile. And I wish he would not interrupt the Legislature's work and consume the work and the time of Question Period with

MR. E. ROBERTS: these quite inane submissions. The gentleman from LaPoile (S. Neary) is not defying Your Honor's ruling. Your Honor was quite clear. The gentleman from LaPoile is simply outraged by the Minister of Fisheries (J. Morgan) and he momentarily had to struggle to get himself under control. Because the Minister of Fisheries is a most outrageous person indeed, Sir, in this sense.

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, oh.

MR. E. ROBERTS: And that is what has happened in this and there is certainly no -

MR. MORGAN: (Inaudible)

MR. E. ROBERTS: I am sorry, now. Am I allowed to make my point without being interrupted by the Minister of Fisheries, Mr. Speaker? I simply want - You know, I would like to get back on the question because there are some very important points. There was no attempt to defy Your Honor's ruling, Sir.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): With respect to the point of order, I will simply repeat what has been repeated in this House many, many times. The person speaking has the right to be heard in silence and then presumably, during Question Period, if members of the Opposition to my right, are asking questions, then presumably they want to hear the answers. It does become difficult if there is a lot of objection or interruption across the House. So perhaps we could consider what we have always done in the past and that is to allow the person speaking the right to be heard in silence. The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. J. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, the feeder plants mentioned by the Opposition House Leader (Mr. Roberts) who is more knowledgeable of the area than I am it being his own district or neighbouring, part district, these feeder plants were operated by T.J. Hardy and our condition to the recommendation of approval, I guess you can call it that, or recommendation of support, was on the condition that the supply of raw material would come from these feeder plants for the proposed St. Barbe fish plant to be built by Nickerson's. We wanted to make sure there would be no adverse affect on the operation now owned by Fishery Products at St. Anthony -

MR. E. ROBERTS: And Port au Choix.

MR. J. MORGAN: - and Port au Choix. That was our condition, In fact, I had the courtesy to send a copy of the letter to the hon. gentleman to let him know what we were saying to the Federal Government. However, I am convinced that the federal authorities in the Department of Fisheries and Oceans have not given their full support if any support, to the proposed plant at St. Barbe.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it was not relative to the question that was asked but because of the comments made in the House with regards to ownership of certain companies, and looking at Mr. T.J. Hardy as connected with that operation proposed for St. Barbe, the fact is that no longer than a month ago Mr. Harold Nickerson sat in my office in front of witnesses, the officials of the Department of Fisheries and Mr. Peter Nicholson, the Vice-President of Nickerson's, at the same time he confirmed to me when we were discussing a fish plant operation for the Fox Island River area in the Western part of the Province. Mr. T.J. Hardy was supposed to move in there and put a plant there. We

MR. J. MORGAN: arranged to put a water supply in, when I say 'we', the Newfoundland Government and I said, 'Well, I know you are involved in Mr. T.J. Hardy's business, Mr. Nickerson so what is the story on Fox Island River?' And his comment was he was more than involved he controls T.J. Hardy. His comment was he controlled and he was going to go back and instruct T.J. Hardy to put a fish plant in Fox Island River.

So, Mr. Speaker, what I am saying is that the hon. gentleman whose district T.J. Hardy's plant is in, one of the plants, nobody is slandering Mr. Hardy, Mr. Hardy is a wonderful Newfoundlander. All I am saying is I am passing on information passed on from Nickerson's that they now own and control T.J. Hardy Company -

MR. S. NEARY: I will find out right now.

MR. E. ROBERTS: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): A supplementary; the hon. member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. E. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, the dispute as to who owns what obviously cannot be resolved here. I understand, just to make my own comment clear, that T.J. Hardy Limited is owned fifty/fifty. That is all I understand, I do not know about anything else.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the minister could tell us whether the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador are still prepared - now I do not want to get into the Northern cod thing, so if that is

MR. ROBERTS: relevant, just note it and put it aside, because it is not the point I am trying to get at - are the Government of Newfoundland still prepared to issue a licence, as they were formerly, in respect of the St. Barbe operation, and I say that on the assumption, which may or may not be correct, that the interests putting together the new fish plant are still prepared to go ahead on some scale even though they are not going to get apparently the DREE funding? And let me just add to that if I might, Mr. Speaker, that I agree with the government's position that it should go ahead, assuming it does not hurt adversely the plants at Port aux Choix and St. Anthony. But that is really by the by. Would the government still licence it if the St. Barbe Fish Plant Limited, or whatever it is called, come back and say, "We would like to go ahead. We are prepared to find the money. We can satisfy this condition." Would the government be prepared to issue the licences?" And I do not want to get into the Northern cod right now, because that is not what I am talking about.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. Minister of Fisheries. •

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, yes, that question was also posed by Mr. Nickerson, not at recent meetings on the Northern cod issue, but separate meetings about a month and a half ago. And at that time I looked at what was given to Mr. Nickerson's company by my predecessor, the licences issued or the -

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Carter.

MR. MORGAN: - or at least approval in principle to issue licences to them for the plant at St. Barbe. And I told them then that, look it was the Newfoundland Government's commitment to give them the licences and that commitment would be honoured by the Newfoundland Government except in one case, and I think Mr. Nickerson recognizes our position on that, it was in connection with herring, the herring species. They had a licence for a number of species, including herring, but I did say that we had some reservations about granting a licence for the processing of herring because of the problems on that part of the Coast in particular with the processing plants we now have in the Bay of Islands area, for example, and the

MR. MORGAN: supply of, or lack of supply of, herring stocks. So that is the only condition that is now attached to that.

In other words, what we are saying to Nickerson's is, "We will give you the licences but as for the funding all we can do is put forward our views to DREE which we have already done.

AN HON. MEMBER: Delightful.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): A final supplementary, the hon. member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. ROBERTS: If I might, Mr. Speaker, the minister I know will appreciate that the matter is of surpassing interest in that portion of our Province, part of which is in my district, part of which is in the district represented by my friend, the member for St. Barbe (Mr. Bennett). And in view of the fact that there will be some controversy about DREE's decision, and the Province's role in input into it, I wonder if the minister would consider,

MR. ROBERTS: and is he prepared to make public the submissions which the Province made to Ottawa in response to Ottawa's request for comments about which he told us in response to the first question which I asked this morning, Mr. Speaker? You know, that would establish clearly and I do not have any reason to question where the Province stands, but that would establish clearly just where the Province stands and it would - I think the minister would know what I am getting at, he would obviate any suggestion being made by any source that 'look, it would have gone ahead except the Province put the kibosh on it. And I am anxious that we know exactly who took what position and who is responsible for what, because I believe the people in that area, Sir, have a right to know.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, some time ago when I was asked the same question by the same hon. gentleman I said then I would not table or make public the documents that we had forwarded to Ottawa based on the fact that at that time there were ongoing negotiations -

MR. WHITE: They are over now.

MR. MORGAN: - between the company and DREE. Now that the conclusion has been reached, in this case by the federal department, and I have already indicated this morning to some extent, at least, the major content of our position to Ottawa and to the House here which means it is public, there is no objection to tabling the document we forwarded which I can supply to the member for the area as well. Our position is made quite clear and I think it is clearly obvious in the document that we forwarded to the federal authorities that that was not the reason. It was not the reason, there was no financial assistance granted to the company for the construction of a plant in St. Barbe.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for St. John's North followed by the hon. member for St. Mary's-The Capes.

MR. J. CARTER: I have a question for the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Brett). This being the start of the 24th weekend a lot of people are concerned that the provincial parks

May 16,1980

Tape No. 1600

AH-2

MR. J. CARTER: may be overcrowded and they are afraid that if they park, say, in gravel pits or in just cleared areas off to one side of the road they may be prosecuted. I would like the minister to clear up this once and for all.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications.

MR. BRETT: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member just indicated a few minutes ago that he was going to ask me a question and I said I did not object. As far as the department is concerned, when we are finished with a gravel pit, or if there is a contractor working for us who is finished, we go in and we will take out the culverts, we will actually remove the entrance to the gravel pit and put in the ditch and leave it. Now actually what happens, as far as we know, is that private people go there with a shovel and they fill in the ditch enough to get their cars and their campers or whatever into the pit and they use it. Now, we have no policy, we have nothing to indicate that they cannot. I do not know if it is legal or illegal. All I know is that sometimes environment or tourism or somebody may call up and say, 'Look, will you take one of your dozers in and remove the access to a gravel pit' and, of course, we have to do it.

MR. C. BRETT: From the department's point of view, we wish that people would not use them for the simple reason that there is no control. People go in there and nine times out of ten they come out and they leave all kinds of garbage - glass, you name it - and there are no garbage cans, there is nothing, so we would prefer that people did not use them. Now, we recognize there is not enough park space, but in the meantime, we still do not want to see them using gravel pits. Actually, we do not have any control and our department will not prosecute people if they do go there.

MR. L. STIRLING: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): I have indicated I would recognize the hon. the member for St. Mary's - The Capes (Mr. D. Hancock). Does he wish to give leave to the hon. the member for Bonavista North?

MR. D. HANCOCK: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. L. STIRLING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

A question for the Premier. It's really a question that was asked a couple of weeks ago and the Premier knows I am going to ask it again. It has to do with the Greenspond Causeway. There is an indication that the combination of the provincial and federal people will be proceeding with the causeway this year. There is some question about whether or not the government have actually applied for the federal funds, and the question I asked the Premier - I think it was two weeks ago, and I realize he has been busy - the question I asked the Premier was if the federal people come up with their funds - and I understand there is enough savings just in maintenance that the provincial government can complete their share of the causeway. And I ask the Premier again whether or not he has had an opportunity to get a commitment from his colleagues on behalf of the people of Greenspond?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. C. Brett), Mr. Speaker, can answer that question.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Communications.

MR. C. BRETT: Mr. Speaker, I received some correspondence from the federal member for the area, Mr. Baker, who indicated in the correspondence that the federal government was willing to foot the cost of the causeway on a 50/50 basis. Now, of course, Mr. Baker does not have any authority, at least I do not think he does. I do not think he has the authority to make that kind of statement. We have no correspondence, we have no commitment, we have nothing from M.O.T. or anybody else in the federal government who has the authority to make that kind of decision. We have nothing from them indicating that they would pay 10 per cent or 50 per cent or whatever. So we are going to be looking for a lot more than 50 per cent. So up to now we have no commitment from the federal government.

MR. L. STIRLING: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary.

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

MR. L. STIRLING: The question which I asked the Premier and which I have asked the minister has nothing to do with the federal government. The question I asked arises out of discussions that we have had privately and that was that my understanding was that the federal government had committed themselves to put some money in for improving the ferry service, improving the terminals. Let us leave the federal question out of it. The indication that I had from the minister is that there was enough savings from maintenance and the subsidy on the ferry service that the Province would certainly be able to put up their share. Now, just assuming that either Mr. Baker or the federal government are prepared to do something, is the Province prepared to put up its share?

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications.

MR. BRETT: Mr. Speaker, the Province is willing to put up money for the Greenspond Causeway. But how much we will put up or how soon the causeway starts or finishes depends on how much the federal government is willing to pay towards the cost of the causeway. And obviously we are looking at it from a point of view of what the ferry system will cost and what the savings will be down the road. But how much we put into it or how soon we will go ahead with it depends on the final negotiations.

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

MR. STIRLING: Yes, because I could only have a couple of questions in supplementaries, the final supplementary then has to be, based on the information that Mr. Baker has provided, has the government at this stage made an application to the federal government for any portion, or any amount of money in a specific application asking the federal government to put up specific figures, or specific amounts?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications.

MR. BRETT: Mr. Speaker, I do not know if we actually said that we wanted ninety per cent, or eighty per cent. I cannot answer that. All I know is that we have been negotiating with the federal government.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, we have only a moment or two left so a quick question for my friend, the member for Gander (Mrs. Newhook), the Minister of Consumer Affairs. We have not heard anything at all from the hon. lady about the fate of the report of the special Environmental Assessment Committee set up to review the proposals by BRINEX, I believe, or BRINCO, somewhere in the BRINCO corporate structure, by BRINEX I believe it was, to develop the uranium mine in Labrador. Could the minister

MR. ROBERTS: confirm, Sir, please if the report has recommended that that project not go ahead?

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs and the Environment.

MRS. NEWHOOK: Mr. Speaker, the report of the BRINEX hearing board will be distributed to the public in a few days. And I am sure the hon. member then will be able to read the full report of the board. It will be delayed now for a few days because in reviewing the report there are a couple of statements in it that our department is seeking clarification on. And just as soon as we receive this clarification this report will be distributed to the public.

MR. SPEAKER: A final supplementary.

MR. ROBERTS: A supplementary, a final one, Sir.
The minister obviously did not understand my question or does not want to answer it. If she does not want to answer it I cannot make her but I can try to see if I can make it more clear. I was not asking what the government intend to do about it, I asked the minister if she would confirm that the committee have recommended that the project not go ahead? Yes or no would be all I need.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs and the Environment.

MRS. NEWHOOK: Well, Mr. Speaker, I cannot say whether it is a clear recommendation, whether it should or should not. And there are various recommendations in the report and I am sure that the hon. member, probably, would like to draw his own conclusions from it.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The time for Oral Questions has expired.

MR. S. NEARY: A point of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A point of privilege, the hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, you have to raise a point of privilege, as Your Honour knows, at the earliest opportunity. Well, about a half an hour ago, or twenty-five minutes ago the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan) made a very wreckless and irresponsible statement regarding an outstanding Newfoundlander who is in the fish processing business in this Province, Mr. T.J. Hardy. The statement was misleading and could only damage Mr. Hardy's business, a man who is not a member of this House, who cannot defend himself. And I am asking Your Honour -

MR. J. MORGAN: Did you call him?

MR. S. NEARY: I called Mr. Hardy on the phone when the hon. gentleman made the statement, I got him at his home. He denied that Nickerson's owned 51 per cent or 50 per cent of T.J. Hardy Limited. He says it is not true! And the hon. gentleman should retract his statement and apologize, Mr. Speaker. It is a breach of privilege of this House, it is an abuse of the privilege of this House and it is just typical of the wreckless statements that the hon. gentleman has been making in recent days in this Province.

MR. J. MORGAN: To the point of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!
To the point of privilege, the hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. J. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, in giving information to the House of Assembly I make every effort and every possible effort to give factual information. And today in the House of Assembly I gave information regarding a meeting which was not a confidential meeting. It was an open discussion between the company, Nickerson's, and ourselves, the officials of the Department of Fisheries, not just Mr. Nickerson and the Minister of Fisheries alone, with witnesses there, lots of them, in fact it was a very large meeting, a gathering in the office of the Department of Fisheries whereby Mr. Nickerson stated - now who do I believe?-it does not really bother me that much except that I notice the company, Nickerson's, is making substantial investments in the Province over the past couple of months by buying out local companies and taking them over. And in this case we were discussing a plant operation, nothing to do with St. Barbe, in this case an operation in Fox Island River - we have invested dollars, taxpayers dollars to put a water supply system in for a proposed plant by T.J. Hardy - and it was then that Mr. Nickerson informed us that they do control T.J. Hardy, they control the company to the point where they were going to go back to Mr. T.J. Hardy and instruct him - the words were, 'instruct him to put a fish plant operation, a processing operation in Fox Island River' where we had invested dollars with the belief that there were going to be some investments made in that community by the company T.J. Hardy.

There is no condemnation of Mr. T.J. Hardy, there is nobody making inflammatory statements about the hon. gentleman from the district, in this case it is a constituent of his, Mr. T.J. Hardy, a fine Newfoundlander, a fine gentleman. But the fact

MR. J. MORGAN: is one company says they control it and Mr. Hardy says no. That is a difference of opinion between two companies not these House of Assembly matters.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. R. MOORES: Resign, resign!

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

With respect to the point of privilege there is obviously not a prima facie case and no point of privilege. Not only is it a difference of opinion between the two companies, I suggest it is a difference of opinion between the two hon. members as well.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order 40, Bill No. 44.

Second reading of a bill

entitled, "An Act To Adopt A Flag For The Province".

On the amendment, the hon.

member for Windsor - Buchans.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. G. FLIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to say a few words on this amendment. And, Mr. Speaker, what is amazing in this is that I am speaking, that I am following the hon. member from the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts). We sat here yesterday afternoon, Mr. Speaker, waiting, in our usual co-operative way, for someone from the other side to stand and address himself to this bill or this amendment. Mr. Speaker, we waited in vain and the Minister of Tourism, Recreation and Culture (Mr. Dawe) again moved up and thought he could close off the debate -

AN HON. MEMBER: (inaudible)

MR. F. ROWE: Now let us shut that up right off the bat.

MR. G. FLIGHT: But, Mr. Speaker, there is one thing becoming very, very obvious that there should be a lot of shame attached to it. It is obvious, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. crowd on the other side have not got the backbone or the courage to stand up and state where they stand on this flag issue.

One of two things has happened, Mr. Speaker, either the Premier has told them, in which they have not got the backbone to defy the Premier and stand up, or else they are afraid. They are cowardly, Mr. Speaker.

MR. T. LUSH: I would say it is both.

MR. G. FLIGHT: They are too cowardly to stand up and indicate where they stand on this flag issue -

MR. T. LUSH: It is a combination of both.

MR. G. FLIGHT: - for fear that the word will get back to their constituents -

MR. LUSH: It is a combination of both.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): I ask the hon. member to withdraw the terminology 'cowardly'. It has been ruled parliamentary.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. F. ROWE: He is being provoked.

MR. G. FLIGHT: I so withdraw, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, as this debate goes on, Mr. Speaker, it will become obvious that it is not a debate, it is an exercise, I suppose, in rhetoric. A debate, Mr. Speaker, over the years I have been in this House, Mr. Speaker, I recall one instance in particular where the Premier, the then Minister of Mines and Energy, introduced a piece of legislation in this House and after four or five hours of debate accepted an amendment to that particular piece of legislation. Now, Mr. Speaker, that is my interpretation of debate, where people get to make points and point out the weaknesses of certain legislation and that kind of thing. Well, Mr. Speaker, it became very obvious the day that this debate started, it was not debate for that purpose, it was not debate so that the people who were speaking against this flag or for this flag, that the points they would make would have any bearing on the design. No, Mr. Speaker, the Premier had his mind made up and the Premier had his mind made up the day that he appointed his Royal Commission. Let us look at the performance of the Committee, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Pratt gave a ultimatum to the Committee, seven members of this House of Assembly, he gave the ultimatum that 'I will design so many flags and you will have the choice to pick the flag of your choice but it will have to be an unanimous decision by the Committee. And if we have a unanimous decision by the Committee there will be no modifications allowed.' Now, Mr. Speaker, there was indeed a unanimous decision. Not the first choice of the Committee the second choice was the only one there could have been a unanimous decision on. Now, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Pratt must have known that that Committee was simply a committee of this House of Assembly, that the mandate of that Committee was to go out, listen to representation from

MR. G. FLIGHT: the Province, hold public meetings and then come back and recommend a design based on what they had gleaned from those meetings, the kind of feedback they got from the people.

Now, Mr. Pratt must have known that and certainly the Committee knew it. So, Mr. Speaker, I do not suppose - I would not go as far as to charge the Committee with contempt Mr. Pratt with contempt but the fact is, Mr. Speaker, there are fifty-two members in this House, there were six members on the Committee and, Mr. Speaker, if Mr. Pratt wanted unanimous agreement from the Committee and the ultimatum was 'no modification', he must have taken for granted, Mr. Speaker, that when it came back into this House that there would be no call for modification, that we were going to accept carte blanche without question the committee.

Now, that was a known fact Mr. Speaker, and I suspect that there was collusion, I suspect that the Premier of this Province knew, it did not matter what that design was, Mr. Speaker, it did not matter, that flag was going to be the flag adopted by this House. And, Mr. Speaker, it was known if not by all of the Committee certainly by some members of the Committee, members who were in a position to say, we can be unanimous, we can accept anything that Mr. Pratt designs because the debate in the House of Assembly will be irrelevant, the Premier has indicated that whatever you come in with is going to be accepted. The only debate - we will go through the motions, we will let the Opposition or members speak their mind on the legislation, But then he let the word go out to his members, ministry and backbenchers alike, "I intend to support this flag, this is going to be the flag of Newfoundland, this is going to be my flag and you vote for it." Now, that is what has happened, Mr. Speaker and that is the reason why we are not getting any more speakers up on the other side. The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (Mr. N. Windsor) has not spoken yet, the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. J. Dinn),

MR. G. FLIGHT: the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. J. Morgan), and, Mr. Speaker, the one minister who did speak, it is unreal.

I would like for the minister to stand up in the House of Assembly and read a message - the Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. L. Barry - read a message that he received based on the speech that he gave in this House. The hon. minister stood up and said, 'I do not like the flag. It is not symbolic, it does nothing for me. I do not like it.' Well, if that is all true why would he vote for it? Why would one vote for a flag that one did not like - any aspect of the flag he did not like? You know, that is courage, Mr. Speaker, that is a man of conviction!

MR. L. STIRLING: In a free vote.

MR. G. FLIGHT: Maybe some of the things he is going to be negotiating for us on behalf of this Province, Mr. Speaker, he might not like.

MR. S. NEARY: Hear, hear!

MR. G. FLIGHT: It might go against the grain and he might not like it. He might recognize it as a bad deal, but because there is some reason, some unseen force, some pressure -

MR. D. HOLLETT: Because the Premier wants him to.

MR. G. FLIGHT: - because the Premier wants him to, he might go ahead with a deal like that with that agreement. So what can the people of this Province think, Mr. Speaker, when the minister stands up in this House and gives every reason in the world to vote against that flag and then he votes for it? What can one believe?

MR. S. NEARY: He likes his ministerial salary.

MR. G. FLIGHT: He likes his ministerial salary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. F. ROWE: When the Premier says, 'Jump,' he says, 'How far?'

MR. S. NEARY: And the member for Bay of Islands (Woodrow) wants to worm his way into the Cabinet.

MR. G. FLIGHT: That is right, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to be on record - because I would presume - I understand there may well be a subamendment or two subamendments or three subamendments, it depends on how much time we have to buy for the people of this Province to mount the kind of opposition to prove to this bunch of dictators that they do not want that flag, that

MR. G. FLIGHT: they do not intend to live with that flag - the hon. bunch of dictators. Mr. Speaker, the advantage of speaking now in this debate is one of speaking from hindsight. One knows now. I spoke in the second day of the debate of this House, Mr. Speaker, in this particular debate, and I was in a position to have to pretty well register my own concerns with that flag - with the design and with everything I saw about the flag and about the design. But now it has been two weeks, Mr. Speaker, and we have the benefit of hindsight. We have the benefit of knowing what is happening out there in the Province. We have the benefit of knowing the universal opposition to this flag. And it is unbelievable, Mr. Speaker, that speaker after speaker getting up and registering their protests, registering the feelings of the people of their Province, of their districts, why it is this government still persists in railroading this bill through. Why the haste, Mr. Speaker? What would be wrong with allowing the people of this Province a month or two or three? What is wrong with modification of this flag, Mr. Speaker? What is wrong with it?

Mr. Speaker, one of the big arguments by the government - as I pointed out already in this debate, but I will do it again - one of the big arguments is that, 'Well, this will blow over. Look at the debate with the Maple Leaf, the flag of Canada.' Well, Mr. Speaker, there is a difference - at least the new flag of Canada had symbolism. But more important, Mr. Speaker, when the federal government of the day brought in that flag, their first choice, the heavyweight of designs was three Maple Leaves. But the people of Canada opposed that and suggested that one Maple Leaf would be more appropriate. And the government of the day, Mr. Speaker, made that concession that the flag could be modified. Now, why is it that this government is not prepared to allow modification of that flag? Why is it that it is not prepared to permit something in that flag that would make it, you know, relatively acceptable across the Province? Why? It is utter and total contempt, Mr. Speaker, and arrogance, all for the vanity of one man, Mr. Speaker. The Premier of this Province wants to be able to stand up eight or ten years from now - or ten days from now when this debate ends and say, 'That is my flag!'

MR. FLIGHT: The vanity, Mr. Speaker, of one man, the Premier of this Province, the man who was going to have open government, the man who was going to let people have a say in the affairs of this Province, Mr. Speaker. He said quite recently that you would get a lot more commissions in this Province, that his kind of government was going to be the kind of government that reflected the will of the people. We were going to have royal commissions. We did not have a spray programme because he was so concerned about the feeling of the people, he wanted to get a royal commission out around and test the air and let the people have some input. That is not much in keeping with the way he is handling this particular debate, Mr. Speaker.

MR. F. ROWE: He has not even handled it.

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, the commissions that we have in the future, if the Premier treats or ignores the royal commissions or the select committees of this House the way he is ignoring this one, his committees will not have too much credibility in this Province, Mr. Speaker. The Premier, Mr. Speaker, is paranoid. The Premier of Newfoundland is paranoid over this issue. And he has got the whips on. It was very obvious yesterday, Mr. Speaker, when he stood there and indicated - there were a few people over there who wanted to get up. I know them over there who want to get up. And may get up and they may vote for the flag, but they want to slip into the answer some little concerns they have, so they can go back to their district and say, "Look, I tried and I said this and I said that, but it had no effect." He is not even permitting them to do that. He is not giving them the opportunity to do that. And let me tell this House of Assembly, and let me tell the members opposite too, what the Premier has done by allowing the kind of a free vote that he has allowed.

The hon. member for -

MR. F. ROWE: St. John's Centre.

MR. FLIGHT: No, Luke Woodrow' -

MR. F. ROWE: Bay of Islands.

MR. FLIGHT: - Bay of Islands (Mr. Woodrow), the hon. member for Baie Verte -

MR. F. ROWE: White Bay.

MR. FLIGHT: - Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. Rideout), the hon. members from the Corner Brook districts, the hon. member for Gander (Ms Newhook), where only two people showed up to represent all the people she represents, and the hon. minister did not bother to go to the Committee or go to anybody and say, "I am sorry, that does not represent the views of my people. We have to find another way to find out how the people of Gander feel."

Mr. Speaker, had the government and had the Premier not been so hypocritical and said, "This is a party vote," he would have let some of these people off the hook in the eyes of their constituents. Because they could have gone back - they know the feeling now - they could have gone back to the district and said, "Well, look, I do not agree with the flag any more than you do. And I stood up in the debate," or "I argued in caucus," or "I argued in Cabinet, but I mean that is it. You know I could not control it myself and I could not cross the House." Only some people can do that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WARREN: Right on. Right on.

MR. FLIGHT: So, Mr. Speaker -

MR. WARREN: (Inaudible) changed.

MR. FLIGHT: So, Mr. Speaker, they would have at least had that refuge. But now, Mr. Speaker, they go back and do not think for a second they are not waiting back there in the districts, do not think they are not waiting, the organizations and the individuals -

MR. STIRLING: A free vote.

MR. FLIGHT: - to ask them about the flag and why you allowed that monstrosity to be designated as our Provincial flag.

MR. STIRLING: On a free vote.

MR. FLIGHT:

What is the answer going to be then?

And I know some people over there are concerned about their political lives, who would go to any length, any length in the world to retain the support they have. What are they going to say then? They are going to have to face it. But they could have, like I said, if the Premier had not been a dictatorial as he was. He is so dictatorial but wanting to appear to be democratic, 'It is a free vote'. Some free vote, Mr. Speaker, some free vote.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to refer for a second - in my last speech I got up and I spent fifteen minutes of the speech, I suppose, defending the Union Jack. And I want to make it very clear - and it was the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) who reminded me, in a sense, that I want to be on record as to how I feel about the Union Jack in the flag. And, Mr. Speaker, I have no desire in the world to continue to fly the Union Jack. I would not be particularly concerned myself if the Union Jack were or were not incorporated. But, Mr. Speaker, the reason that I would say why not incorporate the Union Jack is this. Newfoundlanders are compassionate people, Mr. Speaker.

MR. G. FLIGHT: Newfoundlanders are the kind of people who would make that kind of concession, would it have been such a great concession? You know, we are talking about all the members of the Canadian Legion, all the veterans over the years. We have had hundreds and thousands of Newfoundlanders who died over the years in conflicts. We have had Newfoundlanders burried at sea shrouded in the Union Jack. Now, would it have been such a great concession? So, I am making the case in the sense that if I, you know, -

AN HON. MEMBER: (inaudible) the flag down.

MR. G. FLIGHT: What does it say there, thirty minutes?

MR. F.B. ROWE: You know, I think there is an error there, Mr. Speaker, with all due respect.

MR. SPEAKER: (Butt) Yes, the hon. member's time does not expire until 11:08.

MR. F.B. ROWE: That is right. That is right.

MR. SPEAKER: And I will give you a five minute warning at 11:03

MR. G. FLIGHT: I am going to move a subamendment to say all I have got to say gentlemen, So, I mean, I will just have to do it.

Mr. Speaker, would it have been that great a concession? If I and I suggest to you that most Newfoundlanders feel this way, most Newfoundlanders, that if they hated the Union Jack, if they did not want to see it ever again, they would be prepared to make that concession to the people who gave so much to this Province over the years. Simply make the concession. Would it have been such a sacrifice? Now, that - I want it on record, Mr. Speaker, is the concern I

MR. G. FLIGHT: have about the Union Jack. And that concern, Mr. Speaker, is held by thousands and thousands and thousands of Newfoundlanders. There are very few Newfoundlanders in this Province today who would deny having the Union Jack incorporated into that flag for the reasons I have given, not because they want to continue flying the Union Jack, not because they feel any special allegiance, not because it is the flag of another country, not because we are five hundred years old and it flew over them.

They want a distinctive flag, but Newfoundlanders are big enough to make that little concession. And the generations coming after us will applaud us for doing it. But no we are too small, Mr. Speaker. The government of this Province and the Premier and the ministers who support him are too small to make that concession. Too small to make the concession to allow the Union Jack to be incorporated in that flag

DR. J. COLLINS: It is incorporated in it.

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, oh.

MR. G. FLIGHT: In the mind of the minister, the abstract minister, some of the figures I see coming out of Finance must be considered in the abstract, too.

MR. L. STIRLING: It is certainly symbolic. It is symbolic.

MR. G. FLIGHT: Symbolic is the word.

MR. L. STIRLING: Creative accounting.

MR. G. FLIGHT: Now, Mr. Speaker, the universal -

MR. D. HOLLETT: Two from three (inaudible) symbolic.

MR. G. FLIGHT: The other point I made with regard to the lack of symbolism in the flag, Mr. Speaker, again it has become obvious now, with hindsight, that practically everyone in this Province wanted some symbolism of Newfoundland. They wanted some symbolism. It could have been any one of twenty things, I suppose. If the Committee could

MR. G. FLIGHT: have been unanimous on that flag, on that design, certainly they could have come to a unanimous decision on some symbol, whether it was the Pitcher Plant or the Coat of Arms, or a blueberry or a bakeapple or a codfish. It could have been anything. If they would have been unanimous, Mr. Speaker, we would not have to be going through this debate we are going through. We would not have to be trying to buy time to let the people of this Province have some input and show their concern.

MR. S. NEARY: They were calling in from Ramea last night to find out where the hon. gentleman was (inaudible)

MR. G. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, let me read a letter and I would hope—and if anyone in this House is small enough to do it, I will table it. I do not want to table it because it is from an individual and it is really not necessary to table it. I will read it and I will table it.

MR. S. NEARY: No 'Graham' they do not see any point at all because he got his mind made up, they are going to follow the leader, anyway. That is why they (inaudible) up

AN HON. MEMBER: We will get it later, Graham.

MR. S. NEARY: Is that so?

MR. G. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, listen to this. This should make some people on the other side happy. I would say to the House of Assembly, Mr. Speaker, that this is a constituent of mine and I thought that I knew all my constituents, could recognize them. I have never met, to my knowledge, this constituent. I would not know him if he were to walk into the House of Assembly but he was concerned enough to write me a letter and I regret that I have obviously left the second page of the letter on my desk. No, I did not. I have it. I have it. And, Mr. Speaker, if someone is in the House small enough to ask me to table it, I will table it. However, it is really not necessary.

MR. G. FLIGHT: The Premier is getting thousands of letters a day and he is not bringing them to this House. All of them opposing.

MR. S. NEARY: And phone calls and telexes.

MR. G. FLIGHT: And this should make- the first line or two here, which is not important to the letter, as far as I am concerned.

MR. S. NEARY: Know them all.

MR. G. FLIGHT: It says, 'Mr. Flight, Mr. Graham Flight, MEA, Confederation Building, St. John's, Newfoundland. Dear Mr. Flight. This is just a note

MR. FLIGHT: hoping that you are one of the MHAs opposing the new flag. In most recent elections I have voted for the PC candidate feeling that the PC government has been doing a credible job. However, I cannot vote for a party that railroads through the elected assembly a flag that ordinary Newfoundland people cannot identify with.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. FLIGHT: Now that is the unimportant part of this letter. Of all the letters that have been written in this Province, Mr. Speaker, of all the letters that I received and other members that I have seen and all the conversations I have heard, no one letter comes so close to reflecting the concerns and the feelings of the majority, the silent majority out there. Just listen to this, 'railroad is the proper word. Even while the Legislative Assembly is apparently debating adoption of the flag, pictures of it with the label, "This is our new flag" are being posted at public buildings including schools. Now, Mr. Speaker, obviously that man has the insight, he recognized the hypocrisy of what is happening in this Province, what is happening in this House of Assembly. Even while the Premier brings in a bill, Mr. Speaker, to say we will debate the flag and presumably the House of Assembly, after the debate, will adopt that flag. But the day that that debate started - and the Premier knows this, the day that that debate started there were flags shuttled out across this Province with signs, "This is our new flag" - in schools. And we talk about hypocrisy. They are a bunch of hypocrites, Mr. Speaker, and every person, Mr. Speaker, who stands up to support it. Now listen to the next paragraph, Mr. Speaker, 'Some commentators have observed that there was initial opposition to the new Canadian flag, that opposition now being virtually dead, right on! However, the opposition then was not because the symbolism of that flag was too abstract for the people to identify with, there is nothing abstract about the Canadian flag, but -

MR. SPEAKER (Butt): Order, please! I have to ask the hon. member to withdraw the word 'hyprocite'. It is unparliamentary.

MR. FLIGHT: I am sorry. If it pleases Your Honour I withdraw it. However, the oppositon was then not because of the symbolism of that flag, because it was to abstract for people to identify with, but rather because the symbolism was clearly Canadian instead of reflecting and including the British and French elements to remind us of our past. Now, in addition, at that time a flag with three leaves was the initial strong contender but the Canadian government was willing to listen to the people and allow modification. Well what is wrong with this government? Why are they not prepared to listen to the people and allow some modification? It will still be their flag. The Premier could still go around and say, "This is Peckford's pennant" Why is he not prepared to allow some modification and why is he allowing the kind of a charade that we are seeing on this debate? A charade, an insult to the intelligence of the people of this Province, Mr. Speaker, to all the people and the Premier knows it. Now listen to this, Mr. Speaker, the new flag tries by very abstract symbolism to indicate our heritage and our future. However, a flag that ordinary people'- and here is the key, Mr. Speaker -'a flag that ordinary people'-not members of the House of Assembly and lawyers and doctors and artists, the snobbish elite of this Province, Mr. Speaker, and you are not in this place very long before you become one of the snobbish elite, I will guarantee you. You see yourself as one, Mr. Speaker. That flag is not meant to please the aristocracy of this Province, it is meant to please the ordinary people and the ordinary people of this Province, Mr. Speaker, not only do they not sit in this House of Assembly if this debate goes through they are not represented in the House of Assembly.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Right, Right on.

MR. FLIGHT:

And then it says, "This, the new flag cannot help but remain an artist's flag! Is that what the Premier wants? Does the Premier want an artist's flag or does he want a people's flag? Does he want a flag that the people of Newfoundland will be proud of

May 16, 1980

Tape No. 1608

AH-3

MR. FLIGHT:

or does he want a flag that he can be proud of? That he can go around and point to and say, 'That is my flag. I did that. That is my one contribution to Newfoundland'. Now, Mr. Speaker, I am running out off time and there is one other thing that I want - I cannot believe, Mr. Speaker,

MR. G. FLIGHT: this government denied the Royal Canadian Legion the right to appear before the Bar of this House.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in the second paragraph of this letter it is very obvious to me that the man who would have made this presentation he may not have wrote it and he may indeed have wrote it -

AN HON. MEMBER: No way.

MR. G. FLIGHT: was my worthy opponent in the last provincial election who is now the first Vice-President of the Royal Canadian Legion, the man who would have made the presentation. And I stand here, Mr. Speaker, and I say that I defend that man and that organization's right to have appeared before this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. G. FLIGHT: There is not a member sitting in this House of Assembly today--I am prepared, Mr. Speaker, to exclude the two veterans who are in this House. And having excluded them I say to you there is not a man, a member sitting in this House, who has earned his right to be in this House any more than the Royal Canadian Legion and most of them have not come close to deserving that right. And they sit here in their snobbishness, they sit here in their all importance and deny the Royal Canadian Legion. But for the members of the Royal Canadian Legion and their ancestors, we might not be sitting here debating in this forum. I might not have the right to stand up and say what I am saying. Certainly God, the people who made it possible for us, to go through what we have gone through this past two weeks in this debate should have had the right to come and stand before the Bar of this House and make a presentation. What was the Premier afraid of? You talk about denying rights, Mr. Speaker,

MR. G. FLIGHT: Did Dalton Camp have just as - was what he talked about in this House just as important. more important than what the Legion would have said? Let me read a paragraph. Mr. Speaker. I may have to move a sub-amendment here. Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I tell you I do not understand the design of that flag. If there is one country or province or state or island in this world that cannot be represented by straight lines it has got to be Newfoundland. This Province is the most crooked piece of real estate in the world. And the perimeter of -

MR. L. THOMS: It has been for the past eight years.

MR. G. FLIGHT: And now it is becoming corrupt. Mr. Speaker, the one place in this world that should not have been represented by parallel straight lines is the Island of Newfoundland and Labrador, Mr. Speaker. Now, Mr. Speaker, the day that that flag -

MR. SPEAKER: You have thirty seconds remaining.

MR. G. FLIGHT: I will get another chance, Mr. Speaker, this is not the only amendment. The only hon. gentlemen might just as well sit back. This is not the last amendment that this debate is going to see and so, Mr. Speaker, I will get another chance.

I will just end up, Mr. Speaker, by saying that there is no question about the outcome of this debate. This has not been a debate as I said, it has not been a debate that would have been conducive to new ideas and the possibility of having changes made in that flag. It has not been a debate where a member could have felt that he had a chance to reflect the feelings of his constituents or the the people of this Province. That did not matter, that is insignificant. Had the deal been

MR. G. FLIGHT: struck, Mr. Speaker, that only one speaker stood on this side and one on the other side, that would have been the end of the debate. If it goes on to July, Mr. Speaker, it will not make any difference we may see closure.

Maybe that is what we should do. We should make the Premier fight for his pennant. We should keep her open and force him to have closure. He is prepared to fight, let him get his flag the hard way. His flag, not the people's flag, his flag. And, Mr. Speaker, let every member who stands in this House of Assembly and supports this flag know that they are doing the people of Newfoundland a grave injustice. You talk about famous - I have heard about famous flags, Mr. Speaker, the day that that flag -

MR. SPEAKER (Butt): Order please!
The hon. member's time has expired.

MR. L. STIRLING: By leave.

MR. G. FLIGHT: The day that that flag, Mr. Speaker, is adopted in this House it will be a day of infamy for this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. member for Grand Bank.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THOMS: I do not think the hon. member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Andrews) should be as presumptuous as he obviously is now by banging on his desk there.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to have a few words to say on this amendment. And I think maybe I can best start off by quoting the great Irish playwright, Brendan Beehan, who once said that, "critics are like eunuchs in a harem, they see the trick done every night and cannot do it themselves." Now it is very easy, Mr. Speaker, it is very easy for one to stand in this House and criticize this new design. There has been evidence to me that there has been a cop out, to an extent, on both sides of the House. It is a free vote. It is a free vote and I guess I interpret that as being able to stand here and criticize the argument put forward by any member of this House. But I have heard a lot of excuses, a lot of excuses for voting for the flag, and a lot of excuses for voting against the flag. There has certainly been evidence of a lack of conviction. And I guess this was most evident by the Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. Barry), who certainly gave the impression that he did not like the flag. The flag did not grab him. But he was going to vote for the flag anyway.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to correct some of the impressions given about the Committee and Mr. Pratt. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Pratt does not deserve the criticism that has been levelled at him in this House. He just does not deserve it.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. THOMS: Mr. Pratt was no more than a professional person, a professional person, who gave assistance to the Committee in designing the flag. There was no attempt on his part to force a particular design on the Committee. The Committee made up its mind of its own free will. There was no force. There was no coercion. And I really see nothing wrong with how the choice was made when it came to the Committee. There were seven people, seven. The seven people could not make up their own minds of

MR. THOMS: which design they wanted, which design they wanted. So it is a well known method, we could all agree on one particular design that we would take as our second choice. Certainly it was not the one that I wanted. The design that I wanted out of the six that were presented by the artist nobody else wanted. Nobody else wanted it. It had a lot more red in it, Mr. Speaker. I am partial to red. I like red. It is the Liberal colour and I like it. I am partial to red.

MR. NEARY: Nicer than Tory blue.

MR. THOMS: And I would have liked to have seen more red and less Tory blue.

MR. NEARY: Right on. Hear, hear!

MR. MORGAN: A most partisan flag.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker -

MR. HOLLETT: Yes, two-thirds blue.

MR. NEARY: Go out, boy, and apologize to your constituents.

MR. L. THOMS: I am concerned about what is happening in this Province. The flag issue is part of it. Right at the moment this Province is in confrontation, is at loggerheads, it is at war with Nova Scotia. It is in a confrontation position with Ottawa. Mr. Speaker, you talk about offshore oil and gas, you put me in the seat occupied by the Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. L. Barry) in this Province and I will have an agreement with Ottawa within twenty-four hours that 90 per cent of the people of this Province will accept.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. MORGAN: You are going to give it away, are you?

MR. L. THOMS: And I am not going to give it away but I can assure you that 90 per cent of the people of this Province - the other 10 per cent being the real greedy people will not accept it - but 90 per cent will accept it but this government does not want an agreement with Ottawa because that is not confrontation politics.

Mr. Speaker, one of the more serious confrontations that we have on the go right now, I saw it in Marystown at the Fisheries Conference, we have Newfoundlanders set -

MR. SPEAKER: (Butt) Order, please! Order, please! The hon. gentleman is speaking to the amendment on the flag?

MR. L. THOMS: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am speaking to the amendment on the flag, yes, and I am trying to show how these confrontations are analogous to the flag confrontation that we have in the Province today.

MR. S. NEARY: Hear, hear. A good point.

MR. L. THOMS: But we do have Newfoundlander against Newfoundlander, we have the South coast fisherman against the Northeast coast fishermen.

MR. S. NEARY: We had a vicious attack today on T.J. Hardy an outstanding Newfoundlander.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear.

MR. L. THOMS: We have, I believe, in this Province a very serious threat to Confederation.

MR. S. NEARY:

Right on.

MR. L. THOMS:

- a very serious threat.

MR. NEARY:

Separatists.

MR. L. THOMS:

The minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. L. Barry) said he was misquoted. He did not mean to say, "It was a serious threat but that there would be a disenchantment with Ottawa." Well, Mr. Speaker, that together with the controversy that is raging in this Province albeit aided and abetted by certain members of the press, these are things that deeply concern me as a Newfoundlander but I see it happening, I see it happening with this administration. I have to take exception when my friend from Windsor - Buchans (Mr. G. Flight) quoted from a letter and the person writing the letter said that in his opinion the PCs have done a incredible job. Now, I am sorry but I could not - anybody who would make a statement like that - I could not accept the statement about the flag from him. I just could not accept it. The man does not know what he is talking about. I would not take advice from him on the flag.

Mr. Speaker, I said on the first day this debate began that there was one condition laid down by the Committee that I did not know was fulfilled and that was the fifth condition. And while I think about it, Mr. Speaker, the Flag Committee did

MR. L. THOMS:

consciously decide that all seven members would not go to every meeting, that we would split up - some would go to one meeting, some would go to another meeting. And the reason that I was not at the meeting held in my district is the reason I stated the other day, that I was unable to travel at the time. I was in a body cast. I want to get that on the record because what I am saying today is going to go out to my constituents and I want them to know why I did not attend the meeting in Grand Bank.

But, Mr. Speaker, as I said, the one thing that has bothered me throughout this, and more particularly now, is the one condition that the flag would have to be accepted by a majority of the people. In the Chairman's report it ended up by saying, 'be widely accepted'. And, Mr. Speaker, there may be - and there probably is - a great silent majority in this Province today in connection with the flag. There may be a great silent majority, a large number of whom really could not care less whether we had a distinctive flag or not, really could not care less whether the Union Jack is retained as the flag of this Province. There may be a lot of others who like the design, who like the flag. But I do know that there are a lot of people out there who do not like the design of this flag.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. L. THOMS:

I am not prepared to say it is the vast majority out there who do not like the flag. What I am saying is, of those who responded, a vast majority of them do not like the design of this flag and they do not want it.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I also question whether the majority of this House wants this particular design. I question that. There has been a definite lack of participation in this debate by government members. I have not heard from Fortune - Hermitage, I have not heard from Menihek or Gander or Bonavista South. And I can go on and on and on. Humber West has not been heard from, except on the Open Line shows trying to defend his position.

MR. L. THOMS: Now, Mr. Speaker, this is an important issue. It is an important debate, it is an important bill. Everybody on this side has gotten up.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. L. THOMS: You just listen. Everybody on this side has gotten up and stated where they stand on this important issue.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. L. THOMS: Kenny Rogers would have had a lot of cowards of the county, Mr. Speaker, to choose from around here. But I resent the arrogance and the lack of participation by government members in this debate. And they are showing the same arrogance - the debate would have been over a dozen times - the Minister of Tourism, Recreation and Culture (Mr. R. Dawe) has been on his feet a dozen times attempting to close this debate. It is a bill sponsored by the Premier himself, and he has not had the intestinal fortitude

MR. THOMS:

to stand in this House and speak on this particular bill. He has not had it. And do not tell me, do not tell me, because the minister has been on his feet to close the debate with the Premier in his seat.

MR. NEARY: Hear, hear!

MR. THOMS: So for him to say that he is going to speak is incorrect. He would have been happy - the Premier of this Province would have been happy to close this debate without having spoken.

Now, I am supposed to support this piece of legislation in view of what has happened since last week in this House?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. THOMS: Since what has happened?

MR. NEARY: Cowards.

MR. THOMS: Am I supposed to support this legislation in view of what has happened?

MR. WARREN: With a bunch of cowards.

MR. THOMS: In view of what I have seen happening on the other side of the House?

MR. NEARY: Weaklings.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to hear silence on both sides of the House if I may.

MR. SPEAKER (Butt): Order, please! Order, please! The hon. member wishes to be heard in silence and that is his right.

The hon. member for Grand Bank.

MR. THOMS: As I said, there are a lot of things, and this flag debate is bringing it out, Mr. Speaker, it is showing me what is happening in this Province. Everything is being - it is a real ramming session. This is being rammed through the House. We have got confrontation on every front, every front. Newfoundlander against Newfoundlander, Canadian against Canadian, province against province, and I do not like the direction that this administration

MR. THOMS: is taking this Province. I do not like it.

MR. WARREN: Right on.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, the hon. the Premier gets up on his feet in answer to a question, yesterday, that I asked, 'Would he reconsider permitting the Canadian Legion to speak before the Bar of this House?' And the Premier got up and talked about the affront this would be to this House and to the parliamentary procedure.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the Premier of this Province, and I would like to remind every hon. gentleman and lady on the other side of the House, that we would not have any parliamentary democracy, we would not be here if it were not for those who now form the Canadian Legion. For the Premier of this Province, Mr. Speaker, to get up, have the audacity to get up, have the audacity to rise in his seat and compare the Canadian Legion to the Monarchist League or the Orange Lodge, or the Knights of Columbus, Mr. Speaker, is a real insult to every man and woman who fought in the two great wars and the Korean conflict. It is an insult to them. It is an insult to them.

MR. NEARY: Hear, hear!

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I probably have as many or more Orangemen as any district in this Province, and there is not one Orangeman in the district of Grand Bank, Mr. Speaker, who would not appreciate and respect the enormous sacrifice that was made by the Newfoundlanders who went overseas. Not one of them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THOMS: Not one of them. But, Mr. Speaker, I saw a lack of respect yesterday in this House -

MR. WARREN: By the Premier.

MR. THOMS: I saw a lack of respect in a letter from the President of the Council to the Canadian Legion, and I saw a lack of respect when the Premier got on his feet to try to justify and weasle his way out of refusing to permit a member of the Canadian Legion to come before the Bar of this House.

MR. NEARY: Right on. Right on.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

May 16, 1980

Tape No. 1613

NM - 3

MR. THOMS:

Can you imagine, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HANCOCK:

You would not know but it was the first time it was done.

MR. THOMS:

Dalton Camp was permitted to come before the Bar of this House.

MR. WARREN:

Who is Dalton Camp?

MR. THOMS:

Dalton Camp, the one-time Liberal who turned Tory. What did Dalton Camp - he was President of the Tory Party.

MR. NEARY:

Right.

MR. THOMS:

He had more right to come before the Bar of this House than somebody representing the Canadian Legion.

MR. HANCOCK:

Or representing Newfoundland.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, that to me is an insult to the Canadian Legion that I cannot accept. I cannot accept it. The Canadian Legion should have been permitted - if any organization, any person was ever permitted to come before the bar of this House of Assembly, Mr. Speaker, it should have been a representative of the Canadian Legion. And as I said, Mr. Speaker, and I make no apologies for it, and I have as many Orangemen as anybody, that you cannot compare an organization such as the Canadian Legion to other organizations. It cannot be done. Without the people who fought in World Wars 1 and 11-

MR. FLIGHT: We would not be here.

MR. THOMS: That is the simple fact of it, we would not be here, we would not have our parliamentary traditions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I am not voting against this flag. I am voting against what this government has made it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THOMS: I am voting against the arrogance which is shown by the lack of participation. That is what I am voting against. I am trying to point out to the people of this Province what is happening to this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear,hear!

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I throw out the same challenge, the same challenge that others on this side of the House have thrown out. I would like to hear where you really stand on this issue, where you really stand. I know where the member for St. John's Center (Dr. McNicholas) stands. I know.

MR. WARREN: Good man, good man.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (BAIRD): Order, please!

MR. NEARY: Do not be so cowardly.

MR. THOMS: I know where the member for St. John's Center (Dr. McNicholas) stands. And a few of the others, even though it has been wishy-washy, and you know why they are voting that way. But

MR. THOMS:

I would suspect, Mr. Speaker, that those who have to stand on the other side of the House and support this flag are deathly afraid that what they say may somehow be reported and get back to their constituents. That is why I think they are not standing in their seats to be counted. I do not think it is going to work. Mr. Speaker, it is not going to work but that is what is happening. That is what is happening. It really boggles the mind. I mean, here we have the Premier, the Premier's bill and the Premier has sat in his seat on occasion after occasion quite willing to let the minister rise and close the debate without the Premier first having spoken. And do you expect me to support a government bill under those conditions? Mr. Speaker, unless I can hear some good arguments on the other side, some better arguments than I have heard so far, I will be voting for this amendment. And if this amendment is defeated I will be voting for a bill that was brought in by the Premier of this Province who did not have the intestinal fortitude to stand up and defend his own bill.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Baird):

You have a lovely voice this morning.

I recognize the hon. member for Bonavista North.

MR. L. STIRLING: Mr. Speaker, I heard the Minister of Labour and Manpower (J.Dinn) say that he would like to speak if we have him a chance. Now, I would gladly yield if a minister from the other side, anybody, other than closing off the debate, not the trickery of closing the debate. So would the Minister of Labour and Manpower like to speak?

MR. J. DINN: No, I am speaking on the main motion.

MR. L. STIRLING: To speak on the main motion. You do not wish on this one.

MR. D. HANCOCK: He is hoping, he is going to have a heart attack between now and then.

MR. L. STIRLING: Would the other part of Bonavista Bay, the member for Bonavista South (J. Morgan), would you like to now speak?

MR. MORGAN: I am not in my seat at the present time.

MR. L. STIRLING: Would you like for me to wait till you get to your seat so that you can speak?

MR. J. MORGAN: Carry on.

MR. SPEAKER: (Baird) Does the member wish to speak?

MR. L. STIRLING: Well, you see, Mr. Speaker, during the last (inaudible) debate, during the debate, Mr. Speaker -

MR. S. NEARY: A young boy in the woods.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The Chair has great difficulty hearing.

MR. L. STIRLING: During the last comments made by my colleague, my courageous colleague -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. STIRLING: - from Grand Bank (L.Thoms). See what is happening, Mr. Speaker.

MR. F. STAGG: You do not have the courage to stop me.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. L. STIRLING: If we only had television in the House -

MR. D. HANCOCK: I would like to know how they would miss you.

MR. L. STIRLING: If we could only have sound in the House. The member for Stephenville (F. Stagg), who yesterday refused to allow television in the House, who refused to allow to have sound in the House, at the Committee meetings, the member for Stephenville who is so concerned that what gets out is his own private, edited version. If they could only see, this morning, what is happening. If the people of Newfoundland could only see what is happening. And what has happened? And what has happened is that a member of the Flag Committee -

MR. D. HANCOCK: Have a good weekend and make it a couple of months.

MR. STIRLING: A member of the Flag Committee, a good Committee, a Committee that did a job to the best of their knowledge and ability, we saw a member of that Committee say on the fifth condition that they had set up, a good Committee, a good condition, the fifth condition was, it must be accepted by the majority of the people and he was straightforward he was one of the first members to speak in this debate and he gave the reasoning of the Committee.

Now, then the Royal Canadian Legion and people from all over the Province - early in this debate when I was accused of shouting and screaming and being emotional, and I was reflecting the concerns expressed to me by the members of my district, the people in the district and the people of the Canadian Legion, at least one member of the Committee was listening, had an open mind on the situation and said, Well, maybe the Royal Canadian Legion has a point. The very least that we can do - this was an openminded member of the Committee who said, Well, look, maybe, just maybe the Royal Canadian Legion has a point that they want to make. They want to make it strongly. We should listen to them. Let us bring them before the Bar of the House. I have an open mind, he said, as a member of the Committee. Let us hear what they have to say.

MR. L. STIRLING:

Now, that seemed reasonable. The first person who suggested something like that was the member for Torngat Mountains (G. Warren). He said, 'Look, the reason you are not getting any reaction from the people is that the Committee are the only ones that saw this design.' And the Committee brought it into the House of Assembly and the Premier immediately made it government policy and then the next day, after pressure started to come in, said, 'Well, it can be a free vote.' The member for Torngat Mountains said, 'Look why does the Committee not take this back out to the people? Let us go back out and let them make their comments.' Very reasonable. Unless it is not in keeping with the Premier's intention of declaring war somewhere in the next day or two or the next month or the next year.

MR. L. STIRLING:

We do not need a new flag to go fight a war somewhere - I do not think we do. Very reasonable, a very reasonable suggestion. And then it appeared that although the Premier said it is a free vote, you have the most outspoken members of the Cabinet, the most outspoken members on the other side silenced, embarrassed, and the minister who introduced this being embarrassed, trying to get up because none of his colleagues got up. Anybody who attends the House knows the sequence of one speaker on one side, one speaker on the other side, and I think it should be noted, Mr. Speaker, that nobody from the other side has spoken on this amendment, this very reasonable amendment. I must say, the last time I spoke on this particular subject I was followed by the House Leader on the other side (Mr. Wm. Marshall), who accused me of just making politics - that is all that it is - by his very nature, then, being political.

I heard a report on the radio this morning, and, Mr. Speaker, if it were parliamentary to say that he was misleading the news media and he was misleading the people of Newfoundland, if it were parliamentary to suggest that, I would do it. But since it is not parliamentary to suggest it I will not suggest it. But the House Leader, very familiar with the rules of the House, very familiar with the procedure, came out to try to convince the people of Newfoundland that what the Opposition had done yesterday was to say, 'We are going to vote for the flag six months from now.' Now, in any other setting - if you were outside the House, if I were not speaking in the House, I would be able to say that he was deliberately misleading the press, but in the House I cannot use that kind of thing. And I would say outside the House that he was deliberately trying to twist things around. Outside the House I would say it, but I cannot say it in the House, because this is a House where we are supposed to have respect for the views of the members of the other side. What did we really do yesterday? We agreed to a request made by the Royal Canadian Legion, made by people from all over this Province to say, 'Let us have a look at this thing and let us debate

MR. L. STIRLING: it and let us decide. So what we moved was to delay it for six months. In the House of Assembly there are only certain things that the Opposition can do, and that is one of the techniques used to kill a bill, to delay it for six months. The House Leader (Mr. Wm. Marshall) did not say yesterday - he did not try to give the impression to the news media - the correct impression - that we waited until we had only two speakers left, because only somebody who has not spoken can move an amendment, and it was part of the very limited technique that we have in this House to give the people a chance to be heard. And we heard from one courageous member of the Flag Committee this morning, and I would anticipate that others on the Flag Committee will say, 'Well, that is reasonable.' If we are right we will be just as right six months from now. We are coming up to the Summer. We have so many important things. They would like to give the impression that we are delaying things, when it is the government who have decided every day to introduce the flag bill.

MR. S. NEARY: Right on!

MR. L. STIRLING: Every day we have asked them, How about doing something on the Budget? The Budget has just been sitting there. We have hundreds of bills - we have the Fishermen's Workers' Compensation Act, we have environment bills, we have the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. J. Dinn) playing games with the Statistics Canada figures. He gets up and he finally gets them to rally around the flag and thump on their desks yesterday because he made a spectacle of himself criticizing the federal statistics - never did one thing about dealing with the real problems.

Well, let me get it clear, Mr. Speaker.

Let us make it clear for the benefit of anybody who has any doubt about it. Nobody in the House has, but the same House Leader who can say to the press - the same House Leader who outside this House can do something which I cannot say in the House. Outside the House I can say he deliberately misled it, but in the House I cannot. But to make it clear - this side will give unanimous agreement right now to put this flag debate off until

MR. STIRLING:

a debate in the next session, six months from now, Fall session, the session next year, and get on to the budget, get on to unemployment, to Worker's Compensation, because they are the ones who decide what we are going to do every day, except on Private Members' Day.

Now, a couple of comments that I must give thanks to my colleague from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) for. I did not realize, I should have realized, I could have, that wherever this Committee went, wherever the Committee went they kept a Hansard. So I spent until two o'clock this morning going through all the reports that I could get my hands on and I would suggest that members on the other side would find it very informative if they did it. I may be able to point out a few things to the Flag Committee, that because they were meeting here and there and a lot of other things intervened, I might be able to point out a few things to the Flag Committee that they may not have even realized themselves until you read all of this and get a pattern.

Let me say I have great respect for the intellect of the Chairman of the Flag Committee. I really do.

MR. NEARY: I do not know.

MR. STIRLING: I really do.

MR. WARREN: I have second thoughts.

MR. STIRLING: No, I have great respect for his intellect.

And I do not even know if he realizes it, but from the first Committee meeting he was trying to direct the witnesses in a specific direction, and I would like to - I am not accusing him of doing anything deliberately, and I said I have great respect for the Chairman. Let us take the Gander meeting; everybody who made a presentation at the Gander meeting, everyone who made a presentation at the Gander meeting, and there were only four or five of them, all made reference to the fact they would like to keep the Union Jack. Now, I do not know if the Chairman realized this but in the very earliest meetings he said - see if I can get the reference, it is in AH-3, in case the Chairman would like to check it out, and he was talking about -

MR. STIRLING: "What about an abstraction? Can we put in something abstract." Now this is in the Gander meeting. And everybody at that meeting, one after the other said, "Nothing abstract. We do not want anything abstract. We want the Union Jack. And we want something about Labrador." But everyone at that Gander meeting said, "No abstractions." Everyone of them.

Another thing came up at the Gander meeting. Maybe the Committee intended this from the beginning. Maybe they did. But he said at the Gander meeting which was in February that at that time they had given the assignment to Mr. Pratt. That was back in February. I do not know if members on the other side are aware of it. I am not suggesting that the Committee meant to cover that up. But in the February meeting they said they had given the assignment to Mr. Pratt to design the flag. Since February. All the rest of the meetings the people were being given the opportunity to present their views and Mr. Pratt would do the designing. That is as early as the Gander meeting.

MR. NEARY: A foregone conclusion.

MR. STIRLING: Another thing that shows the foregone conclusion of the Committee, or at least Mr. Carter. And he said, "We automatically tend to bind both sides." Because they are going to bind both leaders.

MR. NEARY: That is right, the leaders can control their caucuses.

MR. STIRLING: That is what Mr. Carter said in the Gander meeting.

MR. NEARY: The leaders.

MR. STIRLING: Yes, automatically would bind both sides.

MR. NEARY: That is right.

MR. HOLLETT: (Inaudible) on behalf of the Premier and Mr. Jamieson.

MR. STIRLING: That is what he was talking about.

Binding both sides.

MR. NEARY: That is true. Read it out for them.

May 16, 1980

Tape No. 1617

NM - 3

MR. STIRLING:

No. I do not want to use all my time

on the Gander meeting.

MR. HOLLETT:

Read out that though, that is important.

MR. STIRLING:

He said it all through. It is not only

that Gander meeting. "We have engaged Chris Pratt," that is the exact

expression he used. DW-1. I did not want to mark this up because it

was somebody else's copy. DW-1. That is DW-2. Now -

MR. HOLLETT: They will give you leave for this.

MR. STIRLING: They will not give me leave for that.

MR. HOLLETT: They will not give me leave?

MR. STIRLING: I will have to use up my time.

The exact expression was that we have engaged Chris Pratt. On February 12th this is what he said. Then he got into talking about stylistic abstractions. One of the people at the Gander meeting, a Mr. Baird, put his finger on it right then.

MR. NEARY: Not the Speaker?

MR. STIRLING: I think he said he was in his seventies so I presume it was not the Speaker but only the Speaker would know that. What Mr. Baird said at the Gander meeting; he said, 'I hope you are not going to stir up animosity amongst all Newfoundlanders.' What a prophetic statement. 'I hope your new flag will not stir up animosity amongst all Newfoundlanders.' That is out of their own meetings.

MR. HOLLETT: It would not have done if they been democratic about it, would it?

AN HON. MEMBER: Your time is up.

MR. NEARY: Your time is up.

MR. STIRLING: A student by the name of Samuelson made a presentation at one of the meetings at which he spoke. He said, 'On behalf of a lot of the young students at the university, retain the Union Jack.'

MR. HOLLETT: On behalf of the students?

MR. STIRLING: Yes. On behalf of the students.

On March 28th at the Colonial Building all of the presentations with one exception, all of the presentations, March 28th, asked for a retention of the Union Jack. At the Port aux Basques meeting I am sure that my colleague the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) -

AN HON. MEMBER: Do not be so boring.

MR. HOLLETT: No, it is interesting.

MR. STIRLING: You have to make up your mind, Mr. Chairman.

MR. STIRLING: The last time I spoke I was accused of shouting and screaming and being emotional and now I am just quoting the Chairman and you say do not be boring. So you have to make up your mind which way you want it. I was quoting the Chairman and the Chairman has to decide whether it was boring or not.

MR. HOLLETT: They were his words. Right?

MR. NEARY: He made some awful blunders and awful statements when he was there.

MR. STIRLING: See what the Chairman said in Port aux Basques, at the Port aux Basques meeting.

MR. NEARY: Where they told him to go back and save the taxpayers dollars.

MR. STIRLING: The Chairman said, there are two feelings coming through. Now, this was in the Port aux Basques meeting. There are two feelings coming through. Everywhere we go there are two feelings. One is we should do something to retain Labrador and the other one is that we have to retain the Union Jack. That is what the Chairman said.

MR. HANCOCK: He did not?

MR. STIRLING: That is what the Chairman said at the Port aux Basques meeting. And when he talked again about abstractions they said, no abstractions. The one consistent view he got in every one of the meetings -

MR. HOLLETT: The flag is totally opposite.

MR. STIRLING: I am just quoting the Chairman because I had the opportunity to put it all together to try to reach a consensus and I am just quoting the Chairman. He said, two feelings coming through, Labrador must be considered and the Union Jack must be considered. This is a new method of -

MR. HOLLETT: Good research.

MR. STIRLING: Oh, yes.

AN HON. MEMBER: Silence!

MR. STIRLING: There should be a few seconds of silence, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: We should have a two minute silence.

MR. STIRLING: Somebody was asking about how do we -
Mr. Speaker, I really had thought that 'Mr. Carter' would comment on some
of these things because I am quoting him and I really am being very
serious. I am taking the advice of those who said, "Do not be emotional."
I am trying to look at what the Committee itself found. The Chairman,
and maybe he is concerned for what I am about to say, when they were
saying how are you going to get agreement? And he said providing we
do not come up with a design that is too awful -

AN HON. MEMBER: Too what?

MR. STIRLING: Too awful, a-w-f-u-l, o-f-f-a-l,
the same kind of thing, yes. The same kind of connotation.

MR. WARREN: The same meaning.

MR. STIRLING: I am only quoting the Chairman of the
Committee and you have to decide whether they are -

MR. G. WARREN: He is on your side.

MR. L. STIRLING: The Chairman of the Committee -

MR. S. NEARY: He does not know whose side he is on.

MR. L. STIRLING: - in explaining -

MR. D. HOLLETT: He is symbolic.

MR. L. STIRLING: - the Chairman of the Committee said,
"Providing we do not come up with a design that is too awful, we expect
to get it passed."

MR. D. HOLLETT: They are going to bind both sides.

MR. L. STIRLING: And he used, for example, Mr. Pratt's name
and said, "David Blackwood had called him up and said he would like to
submit a design." David Blackwood, and the Chairman knows this because
out of courtesy I told him about my call from David Blackwood. I wrote
the Premier about the call from David Blackwood and now in the newspapers
you can see Mr. Blackwood has expressed his own view.

Mr. Blackwood who is probably one of the
greatest of Newfoundland's artists, one of the greatest Newfoundlanders
of all time was in discussion with the Chairman of the Committee on a
number of occasions and said, "Yes, I will be submitting it." Now, since
I started to do a little research into this I found that a number of
artists, and I do not want to name them but they are of the same caliber
and I am sure that the Chairman has been told this, a number of artists
said, "Look, you do not design a flag out of just thin air. First of
all you have to research all other flags then you have to put together
various combinations." And Mr. Blackwood, now this is the thing that -
I admire my colleague from Grand Bank (Mr. L. Thoms) for having the
courage to see, and the openmindedness to see the wisdom of this
amendment- the six month delay. Mr. Blackwood submitted two designs
and I have seen them. I think that they are designs that may not fit
what the Chairman of the Committee wanted, but they certainly would fit
what the majority of Newfoundlanders would like to see in their flag.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Right on.

MR. D. HOLLETT: That is who owns the flag, right?

MR. L. STIRLING: But the insult to Mr. Blackwood or Mr. Pratt or anybody else was that they were going to decide on the flag on April 30th regardless, and as the Chairman told me, Mr. Blackwood's design came in a day or two late -

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, oh.

MR. L. STIRLING: - and he did not even consider it, did not even show it to the Committee. It did not get five minutes consideration.

MR. S. NEARY: What an ignoramus.

MR. D. HOLLETT: Because of one or two days?

MR. S. NEARY: (inaudible) parliamentary, Sir

MR. L. STIRLING: And I wrote the Premier and said, "Look, what more evidence do you want of the need for a delay? Here is one of our greatest Newfoundland artists -

MR. D. HOLLETT: Yes, Sir.

MR. L. STIRLING: - who has submitted a design and it was thrown out because it missed the deadline, as if we had to have a war tomorrow."

MR. D. HOLLETT: Different from Pratt but still -

MR. S. NEARY: Who set the deadline?

MR. L. STIRLING: Who set the deadline is right? Why did it have to be April 30th?

MR. S. NEARY: The House is the one that -

MR. J. CARTER: Would the member give way?

MR. L. STIRLING: Not if you take it out of my time.

MR. S. NEARY: Get up and make a speech yourself.

MR. L. STIRLING: Not if you take it out of my time.

MR. L. STIRLING: So, Mr. Blackwood, a constituent of mine - and I hope you will respond, Mr. Chairman, because I am just quoting you. Mr. Speaker, what is the rush? We have managed for 400 years to survive without this flag - 400 or 500 years without this flag - and we had a flag that managed to get us through two wars and unless we are anticipating a war the day after tomorrow I would think that it would be much more appropriate to put in the ambulance service, it is much more of a deadline, much more appropriate to put in the Workers' Compensation for fishermen with a deadline.

MR. G. WARREN: That has got to go through the system.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. L. STIRLING: But the Chairman showed right from the beginning-at the Gander meeting he talked about abstractions and everybody rejected it. He talked about two triangles -

MR. D. HOLLETT: Did he?

MR. L. STIRLING: - and he had Mr. Pratt appointed at that stage

MR. D. HOLLETT: He had it in mind then.

MR. L. STIRLING: Oh, yes, at that stage.

MR. D. HOLLETT: He had the triangles in mind then.

MR. L. STIRLING: Now, in Grand Bank he tried it again. Now, he said something in Grand Bank -

MR. G. FLIGHT: Amusing is it?

MR. L. STIRLING: No, it is not amusing. Again, it is something that you might consider -

MR. D. HOLLETT: A serious note.

MR. L. STIRLING: - you might consider -

MR. G. FLIGHT: The Chairman said this?

MR. L. STIRLING: No, in Grand Bank, - again if I were outside of the House I might be using the word misleading.

MR. D. HOLLETT: You are not supposed to be emotional so you are going to be very serious.

MR. L. STIRLING:

No, no this is -

MR. D. HOLLETT:

Right?

MR. L. STIRLING:

Yes, he was in Grand Bank. All these pages - just let me see what happened - let me read you some of the concerns in Grand Bank. Another great Newfoundlander, a man who put together this great fisheries conference last weekend, Mayor Fred Tessier.

MR. B. TULK:

What did he say to them?

MR. L. STIRLING:

He had to interrupt the Chairman because somebody else was making a representation. He said, 'Excuse me, are you saying that your committee has the final decision in the name of the Legislature?'

MR. G. FLIGHT:

That is right. There is a question for them to answer.

MR. L. STIRLING:

Here is what the Chairman said, 'Well, obviously the Legislature has the final decision but since we are proposing' - Mr. Tessier interrupts, 'Who recommends to the Legislature?' Mr. Chairman says, 'Well since we are composed of both sides of the House', Mr. Tessier says, 'Yes' - 'And we have been instructed to come up with a design, to reject our design would be almost to making non-sense of the exercise'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. D. HOLLETT:

The 29th. of April it is all over, is that what they are saying?

MR. L. STIRLING:

Mr. Tessier said, 'The point I make is this, will it come up on the floor of the House?' Mr. Tessier could not believe what he was hearing. He was doing something very important, probably one of the greatest Newfoundlanders and one of the greatest residents of that area, one of the greatest councillors, Mr. Fred

MR. L. STIRLING: Tessier was attending this meeting. And he said, 'Yes, but the point I make is will it come to the floor of the House?' Mr. Tessier wanted to keep at it. He said, 'Yes, there would be debate on it', this is the Chairman. I can imagine the Chairman - I maybe should change to the soft spoken voice of the Chairman instead of shouting - in his very soft-spoken voice saying, 'Yes, there would be debate about it.'

But I would think, unless the design was quite obnoxious to a number elements of society that it would be improper for the House to reject it, improper for the House to reject it. Now this, - again I have to be careful because the member for St. John's North (Mr. Carter) is such a gentle, soft-spoken person that you do not realize what is happening when he says it so I may put a little more emphasis in it than he did. He said, 'The House might amend it'. In order to get Mr. Tessier off, 'the House might amend it'. Now, do not forget that they made the deal with the artist that they appointed way back - and I do not know if the Committee is aware of some of this sort of thing - right? He said, 'The House might amend it, might make some minor changes but to reject it out of hand would make nonsense of it'.

Another prophetic statement made by Mr. Tessier, He says, 'Well, obviously it would become a tool for political games'. Mr. Speaker, again he brought up the question of abstractions and again everybody at that meeting threw out the question of abstractions, everybody! Mr. Speaker, I could not find anywhere in all the presentations - they said they took all of the presentations and gave them to the artist - when the Chairman tried to plant that question, I could not find anywhere that somebody came up and said, 'Yes, we will agree to an abstraction'.

MR. D. HOLLETT: They all disagreed.

MR. L. STIRLING: All the consistency. Mr. Speaker, in Corner Brook they tried the same thing again, the Chairman talked about abstractions. I could not find the concensus, Mr. Speaker, that seemed to come out of these meetings.

Mr. Speaker, I think that just using the Committee's own material, and if you put together what the member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren) said and you take the open-mindedness of the member of Grand Bank (Mr. Thoms)

MR. L. STIRLING: who said, 'Look, it is possible that we are not infallible.' It is possible that the majority of Newfoundlanders - that the condition that this Committee wisely set has not been fulfilled and now the government is forcing it through - called it a free vote. Mr. Speaker, if you were outside the House you would be able to say that it is misleading for the Premier to give the impression that it is a free vote and then not let the people speak on the other side, and that it is a government measure.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that the Premier can force this through the House, absolutely no doubt. And from a purely political point of view, I certainly hope that he does, but for the sake of all the Newfoundlanders who may not know what they agree on but they know what they do not like - and what they do not like, Mr. Speaker, has come out time after time after time in the Committee's own meetings, and I would suggest that you should take a look at them. And the Chairman (Mr. J. Carter) very properly said it, what they agreed on, in all of these meetings everybody agreed on, a distinctive Newfoundland flag. It must have Labrador.

MR. SPEAKER (Baird): I should like to inform the hon. member his time is up.

MR. L. STIRLING: By leave to finish that thought.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: By leave.

MR. L. STIRLING: Okay, Mr. Speaker.

MR. L. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of personal privilege.

MR. SPEAKER: A point of personal privilege, the hon. the member for Grand Bank.

MR. L. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, it has just been brought to my attention that when I finished my few brief remarks on the amendment this morning that I stated that I would be voting for the amendment and for the main motion. I would like to make a correction. I will be voting for the amendment, but I will be voting against the main motion for the adoption of a flag. I just want to make that clear to the House and to the hon. the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. J. Morgan).

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. WM. MARSHALL: On that point of privilege, Mr. Speaker, that is not a point of privilege, that is just a declaration that the whips are on in the Opposition.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Baird): To the point of privilege. The hon. member has taken the opportunity to clarify his thoughts.

Are we ready for the question?

MR. G. WARREN: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. G. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to stand up for the second time around to speak for this amendment. I believe that in my earlier speech last week when I spoke against the flag resolution, I said then I was against it due to the fact that it has not trickled out to Newfoundland and to Labrador. The people have not had a choice, they have not seen the design. One day it was put in the papers and the next day it came into the House of Assembly.

Now, since that time, Mr. Speaker, I have had the opportunity of contacting all the communities in my district. I spoke to the principals of the schools. The schools did a survey of the students from Grades V to X and XI. I want to go on record and read out this survey to show this government that the children of today are the parents of tomorrow, the children of the future, and just show what the people along the Labrador Coast are saying about the government trying to ram this piece of rag down our throats. Mr. Speaker, in Nain there are seventy-five students, thirty-six against, eight for and thirty-one did not care. Now, the reason the thirty-one did not care, which I think has been echoed time and time again by members on this side of the House, is because the government have their priorities wrong. Somehow or other, there is a room upstairs in the government's head not finished. I do not know which room it is, but there is a room up there not finished and they have their priorities upside down.

MR. S. NEARY: That is why they are asking for pituitary glands to finish the room.

MR. G. WARREN: To finish their room with.

MR. S. NEARY: (Inaudible) gentlemen on the other side.

MR. G. WARREN:

In the survey taken of twenty-four teachers in Nain, sixteen teachers against and eight for. In Davis Inlet where there are the only Naskaupi Indians in Newfoundland today, the only Naskaupi Indians that are living today - and there are 224 of them in Davis Inlet - and here we say there is a design

MR. WARREN:

reflecting the Naskaupi origin. Now in Davis Inlet alone, one hundred per cent against. The only Indians that we have in our Province and they are completely against it. Something worth noting, completely against it.

MR. NEARY:

What was that again? Repeat that again.

MR. WARREN:

I have to repeat this one again, yes.

In Davis Inlet, the only Naskaupi Indians that we have, and here in Davis Inlet they are one hundred per cent, one hundred per cent against this design because it does not show anything at all about a native origin. It is just a bunch of bologna.

MR. NEARY:

And they are the oldest civilization in North America, 30,000 to 40,000 years old.

MR. WARREN:

So we go into Hopedale - eleven teachers.

In Hopedale there are eleven teachers - here is an interesting figure, and I wish the Chairman was back in his seat because it would really make him probably shout with joy - eleven teachers, five for, five against, and one does not care. Because as one said, "Look our school is in such a deplorable condition the Minister of Education (Ms Verge) should come up and see it."

We go down to Postville, in Postville the teachers and the students and the people in the community, the older men, the younger men, completely against it.

In Makkovik, the teachers, the pupils, eighty per cent against.

AN HON. MEMBER:

They did not want it.

MR. WARREN:

Eighty per cent against.

MR. NEARY:

I suppose this crowd will be telling us all the kids are for it.

MR. WARREN:

In Rigolet -

MR. NEARY:

It will grow on you.

MR. WARREN:

I beg your pardon?

MR. CARTER:

Will you table it?

MR. WARREN: I will table this. Sure. I will table this.

MR. NEARY: It will grow on you.

MR. WARREN: In Rigolet, the students, the teachers, the parents, everybody against. The students in Rigolet said it was a bunch of triangles and they said, "We have teachers here in the school who are teaching us that all day long."

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. WARREN: We know what a triangle is.

MR. NEARY: They hate it. It reminds them too much of geometry. They hate it.

MR. WARREN: So they said, "Why do we need the government to send out a flag telling us about triangles?"

Mr. Speaker, I listened to the member for Bonavista North (Mr. Stirling), he was saying there are more priorities than this flag issue. A good example was from the Minister of Health a few days ago when I asked him for the third time would he kindly advise this House, advise the people in the remote areas of the Province when the air ambulance subsidy would become effective?

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) nine.

MR. NEARY: Do not so spineless. Do not be so spineless.

MR. WARREN: And he said, "It is going through the system. It is going through the system." Yes, Mr. Speaker, I say it is going through the system. I say there is a lot going through the system of this government. But the system is so preoccupied with foreign objects that it cannot get through the system.

MR. NEARY: Come over where you should be.

MR. WARREN: This is what is wrong and the foreign object that is in the system, is this piece of rag. So this piece of rag got to get through the system before the air ambulance subsidy can get through it, before the workers' Compensation can go through, and before the Environment Bill can be passed. And by the way, what I find so exciting is that the minister now has received the Powell enquiry for thirty-five or thirty-six days and she has not released it yet. And now she

MR. WARREN: says she is going back and asking for clarification. What a farce. What a farce.

MR. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, do you know why? Do you know why? Because the minister is not going to announce that because they have to get the flag through first. We have got use the flag first. And here it is, and she said it was going to be released in thirty days and now we are gone on our thirty-seventh day and it is still not released.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) over.

MR. WARREN: I am surprised -

MR. NEARY: You would love that would you not? You would love to get it over and done with. The Premier would love that.

MR. WARREN: I am surprised, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I know you are not allowed to quote from The Daily News, or The Evening Telegram, or anything like that, but I notice that the straw vote that The Daily News has taken is running now over two to one against. Sixty-seven per cent against and only thirty-three per cent for.

AN HON. MEMBER: The minister is one of the first -

MR. WARREN: What I find so amazing, what I find so amazing, Mr. Speaker -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. WARREN: - is that on the front page -

MR. NEARY: You will get the first gland. You will get the first pituitary gland.

MR. WARREN: - on the front page, "And So Does Jim McGrath", "And So Does Jim McGrath." Now here it is -

MR. NEARY: The first autopsy you would get the first pituitary gland.

MR. WARREN: "A federal member of the House of Commons,

May 16, 1980

Tape No. 1622

NM - 4

MR. WARREN: the member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath),
a good -

MR. NEARY: He does not even know what it is.

MR. WARREN: - staunch Tory, coming out and saying
he is against the flag and if I am allowed to quote, Mr. Speaker, he says
that, "This is not a government measure, as I understand from the fact there
is to be a free vote."

MR. G. WARREN: "Now, furthermore, I completely respect the jurisdiction of the House of Assembly to decide the issue"

MR. G. WARREN: Okay fine. "However, I make this reasonable request of the Premier to lay it aside in order to allow the people to have time to react and to consider"- he did not say, consider this design, did he? He said "to consider a proper design"

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. G. WARREN: A proper design. Now, Mr. Speaker, if -

MR. HOLLETT: You should table that paper for posterity.

MR. G. WARREN: Now, Mr. Speaker, if the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) wants me to table this one I am satisfied to table this paper too.

MR. G. FLIGHT: For posterity.

MR. G. WARREN: Mr. Speaker -

MR. S. NEARY: (Inaudible) pituitary glands, one to the Minister of Health (Mr. House) (inaudible).

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Butt): Order, please!

MR. G. WARREN: Now, Mr. Speaker, now here we have our - we used to call him the "Minister of Fish, you know. In Ottawa during the last federal election and during the last provincial election there were two gentlemen up there called 'Fish and Chips'. Now we have heard from Mr. Fish and I am just wondering when Mr. Chips is going to say something. So we will be expecting Mr. Chips to say something in a few days about this piece of rag.

MR. G. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, I am going to make a prediction that because of the attitude of this party over there and because of the attitude of members on this side that now we have pushed the government in a corner. This is my prediction now, we have pushed them in a corner and now it is to the point that I bet any money that by Tuesday or Wednesday of next week -

MR. S. NEARY: When we run out of speakers.

MR. G. WARREN: - when we run out of speakers, they are going to stand up one by one -

MR. S. NEARY: Right.

MR. G. WARREN: - on this amendment because four times in this hon. House the Minister of Tourism, Recreation and Culture (Mr. Dawe) got to his feet to close the debate with the Premier, the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Affairs (Mr. Goudie), the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge), God bless her. You know, she should have been on her feet immediately. She would be on her feet talking about the status of women, why not get on her feet and talk about a flag. Surely goodness, we have female athletes who are going to go forward with the arrow pointing backwards.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. G. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, I find it so amazing that government members - and not only that, the front benchers pretty well stand immobile.

MR. S. NEARY: Such a sweet lovely lady with no courage. I do not like a woman with no courage, I like a fighter.

MR. G. WARREN: It might be unparliamentary, Mr. Speaker, but I am going to say they are a bunch of mutes.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

MR. G. WARREN: I do not know if it is unparliamentary but I mean -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No, no!

MR. G. WARREN: - they are because they are not saying one word on the flag, they are just sitting back and taking everything in. But I am predicting that come Tuesday when we run out of speakers-and probably we will have another sub-amendment to it - that we are going to see the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Affairs (Mr. Goudie) get up, we are going to see the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) -

MR. S. NEARY: Yes, and the reporters in the gallery will fall (inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

MR. G. WARREN: Right on. We will see them all getting up on Tuesday. And do you know what? The Minister of Touris, Recreation and Culture (Mr. Dawe) will not get a chance for probably three four days to make the final reading because the members on the government side are going to want to get up so fast. Now this is what I am predicting.

And, Mr. Speaker, even the member for Fortune - Hermitage (Mr. Stewart), the member who was on the committee - this is what I find so astonishing; there were three members from this side who were on the committee, the member for Grand Bank (Mr. Thoms), the member for Eagle River (Mr. Hiscock) and the member for Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) they got up on their feet and had their say. And do you know what?

AN HON. MEMBER: The member for Grand Bank (inaudible).

MR. G. WARREN: Yes, but he has courage.

MR. S. NEARY: And common sense and a bit of wisdom and a bit of decency.

MR. G. WARREN: And wisdom. And on the government side we have the member for St. John's North (Mr. Carter) the Chairman who got up and spoke. We had the member for Kilbride (Mr. Aylward) who got up and spoke. We also had the member for Fortune - Hermitage (Mr. Stewart) who, by the way, just crossed the House, I understand, Is that right? And also the member for Menihek. They sat in their seats and they would not get up. You know, I do not know why, maybe they were told something, probably the Premier told them something, I do not know. And they would not get up and say what was on their minds because I am sure, and I think I can look the hon. member right in the face, I am sure if he was honest with himself and honest with this House he would get up after I sit down and say he is against the flag.

SOME HON. MEMBER:

Hear, hear!

MR. S. NEARY:

I want to see the Minister of Education (Ms Verge) get up and tell us whether or not she is going to put her flag up.

MR. G. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, I find it ironic what the hon. member for Bonavista North (Mr. Stirling) has said.

MR. S. NEARY:

Be careful you do not get a dart in the side of the head there.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

Order, please!

MR. G. WARREN:

But about what the hon. member for Bonavista North said concerning the Chairman of the Committee;

MR. G. WARREN: He made statements in the various areas of the Province and said that, you know, it would be unusual, it would be very unusual if the government does not approve of the Committee's findings.

Now, you know, another committee was struck in this House, called the Public Accounts Committee. Now, they brought in their report -

MR. SPEAKER: (Simms) Order ! Relevancy, please.

MR. G. WARREN: No, Mr. Speaker, it might be irrelevancy but it is in connection with a committee - I remember a few days ago that the member from Stephenville (F. Stagg) named all commissions - and the Public Accounts Committee came back and gave their report and the Premier got up and said it was only just a matter of misunderstanding, misunderstanding.

MR. S. NEARY: An honest disagreement.

MR. WARREN: Honest disagreement. So, could this not be an honest disagreement.

MR. HOLLETT: There is some (inaudible)

MR. G. WARREN: Now, Mr. Speaker, on April 29th, just to go and show you what the Chairman of this Committee is trying to not only push down the throats of Newfoundlanders, not only push down the throats of Newfoundlanders but is trying to push down the throats of everybody from East to West, just listen to this.

MR. HOLLETT: He is coming. He is going to speak.

MR. NEARY: No, no guts.

MR. WARREN: On April 29th when the member from St. John's North (J. Carter) read, he said, ' From its first meeting - this is right here in this little blue book -

MR. WARREN: from its first meeting-and the last sentence says, The Committee also agreed to restrain from promoting specific designs until all the public hearings were over.

MR. NEARY: Oh !

MR. WARREN: Now, on the next page he says -

MR. NEARY: You are all yellow.

MR. WARREN: - in late March they met with Christopher Pratt. And it was decided at this meeting that a new flag should be

MR. WARREN: - geometric in design. Now, that is okay everybody said that sounds fine. No problems there. But, just listen to the next sentence. In the meantime - they are coming to take you away fellows.

MR. NEARY: He is getting his laughs.

They are coming for the hon. gentleman.

MR. WARREN: Yes, they are coming to take you away. In the meantime, further proposals were forwarded to Mr. Pratt as they were received. Now, Mr. Pratt was supposed to go out and make up a geometric design but then again further proposals were sent to him as they came in.

MR. HOLLETT: The Chairman cannot take it, look.

MR. WARREN: Now, how in the heck can Mr. Pratt, in all due respects to Mr. Pratt, how could he do something based on all the designs when he did not even have the designs.

MR. HOLLETT : The Chairman is gone, look.

MR. WARREN: Did not have the designs.

MR. HOLLETT: Did you notice the Chairman is gone?

MR. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, yes. it is unfortunate that the Chairman has gone but I want to go back and read from one of the

MR. WARREN: hearings, I think it was in Makkovik. It was in Makkovik that we attended a hearing. At that time, I was there. So Mr. Anderson, Ted Anderson, he said, 'I cannot understand why there are presently nine people in Makkovik who do not have a house to live in yet you people, you people - that includes myself too, as I was on the Committee acting for one of the other members - could come in here in a helicopter which probably cost two or three thousand dollars and people here without housing.

Now there is an example, Mr. Speaker, that we went out - fine, we had to spend money in order to get a reaction from the people and I would be satisfied today to see the Premier saying to the Committee, 'Look, go back again with this design and with other designs to see what the people think of them'. But to know that there are people along the Labrador coast with no housing, and people along the Labrador coast with no wharves to tie their boats to and still and all we are in this House debating this - we call it a flag.

AN HON. MEMBER: Then have the vote.

MR. WARREN: I do not think we should have a vote. It is not even fair to bring it into the House. It should not have been brought in in the first place. It should not have been brought in here until the Workers' Compensation for fishermen was dealt with. Or until the Environmental Bill was passed. Or until the fishermen around this Province have more connection with the provincial government. The provincial government is ignoring the fishermen. It is ignoring the fishermen left, right and centre. The fishermen now cannot even get their loans approved.

Mr. Speaker, I predict, as I said earlier, I predict that on Tuesday we are

May 16, 1980, Tape 1624, Page 4 - EL

MR. WARREN: going to get the
government members standing up and saying, 'Look.' -
I have great faith in the Premier. I have great

MR. WARREN:

faith in the Premier. He is a very versatile, ambitious gentleman and he -

MR. NEARY: He is in too much of a hurry boy.

MR. WARREN: He is like the arrow on the flag.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (Simms): Order, please!

MR. WARREN: He is going so fast and powerful, like

the arrow, that unfortunately he is going to end up against a brick wall and I think is it. We have seen it from the people along the coast, across Newfoundland showing the disrespect for this flag. They just want to throw it right out the window. Mr. Speaker, I could go on for hours and hours. I do not think it has been read in this House. I do not think it is unparliamentary. I am going to read -

MR. HOLLETT: Table it boy. Table it.

MR. WARREN: All members have it but it but there is a letter here to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (Mr. Windsor). He is also the member for Mount Pearl (Mr. Windsor) and I noticed here there is a paragraph I want to read, Mr. Speaker, if it is permitted. I think it is anyhow. "At our recent sports dinner and dance held at our branch attended by approximately 150 people, ninety-five per cent of them were under the age of forty." Now, that is worth noting, Ninety-five per cent of a group of people who attended that sports dinner and dance in Mount Pearl were under the age of forty and representing various social, educational and religious backgrounds.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please! Is the hon. member going to quote something that has to do with the debate?

MR. WARREN: Yes. It sure does. And he said, "Our president gave a very brief speech of welcome and he then mentioned our opposition to the proposed flag." And here is what happened. "He was greeted by a loud, long and spontaneous standing ovation."

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WARREN:

Now, Mr. Speaker, that was ninety-five per cent of the people below the age of forty. So I would venture to say come Tuesday the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (Mr. Windsor) is going to get up on his feet and he is going to say, 'Look, I received this letter from the Royal Canadian Legion in Mount Pearl and I know the Royal Canadian Legion want the Union Jack. But here they have people younger than forty, of different social and educational backgrounds so I have to respect them. Now, they are my constituents and I have to respect them and in all due respect to the Premier, I am going to turn my back on the Premier this time.' I bet he will stand up Tuesday. 'I will have to turn my back on him this time. I am going to say, boy, look those 140 people in Mount Pearl between the age of thirty-five and forty, they are my voters, I am going to have to turn my back on the Premier and vote for this amendment.' I bet he will say that.

Mr. Speaker, I see my time is getting short.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

By leave. By leave.

MR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, I do have another bit of paper that I was going to quote from. This morning I had the opportunity to have a ride with one of the larger taxi stands in the city, in here to work, so when I stepped aboard the car this gentleman was there and I said, "What do you think of the flag?" Look, he said, the last seven or eight days, I am not telling you one word of a lie either, I have driven probably four or five hundred people and that is the whole conversation in the taxis, the flag. That is the complete conversation around St. John's, the flag. And I said, "Well, they are all for it, are they not. I was just trying to lead him on and just see what he would say. I said surely goodness they are all for that nice flag are they not? He said do not talk about it. Are you in the government or not? Right away I told him I was and he said I know you are going to stand up for the people and vote against the flag. He said that is what everybody wants to do. So here he was a taxi driver in St. John's

May 16, 1980

Tape No. 1625

AH-3

MR. WARREN: going around Tory districts in Tory St. John's and here is what he said to me. His request was not too difficult. All he said was, 'Why do they not take the arrow out?' He said we have been shafted by this government for the last seven years so why do they keep shafting us?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WARREN: So his request, why not take the arrow out and replace it with something, anything other than the arrow.

AN HON. MEMBER: Did you give him a big tip?

MR. WARREN: Yes, I did give him a tip. I believe he is from your district, by the way. He is from your district. I understand that you do not tip him too often see.

MR. STIRLING: If you think of a taxi driver as a -

MR. WARREN: So, Mr. Speaker -

MR. STIRLING: Now you are against the taxi drivers.

MR. WARREN: I took a few moments out, Mr. Speaker, to look through -

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

MR. WARREN: I took a few minutes out, Mr. Speaker, to look through the ten provinces of Canada and their flags and, Mr. Speaker, I notice - I am just going to go through them very fast because I believe my time is running out.

Here we have the flag of P.E.I. There is a symbol there to represent P.E.I. We go over to Nova Scotia, there is a symbolism there for Nova Scotia. We go to New Brunswick, there is something there so the people can know that it is New Brunswick, it is not Newfoundland. In Quebec there is a symbol, in Quebec there is a symbol. In Ontario there is a symbol. In Manitoba there is a symbol. In Saskatchewan there is a symbol. In Alberta there is a symbol, and in BC there is a symbol. In the Northwest Territories there is a symbol, and in the Yukon there is a symbol. Right on through there is something to show what province you are in. Do you know what? I bet any money that if that flag is adopted and placed on the flagpoles in Port aux Basques - just imagine now, this flag -

MR. STIRLING: Peckford for Canada.

MR. WARREN: - is placed on a flagpole in Port aux Basques and here are tourists coming off the ship, okay? Now, the wind happens to be blowing off shore, the wind happens to be blowing off shore - now this flag is up and the wind happens to be blowing off shore -

MR. BARRETT: As it usually is in Port aux Basques.

MR. WARREN: - and it usually is in Port aux Basques. Right!

MR. WARREN: And the tourists coming off look up, "They are telling us to go back home."

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WARREN: There look, pointing, go on back. Or go on out to sea or something. You are even shafting the tourists.

AN HON. MEMBER: You would make a good (inaudible).

MR. WARREN: So, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say to the hon. members, how can you march forward with an arrow pointing backwards? You know I cannot buy it. And you cannot fly the flag that way, can you? Surely goodness you would not be able to fly it that way would you?

MR. STIRLING: Maybe that is what they meant.

MR. WARREN: Maybe that would be different, you know.

DR. COLLINS: (Inaudible) writing upside down.

MR. WARREN: Oh yes, right on! Right on!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WARREN: Now, that is a good idea. Now do you know what, Mr. Speaker, I would vote for this flag.

MR. STIRLING: I wonder if Hansard will be able to pick up that gem?

MR. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, I would vote for that flag if the writing was on the flag too. Yes, Sir. Because that would really show the arguments of this government by putting the writing on the flag. I would vote for it, upside down and the writing on it. Yes, Sir.

MR. STIRLING: I hope Hansard picked up that gem?

MR. WARREN: That is what this government is up to. I would say maybe that is what is going on there. Maybe that may be the secret behind the whole thing, to make sure there is some writing on it.

So, Mr. Speaker, I suggest at least we take the arrow out of it and what we should probably put in there is an anchor. Why not put an anchor in there? And probably the anchor could be

MR. WARREN: a symbolism there not to say that the arrow points to our future but that the anchor is drowning us. Because you know what the anchor will do - the arrow will point to the future but the anchor will just drown us as this government is doing to Newfoundland.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, I had to speak to the amendment to this motion. I believe that this bill should be placed on the table for six months hence. And I believe that the people of this Province, not the member for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter), should go and sit down with one artist.

MR. NEARY: And his little crowd of snobs.

MR. WARREN: What about Jean Crane, a great artist in Labrador? What about several artists across the Province? Why were they not - in fact, the hon. member received a presentation from Jean Crane. Did he look at it at all? No, he did not even see it. Right. He did not even bother to look at it.

MR. NEARY: It came in too late.

MR. WARREN: No, it never came in too late, it was presented at the hearings in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. But he did not even look at it because he had Chris Pratt in mind.

MR. NEARY: That is right.

MR. WARREN: Right on.

MR. NEARY: They had the design done for less than you can (inaudible).

MR. WARREN: So, Mr. Speaker, I have to vote against this amendment and I hope that - again, before I sit down, I am going to make a prediction. I am not too bad as predicted. I predicted, that the New York Islanders would win the Stanley Cup and they will, so I am going to predict now that the government members who have not spoken, number one, the government members who have not spoken are going to get up, and they are going to speak and do you know what, we are going to have two surprises. We are going to have a couple of surprises. A few people are going to

MR. G. WARREN:

Speak in favour of the amendment. Just watch! By Tuesday, we are going to have two or three speaking in favour of the amendment. And then the Premier probably will begin to see the light. He may begin to see the light. But as my colleague from the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. E. Roberts) said, I am doubtful, because he has been in the dark for the last seven months and he may as well stay there for a few more.

MR. S. NEARY:

He is filled up with his own importance.

MR. G. WARREN:

So, Mr. Speaker, I predict that they are going to stand up against this amendment but probably two or three will speak for the amendment and then the people of this Province will have a chance to reject this design completely as they have done in the last few days and furthermore, give them a chance to send in their own designs and let an independent group of artists sit down and come up with a flag - not just one person to have stars in his crown, let all the artists of Newfoundland have a chance. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

Is the House ready for the question?

MR. E. ROBERTS:

Not quite, Sir.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Terra Nova.

MR. T. LUSH:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, I want to congratulate the -

MR. G. FLIGHT:

(Inaudible) he took on the Tories and beat them.

MR. F. WHITE:

Whats-his-name, good old whats-his-name!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Order, please! The hon. the member for

Terra Nova.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. S. NEARY:

He is trying valiantly.

MR. E. ROBERTS:

Well said! Well said!

MR. T. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, I want first to congratulate the member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. G. Warren) who just gave a tremendous speech, a tremendously rational speech, a speech delivered with conviction, a speech delivered with belief. Mr. Speaker, I am sure that that speech

MR. T. LUSH: will go down in the records of the House of Assembly as one of the great speeches delivered.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. E. ROBERTS: Well said!

DR. J. COLLINS: Well down.

MR. E. ROBERTS: Nearly as low as the Minister of Finance (Dr. J. Collins).

MR. T. LUSH: Also, Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the hon. the member for Grand Bank (Mr. L. Thoms) who this morning gave a tremendous speech.

MR. S. NEARY: We are going to find out what happened to Fearn (inaudible)

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

DR. J. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order, the hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. J. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, when a member speaks in this House, I think he has every right to be heard in silence and I cannot hear what the hon. the member for LaPoile (Mr. S. Neary) is saying. The member for Terra Nova (Mr. T. Lush) keeps interrupting.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. E. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, to the point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! To the point of order, the hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. E. ROBERTS: Of course, Mr. Speaker, I think the point of order is well taken and I would simply say - and I was as guilty as anybody - that this is once again the tit for-tat thing. If the hon. the Minister of Finance is going to be a tit and start these things, Sir, we are going to be a tat and answer back. We apologize, Sir. The point is well taken. My friend from Terra Nova has been trying valiantly to get it out to him and I wish he would get on with it, Sir

MR. SPEAKER: With respect to the point of order, I would rule that there is a legitimate point of order and I have a great deal of interest in hearing what the hon. member has to say.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

The hon. the member for Terra Nova.

MR. T. LUSH:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I was offering

my second set of congratulations to the member for Grand Bank (Mr. L. Thoms) who again made a tremendous speech this morning, a tremendous speech, again uttered with conviction and with belief, I would think one of the better speeches that the hon. the member for Grand Bank made in this House and a speech that will be remembered by the people of this Province.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate all the members who spoke on our side this morning, the only side that is fighting for the rights of the people of Newfoundland in the flag debate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. T. LUSH:

People standing up for the rights and privileges of the people of this Province - and Mr. Speaker, I am amazed by the talent on this side of the House. I am amazed by the calibre of debating that comes forward. It is just absolutely astounding when one hears members getting up and debating with such logic and with such rationality.

MR. E. ROBERTS:

Such fervor and enthusiasm and passion. and conviction.

MR. T. LUSH:

That is right - in language that is simple, but language that is convincing, and as I said before, Mr. Speaker, speaking for the rights and privileges of the people of this Province, ensuring that their rights and privileges are going to be protected.

Mr. Speaker, we are dealing with a very important issue. I do not know whether members on the other side really grasp the importance and the significance of this particular issue, namely, the selection of a provincial flag.

MR. D. HOLLETT: Not the same kind he has got now.

MR. T. LUSH: Mr. Speaker -

DR. J. COLLINS: How do (inaudible) issue?

MR. D. HOLLETT: That has got to be considered.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. SPEAKER: (Baird) Order, please!

MR. E. ROBERTS: (inaudible) going to be his chief financial advisor.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The hon. member for Terra Nova.

MR. T. LUSH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. S. NEARY: He can not lie in this House can he?

MR. T. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, tinkering with a flag of any type but more particularly a provincial flag or a national flag, is like playing volleyball with a hornet's nest.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. E. ROBERTS: Well said, Sir. Well said.

MR. T. LUSH: And, Mr. Speaker, certainly government members, if they had been sensitive to the outrageous criticism that has been leveled at this particular flag, they would certainly get some idea of what it is like to play volleyball with a hornet's nest.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Right, right on.

MR. D. HOLLETT: They will learn.

MR. TL LUSH: And those of us, of course, who live in rural Newfoundland know what it is like to be messing around with a hornet's nest. And this is what the government -

MR. S. NEARY: (Inaudible) hornet's nest (inaudible)

MR. T. LUSH: -have gotten themselves into, Mr. Speaker, and yet they are so unaware of it. So insensitive to what the people are saying about this particular flag.

MR. S. NEARY: That is right.

MR. T. LUSH: And, Mr. Speaker, I am doubtful, very doubtful that this flag can recover from the harsh criticism that has been leveled at it to become an emblem of unity for this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear.

MR. T. LUSH:

I am very doubtful, Mr. Speaker, that a flag that has been the object of so much vulgar invective can become the provincial emblem of this Province. I am very doubtful, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear.

MR. T. LUSH:

Yet the government are not willing to sit down and listen to what the people are saying but are trying to push the flag down the throats of the people of this Province. An absolutely callous attitude, Mr. Speaker, by this particular government in not recognizing or paying attention to the concerns and the interests and what the people are saying about this particular flag at this particular time.

So, Mr. Speaker, a flag should be a symbol of unity -

MR. G. FLIGHT:

That is right.

MR. T. LUSH:

- and it should come in with that kind of harmony.

DR. COLLINS:

Are you concerned about all the (inaudible)

MR. S. NEARY:

Now you keep quiet or we will tell Fearn on you. We know you cannot lie to the House.

DR. J. COLLINS:

Are you concerned about all the apathy you are stirring up?

MR. F. ROWE:

This is the same hon. gentleman who was raising on points of order.

MR. T. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. L. STIRLING:

That is the same fellow who raised the point of order.

MR. T. LUSH:

I do not mind these interruptions because it gives me time to think -

MR. E. ROBERTS:

Collect your thoughts.

MR. T. LUSH:

- and to collect my thoughts here and to really drive home in a language, a very forceful language -

AN HON. MEMBER:

Right, get the right word.

MR. T. LUSH:

- a language that I am capable of using -

MR. E. ROBERTS:

Hear, hear.

MR. T. LUSH:

- a language of which I have some degree

MR. T. LUSH: of command -

MR. E. ROBERTS: Hear, hear.

MR. L. THOMS: You have got a way with words.

MR. T. LUSH: - a language that I do not feel ill at

ease in at all. As a matter of fact, I could speak a little bit of French if the minister wanted me to.

MR. E. ROBERTS: Hear, hear.

MR. D. HOLLETT: They will understand you just as well.

MR. T. LUSH: And, Mr. Speaker, I can add up to eight for the minister in several bases.

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, oh.

MR. E. ROBERTS: Only the minister could follow.

MR. T. LUSH: And, Mr. Speaker, this flag has come at a poor time as far as I am concerned. It has been introduced in the House of Assembly at a poor time. It has been brought in, of course, at a time that is very opportune for the government -

AN HON. MEMBER: That is right.

MR. T. LUSH: - a time of high unemployment, a time when the economy is stagnant and sterile, a time when the people of this Province are desperate in terms of job opportunity, a time when the roads of this Province are in a deplorable condition, a time when we have scores of people drinking, polluted water but, Mr. Speaker, it comes at a right time for the government because the government, by bringing in this flag, is diverting public attention away from the real problems of this Province, the real economic and financial problems of this Province. It is diverting attention away from the government's lack of policy relating to its creation of

MR. T. LUSH:

40,000 jobs for the people of this Province, 40,500 to be precise. And the government know that they have not met that objective in this, their first year, just about one year over, and they have not come close to meeting that target. They have not come close to the 8,000 jobs that they were supposed to create this year in order to meet that objective of \$4,500 jobs over a five year period.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that is a great issue to bring in at a time when the government has no policy. It is a great time when the government know that they have done nothing towards meeting the objective of that 40,500 jobs.

MR. E. ROBERTS:

Hear, hear!

MR. T. LUSH:

But I say, Mr. Speaker, it is a poor timing for the people of Newfoundland. Poorly timed not only in relationship to the lack of the government's initiative to get this Province moving, to stimulate the economy but it comes at a bad time too when this Province is on a confrontation course with Ottawa. And it is another factor that is causing division among our people and that is something we do not want at this particular time.

So, Mr. Speaker, for these two factors; for the lack of a policy that is stimulating the economy of this Province and because of the confrontation course that this government is on with Ottawa this is a bad time to bring in this flag, a flag that is apparently satisfying very few people. So, Mr. Speaker, the timing is wrong for the people of this Province, The timing is right for the government, of course, it is serving their purposes but it is wrong for the people of Newfoundland.

MR. T. LUSH: And, Mr. Speaker, the method of selection of the kind of flag that we have is questionable. It is a questionable method of selection. Nothing wrong, Mr. Speaker, with the Select Committee going around this Province and conducting hearings although when one listens to what happened in a lot of these hearings, as was outlined by the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary), one wonders about the value of that particular method. But nevertheless, it is an acceptable method for any committee to go around and conduct hearings to get information from the people, to get their ideas and to get their concepts as to what a flag should entail or what a flag should contain, a provincial flag. So nothing wrong with that, Mr. Speaker.

But then, the idea of going to one artist. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that this is certainly a questionable procedure to select something as delicate and something as complex as a flag to go to one artist does not seem to be right, Mr. Speaker. It does not seem to be right at all, as I have said, to go to one artist when we have so many artists in the Province, so many talented artists. And then, Mr. Speaker, for the artist to place restrictions on the Committee to say this is to be the flag and nothing else, the design cannot be changed. this design cannot be changed, it must be this flag.

Now, Mr. Speaker, one has to question this method of selection. Why, when we selected the national flag of this great country there were no such restrictions imposed upon the design that it could not be changed, indeed it was changed. It was changed! And what is there something sacriligious about changing the design of this flag? Is there something sacriligious about it? What is so important about this design that we are not allowed to change it?

MR. T. LUSH: And that is why, Mr. Speaker, that we have passed this particular amendment. We will pass this amendment again so that the people of this Province will be given an opportunity to, if they can do it in a more forceful and in a more accentuated way, present their viewpoints and their criticisms of this flag to the government. Hopefully, over that time the government will mellow, they will come to their senses and realize that this is not the flag that most Newfoundlanders of this Province want.

Hopefully over that time

MR. LUSH: the government will mellow, they will develop some sensitivity in this matter. Well, Mr. Speaker, a flag cannot be a one person thing, or a one party thing. A flag cannot be the creation of one person. A flag cannot be the creation of one party. A flag must belong to the people that it represents: A flag, Sir, must be the flag of the people. And we cannot force this flag on the people of Newfoundland in the way that we are trying to do. We cannot do it. We cannot do it. And I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that if we do it that the people of Newfoundland will remember. The people of Newfoundland will remember, whenever this flag, if it indeed this amendment is defeated- although I do believe that there are government members over there, there are government members, if they voted according to their conscience they would be voting for this amendment today.

MR. F. ROWE: That is right.

MR. LUSH: They would be voting for this amendment today. If they voted according to their conscience and what they believed in, and if they were voting based, on the kind of feedback that they are getting from the people of the Province, they would vote for this amendment today. Many, many of them over there would be voting for this amendment.

DR. COLLINS: Procrastination is (inaudible).

AN HON. MEMBER: Order! Order!

MR. LUSH: And, Mr. Speaker, they would be voting for this amendment today, Mr. Speaker, voting for it, to give it the six month hoist-is it?

MR. F. ROWE: That is right.

MR. LUSH: Is that the terminology? Is that the terminology?

MR. F. ROWE: That is the (inaudible) colloquial -

MR. LUSH: The member for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) was on radio today and that was certainly -

MR. ROBERTS: Imagine waking up with the member for St. John's East.

MR. LUSH: - that was certainly an ironical statement.

MR. LUSH: The member for St. John's East getting up and accusing the Opposition of trying to make political points on this flag by giving it the six month hoist. Well, Mr. Speaker, the logic that the man used, he defied logic by saying that the idea of it was that we wanted to delay it for six months and then we come back in six months and agree with it. I do not know where he developed that sort of logic.

MR. ROBERTS: It is the same logic he uses (inaudible) on public tendering.

MR. LUSH: I do not know where he got that sort of logic. What? Trying to misguide the people of this Province by telling them that the Liberals had brought in this particular amendment, and what it meant was that we were just delaying the thing for six months, but in six months time we would come back and agree to the acceptance of this flag. Now what logic. What logic. Well, Mr. Speaker, that is not the idea of this kind of amendment. That is not the idea of this kind of an amendment.

MR. ROBERTS: Only the member for St. John's East would (inaudible) come up with that.

MR. STIRLING: He knows it too.

MR. ROBERTS: Watch 'Charlie Brett' come six (inaudible).

MR. LUSH: And the member for St. John's East, he is the one who is guilty of making a political football out of this flag, and not the Opposition. What we want, Mr. Speaker, what we want is to make sure that we have a flag that is going to be accepted by a large number of Newfoundlanders.

MR. ROBERTS: Right.

MR. LUSH: What we want in a flag, is a flag that is going to have a greater degree of acceptability than this present flag.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH: That is what we are asking for. That is what we want. And we want to give the government time to think about this rather than forcing a flag on the people of Newfoundland with which we find a small number of people agreeing.

Now, Mr. Speaker, generally, generally when we bring in any major concept or any major idea, or when we are bringing

MR. LUSH: in some major renovation into an institution or whatever, you find two groups of people, those who want that particular innovation, those who want that particular idea, and those who do not. So what we have are those for and those against.

Now, I am not sure—and what we will try to do, of course, is to bring in something that will not entirely satisfy those who want, but we want to satisfy those who do not want as well. So it becomes a compromise if you will, to try and get a greater majority of acceptability. That is the way you work in any institution, with ideas and things or whatever, innovations, whatever they might be.

MR. HOLLETT: He is listening to you. He is trying to learn over there. Look.

MR. LUSH: But, Mr. Speaker, in this particular instance I am not even sure that we have that particular dichotomy of those for and those against. I am not even sure we have that with the flag. Because I believe the vast majority of Newfoundlanders want a flag, want a new distinctive flag for this Province. What we had though was some division,

MR. LUSH: some lack of unanimity, if you will, on what the design should be. Now, Mr. Speaker, that made it very simple to come up with a compromise, if you will, to come up with a compromise in position. Because we did not have to fight between those who want and those who did not. What we had to try and satisfy, of course, were those people who wanted a particular design.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am sure that we could have come up with a flag that would have a greater degree of acceptability than this present flag but what happened was that we discarded all the rules of logic. We were not concerned about those who wanted, those who did not want or those who wanted a particular design, we left out everything and came up with a design that nobody wants. We came up with a design that nobody wants. That is what we did.

MR. HOLLETT: Except the Premier.

MR. LUSH: Except the Premier.

MR. STIRLING: No, the Premier did not care what the design was.

MR. HOLLETT: No, that is right.

MR. LUSH: We defied all of the logic, Sir, with respect to getting a new idea accepted, getting an innovation accepted. We defied all the rules of logic in this particular activity. We defied all the rules of logic and what we came up with was a flag that represented nothing or nobody. A flag that represented nothing or nobody, a flag so absurd, so absurd in its symbolism that I do not think that the greatest people in literature, because these are the people usually who are really versed in symbolism, the greatest experts in literature would be at a loss to try and interpret what this symbolism represents.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I believe that we

MR. LUSH: will be doing the people of Newfoundland a great favour, I believe that we will be doing the people of this Province a great favour if we can agree in supporting this amendment. If all members can get together because as I have said before, I know that there are members on the other side who are getting the same kind of feedback that I am getting, they are getting the same kind of criticism of this flag that I am getting, and, Mr. Speaker, I am sure that they will vote according to their conscience. If they are representing the will of the people they will stand up, many of them, and support us in this amendment today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ROBERTS: First-class speech.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. F.B. ROWE: See if we can get somebody up on the other side.

MR. ROBERTS: No, no, they are not going to stand (inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Is the House ready for the question?

MR. F.B. ROWE: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the member for Trinity - Bay de Verde.

MR. F.B. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, if it is agreeable to the House Leader on the Other side I would call it one o'clock and adjourn the debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed to call it one o'clock?

MR. STIRLING: Is the Premier going to speak on this?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. F.B. ROWE: Well, Mr. Speaker -

MR. SPEAKER: It has been agreed.

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I move that the House at its rising do adjourn until tomorrow, Tuesday at 3:00 p.m. The Flag debate will continue on Tuesday.

On motion, the House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, May 20, 1980 at 3:00 p.m.