

PRELIMINARY
UNEDITED
TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
FOR THE PERIOD:
3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
MONDAY, MAY 5, 1980

MR. NEARY: I have so many things in front of me - and I did not know I was going to speak in the Budget Debate today, by the way, I left all my notes home. I was rushed in at the -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: No, I do not intend to do that, I would like to end up my few remarks today, but I just want to show hon. gentlemen - there is a whole list I have not even touched yet. I know I will be accused of rambling all over the countryside talking about world conditions and this, but they have been related and I can relate them to Newfoundland.

I just want to end up with the line that I started on, Sir. The government says that this is a live within your means budget. I would say that it is a starve the people budget.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER(Simms): The hon. the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ANDREWS: Mr. Speaker, it is very close to six o'clock and I probably have a few moments. In reply to the hon. member -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Call it six o'clock.

MR. ANDREWS: In that case, Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn the debate for today.

MR. ROBERTS: Well said.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, before moving the adjournment of the House I should like to advise that the Resources Committee will meet at 7:30 p.m. in the collective bargaining room. The estimates under consideration will be the Department of Industrial Development.

MR. MARSHALL: And at 7:30 p.m. also, Social Services will meet at the Colonial Building and Consumer Affairs and the Environment will be the estimates under consideration.

Tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, we will be bringing in the flag debate for the great indepth consideration and ultimate free vote by all members.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I move that the House at its rising adjourn until tomorrow, Tuesday at 3:00 p.m. and that this House do now adjourn.

On motion, the House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, May 6, 1980 at 3:00 p.m.

The House met at 3:00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: (Simms)

Order please!

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Minister of Fisheries.

MR. MORGAN:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to inform the House of some recent developments as it pertains to the Northern cod stocks and the effect that these changes, recent changes, will have on the fishery in our Province, which I view as a very serious situation.

Mr. Speaker, on monitoring the non-Newfoundland-based trawler activity in the Northern cod fishery, it has been revealed that a significant number of Mainland based trawlers have diverted from their fishing grounds to the Northern cod stock off the East Coast of the Province. They have diverted from the Nova Scotian shelf to the Northern cod stocks in the last two week period. A quota report received by my department from the Federal Department of Fisheries as of this morning, and confirmation information I received on Friday afternoon, indicates a Mainland catch of 4,801 metric tons of Northern cod has been caught and landed in Nova Scotia. Now that was as of May 1st of this year.

Industry sources have confirmed that if the present fishing pattern continues with its diversion of the Nova Scotian fleet, the Northern cod quota for trawlers will be reached within the next week or so. In fact, the Federal authorities indicated this morning that they feel that if the present pattern is allowed to continue, the total quota of Northern cod will be caught in a three week period. The Province's position on this issue, Mr. Speaker, was outlined by the Hon. the Premier on December 4, 1979 in this hon. House and also at a seminar that was held in Corner Brook on the Northern cod issue. The essence of our policy as a Province on the Northern cod is:

(1) Northern cod must be reserved to inshore and middle distance effort to the extent it can be harvested by that effort.

MR. MORGAN:

(2) Where, within the total allowable catch a surplus to inshore effort can be clearly shown to exist, it must be reserved to offshore effort landing into Newfoundland ports for distribution to the processing plants which now operate on a seasonal basis.

Mr. Speaker, the Newfoundland government is totally opposed to the harvesting of Northern cod stocks by non-Newfoundland-based trawlers. The Province stands firm on its position and views with some alarm the continued presence of Mainland-based vessels in the Northern cod fishery, a fishery in which they have no historical presence. They have had none in the past. In addition to the loss of jobs, which in itself we can ill-afford in this Province, an equally serious implication is for the fishing pattern of the Newfoundland deep-sea fleet for the remainder of the year.

MR. J. MORGAN: We understand, Mr. Speaker, that the main reason for the diversion from the Scotian Shelf and the Southern Banks was as a result of the depressed market for redfish for which the vessels from Nova Scotia were fishing. As a result of the depressed market for redfish, the vessels have now diverted to pursue the Northern cod fishery.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot accept a situation where there is a real possibility of year-round fish plants in Newfoundland having to close down before the end of this year because of this diversion of mainland trawler effort. The plants that would be affected, Mr. Speaker, as confirmed by the Fish Trades Association in a lengthy telegram to me on Friday past, points out that the plants could very well close if the quota is taken in the next two or three weeks in the Northern cod which is now supplying all of the raw material to the existing plants in the Province at Grand Bank, at Fortune, at Burin, at Marystown, at Trepassey, St. John's and Catalina. In other words, the Fish Trades of Newfoundland have confirmed to me, Mr. Speaker, on Friday past that if the Northern cod quota is taken in the next two or three week period, and because now that raw material for these plants is coming from that stock, the Northern cod stock to supply all these plants, it could very well mean the closing of these plants. And they pointed out it means the possible layoff of 5,000 plant employees and lack of work for, in this case, 1,200 deep sea fishermen. So, Mr. Speaker, in view of this situation, I have today contacted the major mainland companies concerned. These are, in this case, H. B. Nickerson and Sons of Halifax, Nova Scotia and National Sea Products Limited of Nova Scotia. We have requested these two companies to immediately withdraw the vessels from the area known as the Northern cod, which is 2J 3KL areas, the ICNAF areas, and we have also asked the senior officials of these two companies to come to St. John's for an urgent meeting to discuss the matter. But our first request is to have these companies withdraw the vessels, the trawler fleet, from the area.

Now, Mr. Speaker, to elaborate a bit on the situation, as of approximately two months ago, in monitoring the situation

May 5, 1980

Tape 1258

EC - 2

MR. J. MORGAN:

of the Northern cod, it was found out then that there was little or no activity being carried out by the mainland firms in the Northern cod area, to the point where only a little more than 700 tons had been caught by the mainland firms and landed in Nova Scotia.

Because of the depression of the redfish market, they feel that it is more lucrative

MR. MORGAN: for them to fish for cod, and they have now diverted thirteen large wet fish trawlers from the Scotian Bank and the Scotian Shelf and from the St. Pierre Bank and areas where they normally fish, to the 2J 3KL ICNAF areas, which is Northern cod stocks. And as a result of that, as pointed out by the Fish Trades Association, within the next two or three week period they feel that, with our own Newfoundland trawler fleet and a fleet from Nova Scotia, they will take approximately 5,000 metric tons of cod per week. And they have already taken 31,000 metric tons total to date, which means in a two or three week period the Northern cod stocks would have reached its established quota of 45,000 metric tons and therefore no further supply of fish for the plants I mentioned earlier.

Mr. Speaker, I want to also outline to the House the content of the telegram now sent to the two companies, National Sea Products Limited of Halifax and H. B. Nickerson and Sons Limited - really North Sydney, Nova Scotia is their headquarters. "I am advised of a significant number of your trawlers based on the Mainland have been diverted from their traditional fishing grounds to Northern cod stocks off the East Coast of Newfoundland and Labrador. The May 1st quota report received from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans shows a Maritimes catch of 4,801 metric tons of Northern cod up to May 1st, 1980. Industry sources have also confirmed that the Northern cod quota for trawlers over sixty-five feet will be reached within a week or so if the present fishing pattern continues. The Newfoundland Government is totally opposed to the harvesting of Northern cod by mainland-based trawlers, as was outlined in the Premier's statement to the House on December 4th, 1979 and in the Newfoundland Government's position paper on the harvesting of Northern cod at the Corner Brook seminar last August. And given our position on this important matter, we view with alarm and concern the diversion effort of mainland-based vessels to the Northern cod stocks. This diversion has very serious implications for the Newfoundland deep sea fleet for the remainder of the year. We understand your diversion from the

May 5, 1980

Tape No. 1259

SD - 2

MR. J. MORGAN:

Scotian Shelf and Southern Banks is as a result of the depressed market conditions for redfish and a more favourable return of the Northern cod fishery. We can not accept a situation where there is a real possibility of year-round fish plants in Newfoundland having to close down before the end of this year, in fact, a strong possibility, according to the Fish Trades to close down within a month or a month and a half if there is no more supply of raw material. The plants that will be affected extend from Burgeo to Catalina." And the closing paragraph in the telegram

MR. J. MORGAN:

to these two companies: "In view of the Province's policies and opposition to this activity, I hereby request that you withdraw your vessels from this fishery immediately. Secondly, I wish to meet with you here in Newfoundland on an urgent basis to discuss this matter in detail. An immediate response would be appreciated."

So, Mr. Speaker, this is the situation as it presently exists and these are telexes read into the record of the House of Assembly putting forward our position to the two companies concerned in Nova Scotia asking them to withdraw this activity immediately.

Mr. Speaker, I will now table the statement and also the telegram going to the companies concerned.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

The hon. the member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. D. HOLLETT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I must say that we all view this set of circumstances with great alarm. In the minister's statement he refers to significant numbers of mainland trawlers and then he was direct in relation to the number. Before I get into specifics, just a general comment, Mr. Speaker, is that I think this points out how vulnerable we are in the fisheries in the total sense. The minister is quite correct in saying that this particular year is the greatest number of mainland large stern trawlers ever fished the Northern cod. I think we all expressed our opinions on that directly and indirectly in relation to the member from Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir's (H. Andrews) private Members Resolution some time ago.

But it also points out something else, that when large fish companies from anywhere in the world in this case Nova Scotia, and I am speaking specifically to the plant in St. John's, when they put in large trawlers, when they explore the grounds, when they have all the communications, when they know when and where to fish, this, of course,

MR. D. HOLLETT: goes through the companies' total network which encourages other boats to fish in that area.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that if this is allowed to continue, it is not just that the trawlers will be out of a quota but also, I suspect, as we said before, that the near offshore and inshore fishermen in that particular region of our coastline are going to suffer badly as well.

There is another problem, and maybe a series of problems, that we have to address ourselves to also and that is, assuming that somebody could say today, "Every Nova Scotia-based trawler, pull out of the Northern waters," I think we would all support that. But then they would leave there and fish their way South. Maybe the stocks on the Grand Banks would be depleted prior to the normal time. They would move further east and go back to the Scotia shelf. And, Mr. Speaker, I am not so sure that with the stringent quotas that are on the Scotia shelf and the Gulf right now, that it is not part of those companies' plan and policy to come

MR. D. HOLLETT: into the Northern cod, get as much as they can out of that first, and therefore reserve the quotas in their own backyard for themselves later on where a lot of our fishermen do not have expertise. That is something we have to watch out for.

The other point is, Mr. Speaker, that I do not, and I am sure nobody in this House wants to see a fish war between two sister provinces. There has to be a method worked out whereby there is fair distribution, because we have to remember all of our side trawlers at present are fishing in what Nova Scotians would call their waters on the Western side of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, some on the Scotia Shelf but in particular Sydney Bight, Scatarie and all this area. And what concerns me here is that if this happens, and I might point out to the minister, we may as well accept the fact Mr. Minister, that it has happened because with eleven boats fishing, I suggest that there are at least seven now fishing in Northern waters and they will come out as they have been doing for over the last two months with full loads, so the quota you have mentioned, I suggest, could well be caught and landed prior to the three weeks that you have already outlined.

So we do have a problem this year, the problem is acute, I agree with the minister, but certainly we all have to work together with whoever is involved, whether it is the fish companies, the Federal Government, ourselves, but prior to the Winter fishery next year, if we do not have a policy in place that is going to protect our workers, our fishermen and our boats, then I think everybody in this House would be derelict in their duties. Thank you, very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

May 5, 1980

Tape No. 1261

DW - 2

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

MR. C. POWER: Mr. Speaker, this is National Forest Week in Canada. The week is highlighted each year to stress the importance of our forests to the nation in general and to this Province in particular.

The first Save the Forest Week was observed in the 1920's and its theme was Forest Fire Prevention.

Today, the week, Mr. Speaker, has more significance as all aspects of forest utilization and protection are considered.

In this Province, the week is sponsored by the Newfoundland Forest Protection Association, a member of the National sponsoring organization, The Canadian Forestry Association. My department supports the work of the N.F.P.A. and will be setting up its major forestry display in Grand Falls for National Forest Week. In addition, my department will be sponsoring advertising in the province's newspapers carrying National Forest Week supplements.

The theme for National Forest Week, Mr. Speaker, is 'Think Forests.' It is an appropriate one, as we in this Province, stop and consider the value of the resource and its importance to all our people.

In order to commemorate National Forest Week and recognize the importance of maintaining our forests, my department is making a black spruce seedling available to members of this hon. House and to all members of the news media present. This black spruce seedlings will be available in the main lobby of this building at the end of today's sitting.

MR. C. POWER: I would like to take this opportunity to wish the Newfoundland Forest Protection Association success in the promotion of National Forest Week.

For all of those persons who do not have a green thumb, we will also, Mr. Speaker, be passing out a list of instructions as to how to care for the spruce seedling. And I think we should table this one, Mr. Speaker, for the nurturing (inaudible).

MR. S. NEARY: It is called a pet tree.

AN HON. MEMBER: One of them grew last year.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please:

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): It is not in order to table objects
in the House of Assembly.

The hon. member for the Strait of
Belle Isle.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, there are two -

AN HON. MEMBER: The member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) was
allowed to table a codfish.

MR. ROBERTS: - there are two kinds of Ministerial State-
ments and we have heard them both today; one a statement on a matter
of some substance, and my friend from Burin-Placentia West (Mr. Hollett)
made, I thought, a superb response to a statement.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROBERTS: Then there is the one that the Minister
of Lands and Forests (Mr. Power) just made which in itself is certainly
fair game for a statement, but I think it is fair to say it is hardly
an earth shattering revelation of the government coming to their senses
with respect to the forestry policy they have adopted. We do welcome
the gift of the seedlings. I assume it does not contravene the
conflict of interest regulations or the Legislative Disabilities
Act, whatever may be left of that. And I note Your Honour's ruling
that you cannot table an object. There have been some pretty objectionable
things tabled in this House, Your Honour, you may want to extend it.
Let us just simply say we on this side are prepared to 'think forests'
and we do hope that National Forest Week is everything it ought to be
across Canada, that the minister continues to give evidence that he too
is thinking forests. We will have a crack at that a little later when
we come to things like the spruce budworm, and the sawmill policy and
presence, or lack thereof, of a number of other moves which we think ought
to be made.

The statement, Sir, was a brilliant insight
into the obvious by the minister and we welcome it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Any further statements?

ORAL QUESTIONS:

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Mines and Energy, Sir. The minister made a statement the other day, outside the House, I believe, that with the coming of oil off the Coast of Newfoundland that the surveillance by the Armed Forces will have to be stepped up, Was the hon. gentleman thinking in terms of Newfoundland having its own air force or navy or army, or would the provincial government have to negotiate this with the government of Canada? Would the hon. gentleman elaborate?

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

MR. BARRY: I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that every hon. member here would like to have our own armed service if for no other reason than to draft the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) and ship him off to Vietnam somewhere. No, Mr. Speaker, what I was referring to was the fact that once - well, first of all, that there is a general recognition and acceptance, I think, in this Province that the Province has never received its fair share of the defence dollar in terms of the amount of money spent by the Federal Department of Defence on military installations. I would submit that there has not been a proportionate share spent in Newfoundland as there has been in other provinces. So that is point one that I made.

And the second point was that once we see commercial production taking place offshore, in a hostile environment there is also the possibility of sabotage. There would be,

MR. BARRY: Mr. Speaker, if Eastern Canada became dependent on that supply of oil, I would submit a need for proper security measures and one of the facets, just one of the facets of those security measures would be an increased military presence right here in this Province.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary.

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

MR. NEARY: I am not sure in the beginning therein the answer the hon. gentleman gave me if he was more interested in getting more defence money in Newfoundland, if he was more concerned about that than protecting the offshore developments. But in view of the fact that the minister has expressed a viewpoint on behalf of the government that Newfoundland owns the offshore, and I presume that will go right out to the Continental shelf, would the hon. gentleman then indicate if the Government of Canada, if pushed out of the picture altogether as the hon. gentleman is trying to do, who would be responsible then for patrolling the offshore developments? Would it be the Province or would it be the Government of Canada? And if the Government of Canada was asked to step up its surveillance and its patrols and so forth, who would pay the additional costs? Would it be the Province, who would get all the benefits, or would it be the Government of Canada and the people of Canada who get no benefits?

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. BARRY: Mr. Speaker, in the same way that the federal government exercises its defence function protecting the boundaries of Southern Alberta where oil fields extend right to the US border, or in the same way that the Canadian federal government exercises its defence function to protect the Ontario border with the United States which extends, Mr. Speaker, incidentally out under water, out into the middle of the Great Lakes, in exactly the same way, Mr. Speaker, the Canadian government would exercise its defence function with respect to the Newfoundland offshore area, as well it should.

MR. NEARY: A final supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A final supplementary. The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, is the hon. gentleman aware or does he have any knowledge of the existing surveillance and patrolling that goes on within Canada's 200 mile limit by the Canadian Coast Guard using aircraft and destroyers? We all remember the complaints a few years ago about the cost of patrolling the 200 mile limit by the Canadian Navy, which apparently are the only ones involved at the present time. Did the hon. gentleman make any attempt to find out if the area is being adequately patrolled now or is this just another political statement that the hon. gentleman made right off the top of his head, of the cuff?

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

Order, please! The hon. member has asked his question.

The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Speaker, I have great admiration for the Canadian Coast Guard. We have seen an increased presence on the part of the Coast Guard right here in this Province, I might say, Mr. Speaker, with some difficulty internally where there has been a continuous pressure to keep a centralized Coast Guard administration outside the Province. And everybody was very excited when the Coast Guard

MR. L. BARRY: finally in this past year or so, Mr. Speaker, started to put the icebreakers where the ice is. An amazing step was taken when that was done. But I have to compliment the Coast Guard and I have to compliment the federal government for finally seeing that the time had come to increase the presence of the Coast Guard in Newfoundland and I hope to see an extended and increased Coast Guard presence in the near future.

With respect to the armed forces, we do also have a certain surveillance by the military, particularly with respect to air-sea rescue capability, again, something which only came after long complaint and pressure on the part of this government to have a stepped up air-sea rescue effort here in this Province. There were too many cases where there were lives being lost, Mr. Speaker, too many cases where our fishermen were in great danger because -

MR. S. NEARY: It is our esteemed Leader of the Opposition who did it, whom you called a traitor to Newfoundland.

MR. L. BARRY: - because of the long delay between the time that they could get their planes in the air in P.E.I. or Nova Scotia, wherever it was. I am glad to see an increased air sea rescue effort here in this Province, but there shall be still more military presence needed, Mr. Speaker, and more Coast Guard presence as the activity offshore increases.

I might add, Mr. Speaker, that we have recently seen where there can be a co-ordination between what is happening offshore with the oil industry and the air sea rescue effort. I believe the - I am sorry, I forget the name of the ship now, but there was a ship ran into difficulty not too long ago that crew members were able to be removed from because the rescue helicopters were able to go out and refuel on drill rigs that happened to be in the -

MR. S. NEARY: It was the Bill Crosbie that is in the harbour down here.

MR. L. BARRY: It was the Bill Crosbie. And it was to a large extent because the helicopters could refuel on the drill rigs that the air-sea rescue was expedited in that particular instance.

May 5, 1980

Tape 1264

EC - 2

MR. L. BARRY:

So, Mr. Speaker, there is nothing tremendously significant about the point that was being made. It was made in response to a reporter's question. I believe that as

MR. L. BARRY: offshore oil and gas development takes place on a commercial basis, we will see an increased military presence here in Newfoundland and we will see this Province hopefully getting a fairer share of the defense dollars that are being spent in this country.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. the member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. G. WARREN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health. On April 15th, I asked the minister during Question Period when would the emergency ambulance program become effective and at that time he told me he did not know. So I am just wondering now if the minister could be more specific on what time that program would become effective?

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

MR. W. HOUSE: Mr. Speaker, when the hon. member asked me the question before, I told him I did not have the exact details because it was still in the system. I pointed out to him that it was made, it was announced in the Budget that there would be a program coming in place in this fiscal year, but we had not had the details worked out. It has to go through the various systems, like the Treasury Board, the Social Policy and it is before Cabinet now and that is all I can tell him; that it is presently at Cabinet and I will not have any further details until it is dealt with there.

MR. G. WARREN: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary, the hon. the member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. G. WARREN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, it seems like the minister is playing cards with the medical affairs of the people of this Province. Could the minister advise the hon. House if there has been any consultation with the International Grenfell Association on respect to the agreements

MR. G. WARREN: that will be in the Budget pertaining to air ambulance services in Labrador? Will IGA be consulted prior to the announcement? Also, will it be retroactive? There are many patients now that have been transferred out of Labrador at the present time and they have been calling my office, and I presume probably other members from Labrador have received the same representation: Will this program be retroactive to the first of April or will it come into being when the minister, through the Cabinet, feels like it? Could the minister enlighten us more on that one?

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

MR. W. HOUSE: Mr. Speaker, first of all, the first statement the member made in preamble to his question of playing cards or games with the public of Labrador, I want to point out that -

MR. G. WARREN: Sure you are.

MR. W. HOUSE: - after a number of years, and we are making steps in the improvement in the health system every year and the ambulance system, and this year there is a major step forward and I would suggest that he should let the thing go on in due process. But the point about it is, of course we had talked to the IGA, the Director of the IGA prior to this. As a matter of fact, it was mentioned in the part of the study that was carried on by a committee in Labrador and we discussed that totally with the director. Certainly, there are negotiations and we are talking about it, and the hospital board and the association both play a very prominent part in that particular program. So we could not do it without that. The other aspect, of course, is that

MR. W. HOUSE: I can not tell the hon. member whether it will be retroactive, I can not tell him that because the programme would only be in place when the regulations are developed and we announce it.

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

MR. E. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. C. Brett), if I can persuade him to lay down the paper for a moment. A handsome picture of his colleague, the Minister of Lands and Forests (Mr. C. Power), there which I hope will be distributed with the seedling today - on soft paper.

MR. POWER: The minister's comments were not so complimentary.

MR. E. ROBERTS: The minister's comments were not so complimentary but fortunately I would say to the Minister of Lands and Forests it is Cabinet solidarity and all that sort of thing.

Mr. Speaker, that was by way of an introduction to the preamble.

MR. JAMIESON: Preamble.

MR. E. ROBERTS: Yes. My question is for the minister and grows out of his, I think, quite productive visit to the Main Brook portion of my constituency last week. I wonder if the minister could tell us first of all a little about the shopping list that has gone up from his department through the Intergovernmental Affairs Ministry to Ottawa with respect to the next DREE roads agreement? I assume the minister knows what I mean by the term shopping list and I assume the House is familiar. This is the list submitted by the government of the Province from which Ottawa selects the projects which they will fund under the new DREE roads agreement, assuming there will be, as there in fact will be, another agreement. Could the minister tell us when that list went and whether Main Brook is on it?

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

MR. C. BRETT: Mr. Speaker, somebody had told me before I left for Main Brook that that - I will use the term shopping list for want of a better word - if somebody had told me that that was not in Ottawa, I probably would have said that they were not speaking the truth.

MR. E. ROBERTS: That it was or was not?

MR. C. BRETT: That it was not, because I understood it was. And it was only upon coming back to St. John's that I discovered that the so-called shopping list is still at the DREE office in St. John's. And my understanding is that the reason it is there is that the federal government refuses to entertain any further agreements or any further shopping lists or anything else of that nature until such time as they have dealt with the four - I think it is four, I am not absolutely certain; they do not deal with my department but I think it is four - DREE agreements that are in Ottawa now waiting for some action.

Some of these agreements or requests have been in Ottawa for over a year, some not quite that long, but up until this moment to the best of my knowledge there has been no action taken on any of them and it is my understanding that until such time as they do act on these they will not entertain another list.

To the best of my knowledge the road to Main Brook is not on that list. I have not had a chance to discuss this with the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, who is the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. BRETT: I understand that the task force report which was recently released up there, strongly recommended that that road be built. In light of that I would think that the road probably now has a different priority. I would also like to say that I did not understand the situation quite as well before I went up as I do now. I have to agree that it is a very important road. By the same token, of course, we cannot forget the road that is commonly referred to as the road across the country. I think that one is equally as important, and what I would like to see, if we could get DREE to participate, is to do the whole thing, right from Plum Point right on across to complete the loop, right up to the proposed airport at St. Anthony.

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

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There shall be another time to talk about the road across country vis-a-vis the new road to be built, but I would like to see them both done. I may or may not agree with the order in which they are to be done but that is a matter we will debate at the proper time.

Could the minister tell me then whether the government, now that we have established that the Main Brook to the new Northern Peninsula Highway road is not, in fact, on the DREE shopping list, just as we have established that the shopping list is not in Ottawa, it is in the Federal Government DREE Office here in St. John's, can the minister tell us whether the government are prepared to amend that list by adding to it a request for the Main Brook - Roddickton - I am sorry, not the Main Brook-Roddickton, the Main Brook new highway link and, if so, as I hope the

MR. ROBERTS: minister will agree to do, can the minister undertake to assure us that the government will request that it be given a degree of priority. The task force report certainly mirrors that, as the minister tells us. I think there are many other equally compelling arguments and it is time that road was recognized.

But I think the question is quite important, Mr. Speaker, because, as the minister will agree, unless that road is on the shopping list it cannot be put on a roads agreement, as I understand it. Equally, it is fair to say that even if it is on the list, it may not get on the actual 'to be done' list because there will be less money than the government need to do the work. But can the minister tell us if he will agree to amend the list by adding that to it? And if so, would he also ask that a degree of priority be attached to it?

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

MR. BRETT: Mr. Speaker, I do not think I should make that kind of a commitment. As I indicated, the Premier is the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and I, myself, believe, probably, that priorities might have changed since that task force report was released. But in all fairness I think that question should be posed to the Premier rather than to me. Intergovernmental Affairs will be doing the negotiating, not only for this roads programme but for all of the DREE agreements, and I think the Premier is the right person to answer that question.

I, as the Minister of Highways, may feel that that road should have top priority but maybe government feel differently. You know, it is something that I would prefer to discuss

MR. BRETT: with the Premier first.
On another point, the hon. member suggested that if the road is not on the list then it cannot be approved. That is not entirely true. I think, probably, the Newfoundland Cabinet minister in Ottawa - I do not think, I know - that hon. member, who no doubt will do a good job in the next four years, will have some say in what roads are paved through DREE and what ones are not. And if it is not on the list it does not necessarily mean that it will not get done. I am sure that that hon. member will look after his district very well.

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

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
I do know fairly well the federal minister, the hon. Mr. Rompkey, and I can second the minister's observation that Mr. Rompkey will ensure that justice is done and it will be done. But I understand that Mr. Rompkey's powers cannot be exercised unless the government exercises its discretion first. But anyway, that is another subject. I think it was take a mutual meeting of the minds before Ottawa's cash flows to these projects and there is ample precedent for that in this Province, including the Northern Peninsula Road which was not entirely the decision of the Government of Newfoundland, I assure the minister.

Anyway, my final - Your Honour is wondering? Well, there is a final supplementary: I understand the minister's position that he cannot commit the government at this date. Will he undertake, however, to have a word with his colleague the Premier, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, and let us have a statement at an early date, either to me individually, if he wishes, or in the House, as he

MR. ROBERTS: would prefer, on this question because it is of some great import and the urgency, as the minister will appreciate, is made all the greater because of the fact that he was in Main Brook and met with the council there. They have given me quite a full briefing. They were delighted to see the minister but now they want some specific answers and I know

MR. ROBERTS: the minister will understand. Can he give us an undertaking that he will speak with the Premier, give us some indication of the government's position? That is different than saying what the government's position is going to be. Will he let us know what it is going to be as quickly as he can?

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

MR. BRETT: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I will gladly give that undertaking. I am most anxious to meet with the Premier on this subject and we will be discussing the matter further and in all probability the Premier will have a statement on it.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for St. Mary's-The Capes.

MR. HANCOCK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Health about a problem I ran into with an ambulance service this weekend. I would like to know what is government's policy on the dispatching of ambulances in the case of emergency calls? Just exactly what is the government's policy?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Health.

MR. HOUSE: Mr. Speaker, with respect to ambulance calls, of course first of all the ambulances are given in areas and determined in three different ways, of course, the private operators and the organizations, in some places there are hospitals, and then with regard to the dispatching of ambulances it is done basically through the doctors. A person will call a doctor and the doctors would direct the ambulance, or nurses. In the case of an emergency on the road, any person at all calls and of course gives their names and an ambulance will respond. But there are fairly detailed regulations regarding it, and I can get them to the member - as a matter of fact I have got some here in my briefcase, the regulations now, and there are newer ones drawn up. The point is we have to have somebody responsible most times because in a lot of cases the ambulances are a little cheaper than taxis and of course we have to make sure that when

MR. HOUSE: an ambulance goes that it is going for the right reason.

So it is basically the doctor or a nurse, and in the case of a community, if the doctor is not available, I believe the mayor will be able to release it and the other thing is, of course, in an emergency anybody can get an ambulance.

MR. HANCOCK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): A supplementary, the hon. member for St. Mary's-The Capes.

MR. HANCOCK: How do you determine what is an emergency or not? According to an ambulance call that I put through the week for a person who was injured, I had to get permission from the doctor in order to get the ambulance dispatched to the scene of the accident? Is this indeed true?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Health.

MR. HOUSE: I am not aware of that particular detail but I had another one where a person called me, and I made a point of going back, and if the accident was a broken bone or something like that, they would dispatch the ambulance right away; but the person who called the ambulance would of course have to take the responsibility for it. But I do not know this detail. I will check that one out for you.

MR. SPEAKER: A final supplementary, the hon. member for St. Mary's-The Capes.

MR. HANCOCK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the weekend I had to make - I guess around the bays you would get a hooker quicker than you would get a doctor at times. I had to make seven calls to try and get permission from a doctor to get hold of a doctor to get an ambulance dispatched to the scene of where the accident occurred. Can the minister give me some assurance that this will not happen again, that if an emergency call is called in by anyone, that the ambulance driver will be dispatched immediately.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

Order, please!

The hon. Minister of Health.

MR. HOUSE:

Mr. Speaker, as I just pointed out, I do not exactly know about this except now, I just heard about it. In an accident we are advised - and I have had some problems with certain other areas where that has happened, but I will certainly undertake to investigate that particular incident and see if we can give you a specific answer.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member for Carbonear.

MR. MOORES:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications. By way of preamble, last year, about eight or ten months ago, the minister met with a group of interested citizens, including the Town Council of Carbonear, and committed himself at that time to the completion of the Carbonear by-pass road. The lack of completion, or the non-completion of that road of course has led to complete havoc, traffic congestion, etc., within the Town of Carbonear, and to a number of near fatal accidents involving transport trucks. Would the minister be prepared at this time to re-commit himself to the completion of the Carbonear by-pass road this year?

MR. ROBERTS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):
and Communications.

The hon. the Minister of Transportation

MR. C. BRETT:

Mr. Speaker, I met with a group of people from that area. I beg to differ with the hon. member. I most certainly did not commit one single, solitary cent. Therefore, I do not have to recommit. The roads programme for this year will be tabled as quickly as I can get the Orders in Council - that is my department - and get it typed up. I will present it to the House and then everybody will be aware what roads are going to be done and what roads are not going to be done. But I certainly did not make any commitment, Mr. Speaker.

MR. R. MOORES:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Carbonear.

MR. R. MOORES:

Just as a self-protective measure, Mr. Speaker, this is the fourth year in a row that the minister has given me this - well, not this particular minister, but a Minister of Transportation and Communications - has given me this exact same answer, and each year they deny having made a commitment. Now, I was not at that meeting last year, but I do know what was said there. My next supplementary question to the minister - it is irrelevant whether you committed your funds or whether you made a promise or whether you intend to recommit funds this year - would you place the Carbonear by-pass road in its proper perspective on the list of priority construction this season and tell me just exactly what that status is?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. G. WARREN:

A good question.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Transportation

and Communications.

MR. C. BRETT:

The hon. member will have the answer to that question, Mr. Speaker, when the list of the road work is tabled.

MR. E. ROBERTS:

Arrogance! Arrogance! Have you let any contracts?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. B. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transportation and Communications.

MR. E. ROBERTS:

Fooled by some of your colleagues!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. B. TULK: It concerns the ferry routes to Fogo Island. I have some indication that the route will probably be changed from Seldom to Carmanville, as it now exists, changed perhaps to go from Rogers Cove to Southern Head, Change Islands and then to Farewell Head. I wonder would the minister indicate if there has been any final decision in this regard and just what the situation is with regard to those indications?

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

MR. C. BRETT: I wish I could get back to the question the hon. member asked before because there was some suggestion from an hon. member over there that we are calling tenders. I do not know if this in order or not, Mr. Speaker, but I want to assure the House that with the exception probably of one or two people - and I also mentioned to a person on the other side of the House, I made some remark that there will be some road work and there was no more said - I assure this hon. House that the roads programme is done by Cabinet, but I do not have the Orders in Council, it is not typed up, as such, and hon. members on this side, excepting one or two to whom I made a casual remark, are not aware because they have been down my throat. They were down my throat the minute I came through the door today. I am going to table the whole thing and both sides of the House will know the same day what is going to be done, that is the gospel truth.

MR. E. ROBERTS: Very good (inaudible).

MR. C. BRETT: The ferry service to Fogo Island - some members of my staff and myself went to Fogo Island recently and we met with two groups of people. Both groups indicated what they would like to see with respect to changes and improvements in the ferry system. We listened very carefully to what they had to say and then we told them what we had in mind and a lot of the plans that we have, One group in particular agreed with them wholeheartedly, the other group, I think, had some feelings that maybe it was not the best idea. But anyway, what we said down there - and it is only an idea, it is just being tossed around at this stage of the game - we talked about changing the route, at least during the Summer months, from

MR. C. BRETT: instead of going from Fogo Island, that is from Seldom to Carmanville as it is now, we were discussing and looking at the possibility of going from some point near Seldom just up around Rogers Cove, or something like that, across to Change Islands and then on to Farewell Head. I think that is what it is. It is an entirely new route, it is a quicker route. It would mean, hopefully, more trips and we may somehow co-ordinate the efforts of the two ferries, the one that now goes from Change Islands to Farewell Head and the one that now goes from Seldom to wherever she goes on the mainland.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Time for one final supplementary,
The hon. the member for Fogo .

MR. B. TULK: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the minister would perhaps tell the House the groups that he has been in contact with and perhaps tell us if he is satisfied at this point

MR. TULK:

that he has done enough research into that route or whether he will be doing further research? And will he be providing alternate docking facilities in case the run from, let us say, Rogers Cove for a point of reference, to Farewell Head does not work out, will he be providing alternate docking spaces, say, in Seldom and Carmanville if there has to be a winter run?

And perhaps, the last question, Mr. Speaker, is will he be providing new docking facilities this year anyway for the run off Fogo Island regardless of where it is going?

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

MR. C. BRETT: Mr. Speaker, that was two or three questions. I do not know if I can remember all of them or not. But the two groups that I met with were the Fogo Island Development Association, I think it is called and the, I suppose, it is the Fogo Island or Fogo District Progressive Conservative Association, Those were the two groups.

Would we be providing alternate facilities if it does not work out from Rogers Cove? There is some thought that maybe we could run into some trouble with ice during the winter months on that particular route and we are cognizant of that. And therefore what we might have to do, if we do this at all, and this is certainly in the preliminary stages, very, very preliminary, but if we do that at all we realize that we could have to use the route from Rogers Cove to Farewell Head in the summer, or for six or seven or eight months of the year, and then the other four months we may have to revert back to the Seldom - Carmanville run.

MR. C. BRETT: Have we done enough research?
I do not know if we have done enough research or not, I really do not. I know we have done an awful lot. No, not 100 per cent because, as I have already indicated, it is very, very preliminary. But we have been researching the Fogo Island ferry service for the last number of years because there have been requests for causeways and requests for bridges and requests for you-name-it, so there is a stack of it down there that thick. Now whether that is enough or whether it is not I do not know, but I would say that we are still going to have to do some more thinking about it and probably more research as well.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!
The time for Oral Questions has expired.

I would like to acknowledge the presence in the gallery today of a former member of this hon. House, the former member for St. John's West, Dr. Hubert Kitchen. And it has also been brought to my attention that we have a distinguished Newfoundland personality in the gallery and I know hon. members would want to join me in welcoming Mr. Harry Hibbs.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Stephenville.

MR. F. STAGG: Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to give the final report from the Government Services Committee as opposed to the interim report which I presented last week.

MR. F. STAGG: This report consists of telling the House that we have passed the five Heads of expenditure submitted to us, these Heads being Head IV, Finance; Head V, Labour and Manpower; Head XVII, Transportation and Communications; Head XVIII, Public Works and Services and Head XIX, Municipal Affairs and Housing. These Heads of expenditure were passed without amendment and that means that our committee has now done its function for this fiscal year.

By way of preliminary commentary before the concurrence debates, we did receive a very interesting letter from the press gallery in response to my interim report which I made the other day. I addressed myself to that this morning and basically we are most appreciative of the comments made by the president of the press gallery and I certainly think that it would go a long way towards solving some of the problems that we had encountered along the way. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Any further reports?

MR. L. BARRY: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. L. BARRY: Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to file the annual 1979 report for Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro Corporation.

MR. E. ROBERTS: They made \$9 million, did they?

MR. L. BARRY: There is a nice picture of some caribou on the cover.

MR. C. POWER: Environmentally conscious.

MR. SPEAKER: Any further reports?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to give the answer to a question asked by the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary). I cannot say on the Order Paper of which day, but it was very recently. I will read the question and that will, I think, put it in perspective or the hon. member will know to what I am referring. The question was, "Have any representations been made in the past three years by the minister or his department to the federal authorities requesting changes to present laws concerning the use and distribution of marijuana?" Now I can only make a distinction in answering it and that is up to the period of, say, last July when I became minister, I am not aware of any requests, certainly in the sense of written requests. I could not say whether there would have been, you know, oral discussion of it. That would not show in the record. Now in the period since July, since I have been there, I can tell the hon. gentleman that this question was discussed at a meeting last October called by the federal Minister of Justice, the then one, Senator Jacques Flynn and the ten provincial counterparts and it was a general discussion without decisions being made, number one from the point of view of both the advantages and disadvantages of decriminalizing the use, not the trafficking but the use of marijuana. At that time we were informed that a study was being made by the federal Department of Health and Welfare to update the LeDane Royal Commission Report which, it was felt, was quite outdated and that the new strains or mutations of marijuana being used were quite different from what had been examined then and that its health and related effects could be quite different. The idea therefore was to wait until that study would be available and that there would be a further meeting around December. Now, there having been an election and a new government in between, that has not taken place. I would anticipate a meeting within the next two or three months.

(Inaudible) decriminalizing marijuana.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: My position would be, and I think it is one shared by all, that until we have that updated information with respect to its effects, medical or psychological or related effects, that it would be premature to

MR. OTTENHEIMER: make a statement there. The basic understanding was, the information we were given was that the LeDane Royal Commission Report in many respects was outdated or its findings outdated because what is being used now is in its composition quite different from the marijuana then used and that no firm position would be taken until the ministers had an update on its health effects. So I think really we will have to wait until we have that.

MR. NEARY: But now they have these -

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Further answers?

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Presumably, but we have not been told.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Eagle River.

MR. HISCOCK: Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition on behalf of the residents of Port Hope Simpson, Labrador. The prayer of the petition is that an airline strip be constructed in that South Coast of Labrador community. I also realize that this is a federal matter and I have written to a minister in the federal government on this matter as well as Mr. Jean-Luc Pepin, Minister of Transportation. But I rise to present the petition in this House because the residents have asked me to present the petition and asked for the support of the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Brett) for this Province. It is the largest community on the South Coast of Labrador and in this regard the provincial government is building an airstrip at Cartwright this year which will be finished, there is one at Mary's Harbour which is now being finished and also one in the process at Forteau and of course we have the one at Blanc Sablon. People feel in Port Hope Simpson and the immediate area that you have to take the single engine plane to Mary's Harbour and then take the twin Otter to St. Anthony, and then on to other areas of the Province that are connected with the Queen Air. I am concerned from this area particularly because Port Hope Simpson is inland over twenty miles and is the first place to freeze up in the Fall and also the last place in Spring to thaw out, and therefore they need to have more transportation. It is possible for CN boats to go to Mary's Harbour and to William's Harbour and

MR. E. HISCOCK: Charlottetown and other areas much later in the Fall than it is to go to Port Hope Simpson. So I ask the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. C. Brett) if he will take this matter up and give it priority. It is not only this airstrip but the other airstrips on coastal Labrador that will be speeded up. They are scheduled for one a year and I think they will be finished in 1986. I would ask the federal minister, as well as the Minister of Transportation in Ottawa, and I would hope that the provincial government through the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. J. Dinn) will employ upon the federal government to speed up these airstrips particularly with regard to Port Hope Simpson on the Labrador Coast.

By the way, Mr. Speaker, I might add that ninety-eight people signed this petition and there would have been more but basically another petition was signed and circulated in the community and sent directly to the Minister of Transportation and Communications.

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

MR. E. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, if any hon. member on the other side wishes to say a word I would be happy to - the minister made a sign, Does he wish to speak? I mean, I will yield and then come back in a moment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, Oh!

MR. ROBERTS: Well, Mr. Speaker, that is fine.

the remarks that I wish to make are a few but very much heartfelt.

The community of Port Hope Simpson was not within the area of Labrador which was formally included in the Strait of Belle Isle constituency from 1975 to 1979, but nonetheless it is a community that I have come to know fairly well over the years in a variety of ways. I think that the prayer of this petition, and I would differ with my hon. friend from Eagle River (Mr. E. Hiscock)

MR. E. ROBERTS: it is primarily a federal responsibility but there is a legitimate provincial input into this -

MR. S. NEARY: Right on.

MR. E. ROBERTS: - and we have a precedent, I believe, in Rigolet. As I recall it, the airstrip in the community of Rigolet was funded initially in part at least by the funds from the government of the Province.

MR. WARREN: It is still half finished.

MR. E. ROBERTS: It is still half finished, but at least it is halfway there. But the prayer of the petition really is one that ought to commend itself. These airstrips are expensive in themselves, Mr. Speaker, but they are not expensive when we come to measure the good which results from them. I do not know what it costs to build a airstrip these days - say, \$500,000, it is of that order, possibly a little more possibly a little less - but the fact remains that until a road is constructed to link Port Hope Simpson with Mary's Harbour and the other communities in the area, the only possible means of year-round transportation is by air. The boats are fine in the Summer, whether they are coastal boats or whether they are private boats, trap skiffs or longliners or speed boats, it does not matter, but they are only for a limited portion of the year and, as my hon. friend has explained, Port Hope Simpson is well inland, it was a created community in 1930s named after the then Commissioner of Natural Resources, Sir John Hope Simpson. We would have Powersville today, I suppose, if we are to have a comparable community. It is well inland and so it freezes well before the communities out on the coast freeze up, Mary's Harbour, which I suppose is the nearest coastal community to Port Hope Simpson - about what? 20 miles away in a direct line. There is going to be no road built, in all likelihood, for some considerable time and so the only way to provide these people with access to anything approaching year-round transportation is by the provision of an airstrip.

The petition makes it clear that what is there now is not adequate; what is there now is exactly what nature put there - the water in the harbour and the ice when the water

MR. E. ROBERTS:

turns into ice.

So I would hope that the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. C. Brett) will support this petition on behalf of the government, and I have no doubt he will do that because that does not cost the government a plugged nickel. But I would hope as well that he will offer on behalf of the government or the government will offer in their own right to help towards this.

The people of Port Hope Simpson, like the people of most of these communities in Southern Labrador, Sir, have been denied, inevitably but not rightly, have been denied the benefits of the Confederation years. Many parts of Labrador have seen benefits, many parts of this Island, but, Sir, if there is a forgotten coast, and that is a phrase that is often heard in this House, it is the coast which begins at Mary's Harbour and goes down North as far as, I suppose, not even to Rigolet, possibly as far as Cartwright and Paradise River and the communities in Sandwich Bay. That is the portion of this Province that is most seriously lacking not just in public services, in even anything. So I would say to the minister that he could find a lot of projects in this Province that are less worthy than this one and I would venture to say, Sir that he will fund, or his department will fund many projects this year and next and down the road that are far less worthwhile than this one. So I would urge him to consider giving provincial money as well as to supporting a request for the federal money. It is easy to spend

MR. E. ROBERTS: federal money, Let him also put some of his own money on it because I think, Sir, this is money well spent. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. C. Brett) wishes to speak on that petition?

The hon. the Minister of Transportation and Communications.

MR. C. BRETT: Very briefly, Mr. Speaker, I am more than happy to support that petition from the hon. member. The hon. member brought it to my attention some time ago outside the House, and I agreed wholeheartedly that both he and I should take up the matter with the federal government. And this is not a matter of passing the buck: Everybody acknowledges that it is a federal responsibility. I think the federal government more or less agreed some time ago to build something like thirteen airstrips on the coast and they have not done too badly. There are three or four finished or just about finished. We are spending \$600,000 in Cartwright this year to put a crushed stone top on it. But I acknowledge the need and I am aware of the need, as the hon. member for the area is, and, certainly, I will do anything that I can in my capacity to make sure that the federal government does not forget Port Hope Simpson.

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

MR. H. ANDREWS: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of personal privilege. In this afternoon's Evening Telegram on page one, there is a story about a mini-poll which indicates few MHAs opposed to the flag design. Mr. Speaker, it is bad enough to be misquoted, but it is, I suspect, even worse to be quoted when you have not said anything at all. It says here that I said I would not support the proposed flag, it was an abstract design and has no meaning to me, 'I do not think there is anything I like about it' and 'I will have to vote against it.' I was not interviewed at all by the Evening Telegram, so I would ask that the paper retract what is said in this article. And I suspect maybe if this is typical of that story, there may be some other falsehoods in it also. I was interviewed by the CBC in an anonymous poll that was taken, and for the record, I indicated to them that

MR. H. ANDREWS:

I would vote for the flag.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

Order, please!

With respect to the point of privilege,

I would rule that there is not a prima facie case in this particular matter but that the hon. member has taken the opportunity to clarify remarks that were attributed to him.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Motion 5.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Education to introduce a bill, "An Act To Amend The Education (Teachers' Pensions) Act," carried. (Bill No. 35).

On motion, Bill No. 35 read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

Motion 6.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Consumer Affairs and Environment to introduce a bill, "An Act To Amend The Judgement Recovery (Nfld.) Act," carried. (Bill No. 10).

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

Motion 7.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Transportation and Communications to introduce a bill, "An Act To Amend The Highway Traffic Act," carried. (Bill No. 32).

On motion, Bill No. 32 read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

Motion 8.

Motion, The hon. the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to introduce a bill, "An Act To Amend The City Of St. John's (Loan) Act, 1975-76 And The City of St. John's (Loan) Act, 1978", carried. (Bill No. 39).

On motion, Bill No. 39 read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

May 5, 1980

Tape 1273

EC - 3

Motion 9.

Motion, the hon. the Premier to
introduce a bill, "An Act To Adopt A Flag For The Province," carried.
(Bill No. 44).

On motion, Bill No. 44 read a first time,
ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

Motion 4.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Justice
to introduce a bill, "An Act To Amend The Change Of Name Act, 1978," carried.
(Bill No. 36).

On motion, Bill No. 36 read a first time,
ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

MR. MARSHALL: Order 3. Committee of Ways and Means.

MR. SPEAKER(Simms): Order 3. Committee of Ways and Means, the Budget Debate. The hon. the member for LaPoile.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the responsibility that falls on my shoulders today is to lead off for the Opposition in the Budget Debate. And I must say that this presents a rather difficult task because it is so long ago since we heard the Budget delivered in this House that most members have forgotten what it was the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) said.

Now, Mr. Speaker, before I get into the meat of the Budget Debate itself, I want to, first of all, say that a large number of people were confused as to what we were going to debate in the House today. A lot of people thought the debate would start today on the new provincial flag. The President of the Council (Mr. Marshall) indicated, I believe, on Friday, that today would be devoted to the Budget Debate and tomorrow the flag debate would start and we had notice of second reading of the bill a few moments ago by the hon. the President of the Council, who introduced the bill on behalf of the Premier.

I was always under the impression, Mr. Speaker, that the bill for a new provincial flag was going to be brought in by the Minister of Tourism, Recreation and Culture (Mr. Dawe) But now the Premier has put his name on the bill that was just circulated in the House and it is going to be brought in under the name of the Premier who told the people of this Province a few days ago that there was going to be a free vote on the provincial flag. A

MR. NEARY: free vote, he said, but then he went on to add in the next breath that he was in favour of the new flag. Now, what kind of a free vote is that? The Premier of the Province, the leader of the Tory Party, says, 'Yes, a free vote, but I am in favour of the new flag', and then brings in a bill with his name on it, the Premier of the Province. Now what way does he expect his colleague to vote? What way does he expect that hon. crowd of sheep who are looking for favours, who want to bow and scrape and weasle their ways into his cabinet, what way are they going to vote? 'A free vote' he says, 'but the bill is in my name, Hon. A. Brian Peckford, Premier' and he announces to the whole world that he is in favour of the flag but they can vote how they like. All I can say is God help them if they do not toe the party line and vote for it. That is not a free vote.

AN HON. MEMBER: A flock of sheep.

MR. NEARY: A flock of sheep, yes.

MR. WARREN: There is nothing free about that.

MR. NEARY: A flock of sheep and they will all be rewarded in the end, Mr. Speaker. But I will not say that they will all be rewarded in the end by getting into the Cabinet. When they go back to their constituents, back to the voters they will be rewarded in the end. Because, Mr. Speaker, never before in this history of this Province have we had a single issue that has caused such a furor from coast to coast, and caused such a fuss in Newfoundland and Labrador as this so-called distinctive Newfoundland flag.

Mr. Speaker, I am not voting for it. And let me make one thing clear, Mr. Speaker, let me make one thing abundantly clear, that in my view, if I am reading the people in this Province

MR. NEARY: right, ninety-eight per cent, I would say - ninety-nine per cent of the people of this Province are against that design. But that does not necessarily mean, Sir, that they are against a distinctive Newfoundland flag. That does not necessarily mean that.

MR. S. NEARY:

The largest group of people in this Province today, in my estimation, favour retention of the Union Jack. The next largest group, I would say, favour a distinctive Newfoundland flag incorporating in it the Union Jack; and if you put the two groups together, I would say they represent a lot of people in this Province, by far the largest majority. They represent - and then if you put all the other people in with these two groups who the committee chose to ignore, the committee went around this Province, and my colleague was one, went around this Province and asked for briefs and asked the people to come out and meet the committee, express their views on a new flag for Newfoundland and the people went and did that, five or six hundred briefs, five or six hundred people turned out to either make an oral presentation or to make a presentation in writing, and then were completely ignored, completely ignored by the committee.

MR. STAGG: Did the hon. member present a brief?

MR. NEARY: No, I did not present a brief, but my constituents, who appeared before the committee, told the committee, in no uncertain terms that there were things far more important in Newfoundland to discuss than to waste their time and money on going around talking about a flag. And I remember the -

AN. HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. S. NEARY: Yes, I am coming to the hon. gentleman who tries to leave the impression that it only cost \$8,000, I think he said, \$8,000 he said is all it cost for these hearings and for the committee to go around the Province, helter-skelter, having their T-bone steaks and their glass of wine. And I do not deny them that,

AN. HON. MEMBER: That is some hard stuff.

MR. S. NEARY: Yes, it is hard. I know it is going to be hard to take, it is going to be hard to take. But, Mr. Speaker,

MR. S. NEARY: these hearings cost alot more than the chairman is leading the people of this Province to believe. A lot more because he is not including in his \$8,000 the cost of the government aircraft. The hon. gentleman the other day said, 'Oh, it is peanuts, the amount that was spent,' holding these hearings was peanuts when in actual fact it was probably up closetto \$70,000 or \$80,000. I would say a minimum of fifty, somewhere between \$50,000 and \$80,000.

AN. HON. MEMBER: Do I hear forty. Do I hear thirty?

MR. S. NEARY: The hon. gentleman will go down in history, will go down in history as being the man that hauled down the Union Jack in this Province and substituted it with a design,with a flag that is totally unacceptable to 99 per cent of the people of this Province.

MR. WARREN: Right on! You had better stop (inaudible).

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, as I started to say, that does not mean that there are not a lot of people in this Province,who want a distinctive Newfoundland flag,but they do not want that one. They do not want it,and if the message has not filtered through now to the members and to the government,it will in due course.

People argue, and rightly so, that there is no warmth, They can have no feeling for that design. It leaves everybody cold. A flag must convey feeling and warmth and affection, and people must love it and have affection for it. How can you love that and have affection for it? How could you every think about laying down your life for a bunch of triangles? A design that looks like it was done by somebody who took out a geometry set and drew a bunch of triangles or somebody tipped over a bottle of ink and spread it around.

Mr.Speaker, I am not going to take too much time today on the Provincial flag. I merely want to say for the benefit of those people who thought that the debate was starting today that it will start tomorrow,and the reason the government are so anxious

MR. S. NEARY: to get the debate going right away is they want to head off controversy. They are afraid that their own crowd will bolt ranks. They are afraid that their own crowd will chicken out when their constituents get at them. They are afraid their own crowd will weaken, and so the strategy the government has adopted, which is contemptible, in my opinion, and an

MR. NEARY:

indication of how arrogant this government has become in a short time, the strategy that they have developed is, "Get it through the House as fast as you can. Get it over and done with, head off controversy," when they already caused the most savage controversy on an issue that if they went out of their way, if they deliberately set out to create an issue, to cause controversy in this Province they could not have done better.

So, Mr. Speaker, the first item then I want to deal with is the cost of the Committee going around the Province -

MR. MOORES: Squandering.

MR. NEARY: Well, wasting, certainly, I do not know about squandering, but wasting the taxpayers' money as they were told that by the Chairman of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks in Port aux Basques. He ended up his brief by saying something like this, and I am summarizing it, I do not have the brief in front of me, I have it home, by saying, "Well now, I am going to go back to work so I can earn more money, so that I can pay more taxes, so that you people can go around the Province spending it and wasting it." He said, "Surely there are far more important things that need to be debated in the House of Assembly, and far more important reasons for establishing select committees of this House" -

AN HON. MEMBER: They are getting famous for spending taxpayers' money.

MR. NEARY: - or for wasting it - "than going around wasting their time on a matter of the flag."

The hidden costs, Mr. Speaker, to which I refer are the helicopters, the helicopters that were used to carry Committee members around Labrador. That is one of the hidden costs. They used the helicopters that were under charter to the Newfoundland government, the Department of Forestry, the Department of Transportation.

MR. NEARY: So, therefore, these charges will not show up anywhere as being a charge against the Flag Committee. It will be a hidden cost. Probably \$25,000 or \$30,000 worth of helicopter flying time -

AN HON. MEMBER: Talk about the Public Accounts Committee.

MR. NEARY: - that will not be charged as directly against the Committee but will be charged against the Department of Forestry and the Department of Transportation.

Then there is the government aircraft. I do not know how much it costs everytime they take that aircraft out of the hangar down at Torbay and go across this Island, but I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that the cost from St. John's probably to Deer Lake or Stephenville return would be somewhere in the vicinity of \$5,000 to \$6,000. How many times have they used government aircraft? How many trips? Once? Oh, Mr. Speaker, far more than that. So add that on to the cost, that will be a hidden cost, because we can never get the log of the people that use and travel on the government aircraft. So put it all together, Mr. Speaker, and it amounts to a substantial amount of money, a substantial amount. And the hon. member for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter), who is trying to leave the impression that it is only a trivial amount, should be man enough to admit, should have the courage to admit to the people of this Province that it costs a fair amount of money, \$50,000, or \$60,000 or \$70,000 to go around holding public hearings and then, after putting people to the trouble and inconvenience of having to appear before the Committee, then they completely ignore them, completely ignored the wishes of the people, and went to Mr. Christopher Pratt who used to be - I do not know what he is now - used to be a Tory heckler at one time at political rallies. He was sent in as a heckler at political rallies. But he is an artist. He is

May 5, 1980

Tape No. 1276

NM - 3

MR. NEARY: an artist. He cannot help it if he is a Tory. He is an artist. And the Committee went to him and said, "Mr. Pratt, will you make us a design?" And he said, "Yes, I will make a design but when I give it to you you are not to make any changes in it. Take it or leave it. Like it or lump it. No changes in the flag." And I do not know why my colleagues and why the Committee succumbed to the wishes of Mr. Pratt.

MR. S. NEARY: I do not know why they had to put up with that nonsense. It is the committee that had to make the recommendation. If we wanted to employ Mr. Pratt we would have done so in this House. And the committee had no right to be dictated to by that individual as they were, much to my chagrin. I am disappointed and hurt that they could not stand up to one Mr. Pratt and that he came along with his design, which is the monstrosity we saw unveiled in the House last Tuesday, a week ago tomorrow, a sad day in Newfoundland's history indeed, and said, 'There it is. Take it or leave it! No changes, no amendment! You cannot change it! That is it, take it or leave it!' Never mind those who want the Union Jack, never mind those who want a combination of the Union Jack and something else, never mind those who want the Pink, White and Green, never mind those who want the gold, never mind those people who want the Newfoundland Coat of Arms in it or the Pitcher Plant, ignore all of them! Ignore them! They are only people! They are only the people who want to fly a flag in this Province. Ignore the Canadian Legion, ah, they are dwelling in the past. All they can think about is war. That is what I heard this morning on one of the open line programmes, 'All the Canadian Legion can think about is war'. It is enough to make you sit down and cry. I feel like weeping when I hear statements like that. One gentleman-I was talking to Corner Brook last night. They called me and said, 'Can you come over tomorrow morning and talk about the flag on the open line?' I said, 'Sure'. One gentleman came on and I had the impression I was talking to a teenager. He was saying, 'Oh, the young people this and the young people that'. I finally ended up - I thought he was a little teenager, hardly any older than my oldest daughter who is fifteen - and I said, 'How old are you, Sir'. He said, 'I am thirty-

MR. S. NEARY: six', and I said, 'Oh, my God, a senior citizen'. He tried to leave the impression that he was a teenager.

The West Coast, by the way, is savage against this. Ah, the hon. minister shakes her head and says, no, they are not, Well, I can tell the hon. minister they are, they are savage against this flag. The hon. lady would do well to vote against this flag. Vote against it!

Mr. Speaker, I hope that I will never hear these statements made again, 'All the Canadian Legion can think about is war'. Just imagine, Mr. Speaker, a group of men and women who rallied around the flag, who rallied around the Union Jack that we are all proud of.- wherever you go in the world and you see the Union Jack flying, you are proud of it, it is the most beautiful flag in the world - they rallied around it at a time when the freedom of the world was being threatened by a madman over in Europe, threatened by a madman, and I do not know but we have another madman in this Province, the hon. member for St. John's North (Mr. Carter) who would dare haul down the Union Jack and leave the Canadian Legion open for this kind of abuse. The hon. gentleman has not come to their rescue, I am coming to their rescue now. And volunteered, there was no conscription in this Province, their services to go and fight for King and Country, to keep the world free so that we could have nincompoops, so that we could have intelligent people, intellects, so that we could have educated people, so that we could have poor people and rich people and so that we could have all kinds of people, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom from fear,

May 5, 1980

Tape No. 1277

DW - 3

MR. S. NEARY: freedom to allow nincompoops
to roam around the Province at will in government air-
crafts and helicopters at public expense and then ignore
the people they ask to come and make recommendations to
them. These are the warmongers we are hearing about now

MR. NEARY: on the open line programs, 'They can only think of war'. Who was it said that you have to reflect on the past in order to know where you are going in the future?

MR. THOMS: I am only worried about the future. That is where I (inaudible).

MR. NEARY: Now, the hon. gentleman is only worried about the future - haul down all the -

MR. THOMS: That is where I am going to spend the rest of my life.

MR. NEARY: Haul down all the traditions and all the heritage in this Province. Haul it all down and open her up and let her go to the four winds.

MR. THOMS: I did not say that.

MR. NEARY: I hope I will never hear that kind of an argument again, Mr. Speaker, I cannot help but get emotional over this issue. My father happened to be a veteran of the First War. He is dead now.

AN HON. MEMBER: Where were you in '45?

MR. NEARY: Where was I in '45? I was in the same place the hon. gentleman was in '39. Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. gentleman is taking this matter too lightly. Emotions are running high in this Province, Sir, and I am not going to make my speech on the flag now, but I cannot help but getting upset, upset at the arrogant way, at how flippant the hon. gentleman is about the whole matter. On the whole, I will end up this particular part of my -

AN HON. MEMBER: It is a big joke to him.

MR. NEARY: Yes, it is a big joke to him - end up this particular part of my remarks by saying that I would like to see either the flag laid on the Table of the House or a referendum held in this Province and let the people decide whether they want that design or not.

MR. WARREN: Now, that is a good idea.

MR. NEARY: And do not force it down their throats. One thing you can say for the Union Jack, if you do not like it, if you

MR. NEARY: want to haul it down and trample it in the mud, and if you want to argue that we are exploited under the Union Jack, or we did not get a fair shake under the Union Jack, or we did not get this under the Union Jack, or we did not get that under the Union Jack, but, by God, one thing you will have to say, that you were free under the Union Jack.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: If you cannot say anything else about it, you can say you were free. That is what people went and fought for, not that they were encouraging war. They were the last ones on the face of this earth who ever thought they would ever have to go to war.

AN HON. MEMBER: It does not mean much to them over there, though!

MR. NEARY: No, it does not mean much to them. The Canadian Legion is just a big joke now to this crowd, just a big joke. I hear one member say, 'Ah, they are dying out, they are a dying breed, they will soon be all gone'. I heard that said. And I think it is shameful and contemptible and I hope now that that kind of debate, that kind of dialogue will end now, end forever. And if we are going to debate a flag, let us debate it man-fashion: Is the design a good one or is it not a good one? That is the question we have to address ourselves to. Not whether this group are for it - the RC's are against it, the Protestants are for it, the Legion are against it, the Orangemen are for it, that is not the argument at all.

Oh no, not the argument, Mr. Speaker.

The government is allowing themselves to get sucked into that kind of a debate. That is not it. It is not Tory, it is not Liberal. It is a matter of getting the right design for this Province. And what we should aim for, Mr. Speaker, we should aim for fifty-one per cent of the people to be in favour of a flag. You cannot get everybody. The counter-argument to that is, I have heard members of this House say ah, you cannot get a flag that everybody will agree with. Well, so what? Get one that the

MR. S. NEARY: majority will agree with. Do not get one that ninety-eight or ninety-nine per cent of the people are against. Do not do that. Because if you do, I am afraid, Mr. Speaker, with that kind of attitude, with that kind of philosophy, and that kind of a policy of forcing it on the people whether they like it or not and that flag will never fly over this Province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, is I may refresh hon. gentlemen's memories, the bottom line, which seems to be the popular word these days, the bottom line in the Budget Speech was 'live within your means.' The Minister of Finance (J. Collins) told us that the Budget and the Budget Speech was designed to force Newfoundlanders to live within their means. It was a live within your means Budget, we were told by the Minister of Finance. In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, it was a starve the people budget. . Not a live

MR. NEARY:

within your means, but starve the people Budget. One of the first things they did in the Budget was to cut capital expenditure by over \$50 million. Are hon. gentleman aware of what that will do to the construction industry in this Province? Are hon. gentlemen aware of what this will do, this cut of \$50 million will do to communities where they have no drinking water, where the sewerage is squeezing up between their toes? Are hon. gentlemen aware of what this cut of \$50 million in Capital Works will do for couples in this Province who want to own a new home? Are they aware of the consequences, the impact that these cuts will have on the construction industry and housing especially? And above all, Mr. Speaker, are hon. gentlemen aware, especially on the government benches, about what these cuts are going to do to roads in this Province? The roads are in worse condition in this Province right now than they have been, I would say, in fifteen years. Do not give them roads, do not give them water and sewerage, do not give them houses - give them cake, give them a flag. Have a flag fly over a Province that has record unemployment, the highest cost of living in Canada, ever increasing electricity rates, no fishery policy, potholes. As a friend of mine said on Bell Island the other night, that when you go down in a pothole in Newfoundland you have to blow your horn in case there is somebody else down there. Go down in a pothole and you blow your horn in Newfoundland so that everybody can get out of your way down in the pothole.

AN HON. MEMBER:

And when you are coming up.

MR. NEARY:

And when you are coming up out of that pothole.

Mr. Speaker, I would submit that this is going to be a pretty rough year in this Province for the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Brett), it is going to be a long, hot Summer indeed because roads have a very, very low priority on the government's list of expenditure in the next several months, in the next construction season. You will have more demonstrations, you will have

MR. NEARY: more picket lines in this Province than you are having now over in Iran, more protests than you have over in London where they have the Iranian embassy barricaded. You will almost have blood spilled in this Province, Mr. Speaker, because of the government's policy of not going ahead and reconstructing and repairing and improving roads in this Province. Roads, Mr. Speaker, roads. Up to the time the member for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter) went out and got the Province all upset over a flag, I would say roads are probably the biggest political vote-getter in the Province.

AN HON. MEMBER: Next to recreation.

MR. NEARY: No, not next to recreation. I would not say that.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) all by themselves.

MR. NEARY: And the thing that is closer to people's hearts in communities where women cannot hang their clothes on the clotheslines because of the dust and the mud. You think the hon. member would be concerned about that. You would think that the hon. member would be concerned that one of her colleagues this morning

MR. NEARY: strongly condemned the government for not giving a grant for a transition house to look after battered wives.

AN HON. MEMBER: Female chauvinism.

MR. NEARY: You would think the hon. minister would be concerned about that sort of policy. Never mind wasting time on foolish flags. You would think the hon. minister would be concerned about that. A transition house - how much would it cost? Probably cost about the same amount as it did to send the Flag Committee around Newfoundland, a transition house for battered wives. I have not heard the hon. minister raise that in this House yet.

MR. HOLLETT: At the bingo, she says.

MR. NEARY: I am all for that sort of thing. Is that what the hon. minister is referring to when she says, "Leave it to the men."

MR. HOLLETT: That is right.

MR. HISCOCK: Hang out their clothes.

MR. NEARY: Oh yes, they cannot hang their clothes out on the lines. I do not know if the hon. Minister of Education (Ms Verge) has ever had that experience or not. But we had it when we were on Bell Island.

AN HON. MEMBER: She puts it in the dryer.

MR. NEARY: Long before I became a member.

MR. WHITE: Still a lot of people in the district got them.

MR. NEARY: Some people over there still have it. They have it in Fogo district, they have it in St. Mary's district, they have it in -

MR. HISCOCK: We do not have roads.

MR. NEARY: Well, you have the road to Red Bay.

MR. HISCOCK: A little bit.

MR. NEARY: The road to Red Bay, but there are not many people live on that. You have got it in Bonavista North. You have got it in Carbonear district. And, of course, they have no roads up in -

MR. WARREN: They have not even got a radio up there.

MR. NEARY: They have not even got a radio, that is right. Nothing sets the devil in people more, Mr. Speaker, nothing sets the devil in Newfoundlanders more than to have to drive their cars over a road that is like a washboard, full of potholes, a road that is unpaved, a road that is full of mud and dirt and stones flying up around the windshield and the fenders of the car and women trying to hang their clothes out on the clothesline. My hon. friend is on his third windshield now, the member for St. Mary's and the Capes (Mr. Hancock). And so, Mr.

AN HON. MEMBER: All the roads are paved in St. Mary's-The Capes.

MR. HANCOCK: All the what?

MR. NEARY: All the roads are paved in St. Mary's - the Capes? Oh, oh!

MR. HANCOCK: You should go there and make a rise out of it.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would say this is going to be a long, hot Summer in this Province of demonstrations and strikes and barricades. You will see barricades going up now when the weather gets warm all over Newfoundland. I remember one time the hon. Mr. Crosbie, when he was in this House, advocated civil disobedience.

MR. HANCOCK: Is that 'Bully Boy' -

MR. NEARY: 'Bully Boy' said -

MR. HANCOCK: - the one who calls all Newfoundlanders ignorant (inaudible).

MR. NEARY: That is right, advocated civil disobedience in this Province. Well, you will not have to foster it this Summer. You will not have to advocate it this Summer. It is going to be there whether we like it or not. It is going to be a long, hot Summer, Mr. Speaker, and I feel sorry for the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Brett), but I feel more sorry for the construction workers in this Province who will not be able to find a job this Summer as a result of the government's penny-wise and pound-foolish policy. How many trucks will be laying idle this Summer? How many carpenters will not be working this Summer because of the cutback in construction, on roads and bridges and

MR. NEARY: houses? How many electricians will have to line up in front of the welfare offices? How many plumbers and how many bricklayers and masons and how many finish carpenters, who do gyprocing? how many, Mr. Speaker, this year will not be able to find employment in this Province? We will have that monstrosity, if the government have their way, we will have that flying on the flagpoles, and we will have everybody down lined up in front of the unemployment office ~~or~~ the welfare office.

AN HON. MEMBER: They will have a little flag in their hands.

MR. NEARY: They will all be standing there with their little flag in their hands as my hon. friend says,

MR. S. NEARY: showing the colours, waving the flag, here I am. I had this flag forced on me by the Tory Government but I can not get a job, I can not properly feed my children, I can not properly clothe them, I can not properly educate them. We do not have any drinking water, we have got to drive over roads that are full of potholes. We can not build a house because we can not get a low cost building lot. The government have created this boom atmosphere and all of the scavengers and the land grabbers from every part of the world have now come into this Province and have driven up the cost of real estate so we can not build a home. None of this, Mr. Speaker, we will have none of this but we will have a new flag. We can all rally around the new flag, starve the people budget. No harm to say, Mr. Speaker, that Tory times are hard times indeed. It is hard to understand their policy, Mr. Speaker.

They have managed, I suppose, in the last seven years to successfully distract the Newfoundland people from the real issues that are facing this Province. They have managed to distract—when Moores was over there, when Moores was there he blamed everything on Joey Smallwood and what he did not blame on Joey Smallwood he blamed it on John C. Doyle. And now we have got a Premier over there who will not even acknowledge that there was a Moores administration for seven years, he will not even acknowledge that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. S. NEARY: Where you had a Premier who was an embezzler and a thief and a crook and the present Premier sat in the Cabinet and did not resign from the Cabinet, went along with that and said, "I did not do it for myself, I stayed in the Cabinet because of poor old Newfoundland," stayed there for seven years, not for himself mind you, stayed there because he thought this would be good for Newfoundland.

They have been following a course of confrontation for the past seven years. Attack! Attack everybody in sight, attack everything in sight, attack Ottawa, attack 'Joey', attack this one, attack that one, attack the Opposition, They have never ever gotten

MR. S. NEARY: over the fact, Mr. Speaker, that they were elected to govern this Province, that they do not have to attack anybody, they have to establish their own record. They have to blaze the trail themselves, they have to establish a record. Seven years later, January 18th, 1972, when they took over in this Province, not one industry, no economic development worthwhile in this Province. All we hear about is oil and gas, the Northern cod stock, attack Ottawa, attack Rene Levesque, attack Joey Smallwood, attack the present Leader of the Opposition (Mr. D. Jamieson), attack the Opposition and do nothing positive to establish a record for themselves. Their credibility is starting to wear very thin, Mr. Speaker, in this Province.

MR. WARREN: Inaudible)

MR. S. NEARY: The hon. gentlemen may think-but they are living in a fools paradise - they may think the strategy is working but the word is filtering out to the people of this Province, the word is filtering out, Mr. Speaker, that this crowd have done nothing positive, are doing nothing positive to come to grips with the real problems that are facing the ordinary people of this Province, namely, the cost of living, record unemployment, the cost of electricity the cost of gas and heating fuel, vandalism and crime and did I mention electricity rates?

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, these are the real problems that are facing Newfoundlanders today. And the government somehow or other think that as long as they can distract the population with flags and oil and gas that nobody is going to recognize what the real issues are in this Province at the present time. But as I said a few moments ago, Mr. Speaker, the man who goes to look for a job this Spring, the construction worker, the labourer, the electrician, the truck driver, the heavy equipment operator, the carpenter, the carpenter's helper, the mason, the bricklayer, the roofer, all these people, when they go to look for employment this year, it will suddenly dawn on them that this government have been all talk and no action.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. S. NEARY: All they have managed to do with all this talk about gas and oil is to drive up the cost of living for the people of this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WARREN: Twenty per cent, too.

MR. S. NEARY: The highest in Canada last month. The cost of living escalated in Newfoundland higher than in any other province of Canada. And you know what drove it up - the cost of real estate and the cost of food and clothing, the basic essentials.

MR. R. MOORES: That is right.

MR. S. NEARY: People in this Province cannot live without it - brought on by a government that has created a boom syndrome.

MR. D. HOLLETT: And then the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir (Mr. H. Andrews) has to get up and say he supports the flag.

MR. S. NEARY: Yes, supports the flag.

MR. D. HOLLETT: He has to stand up and tell everybody.

MR. B. TULK: But he will not support the resolution put forward by Mr. Rowe. Would that not sicken you?

MR. D. HOLLETT: Yes.

MR. G. WARREN: It is shocking.

MR. S. NEARY: This atmosphere of prosperity and boom is brought about by a government, Mr. Speaker, who are living in a fool's paradise. If the oil boom ever comes - and we are getting conflicting stories about that

MR. S. NEARY: these days; it has been moved ahead a year, moved ahead a couple of years - if and when it ever comes it will only affect a certain group of people in this Province.

MR. WARREN: Inside St. John's.

MR. S. NEARY: Inside the overpass. It certainly will not affect the majority of the people in this Province. It will not have much effect down in Burgeo or Ramea or Grey River or Francois. It will not have very much effect down in St. Alban's, the head of Bay d'Espoir. It will not have very much effect in Port aux Basques or Rose Blanche or Isle aux Morts or Burnt Islands or Margaree or Fox Roost or Harbour Le Cou. It will not have very much effect, I would submit, Mr. Speaker, in most of Newfoundland outside the Avalon Peninsula and the most of that would be in the St. John's area. So they are putting all their eggs in one basket. They are gambling Newfoundland's future like a drunken sailor down in Las Vegas would do. That is what they are doing.

MR. R. MOORES: Or a drunken politician in Las Vegas.

MR. S. NEARY: Or a drunken politician in Las Vegas.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. S. NEARY: They are gambling with Newfoundland's future, Mr. Speaker, and if they lose it is going to be a pretty expensive gamble indeed. It will be a disaster for Newfoundland.

Mr. Speaker, probably the point that I am trying to make is that the issues that concern the people of this Province are being shoved into the background deliberately by this government who follow a pattern of dragging in red herrings in debates both inside and outside the House, by attempting to continuously distract the Newfoundland people from their own worries and from the real concerns and the real problems that are facing our people.

I realize, Mr. Speaker, that we are living in very difficult times, I am well aware of that, and I am making a speech here today in a background, I suppose, of a situation in the world the likes of which we have never seen in our lives. Anything at all could trigger a Third World War, Mr. Speaker. We have all kinds of unrest. You can hardly

May 5, 1980

Tape 1182

EC - 3

MR. S. NEARY:

turn on your television or your radio
or read a newspaper today without being struck by the amount of bad news
that

MR. NEARY: comes at you from the announcer or from the newspaper. You have Canada itself in that background of turbulence in the world, Canada threatened to be divided and disunited. You have one of the largest provinces of Canada threatening to separate, have a referendum in a few days to decide 'yes' or 'no' whether they should leave Confederation. You have that sort of thing going on.

You have Canada taking a decision not to send athletes to the Olympics in Moscow. And you know, Mr. Speaker, that raises a very interesting question at this particular point. I want to talk about that decision by the Canadian Government and the Olympic Committee, not to send athletes to Moscow. I think it was the right decision, it was a good decision but, Mr. Speaker, I am awfully, awfully concerned about the fact that the athletes have to pay the price when the government had at their disposal other means, economic means, pressure that they could have brought to bear on the Russians. And we have in this Province, Mr. Speaker, a means whereby pressure could be brought to bear on the Russians, by stopping their landing rights in Gander.

Now, hon. gentlemen - the member for Gander (Mrs. Newhook) was sitting in her seat, it may give her a little bit of a jolt to say, 'Stop the Russians from landing in Gander and refuelling in Gander'. And why not? If the situation is serious enough that we do not want to send our athletes to Moscow, is it not serious enough to say 'No' to Moscow and to Russia, 'we are not going to allow your planes to go through Gander'? All it means for Gander, Mr. Speaker, so I am told, and I would not

MR. NEARY: make this statement without researching it, all it does for Gander is to create three of four jobs for an outfit called CARA, which is not even a Newfoundland company, a catering company in Gander. The fuel trucks were going to be there anyway. And they have a couple of apartments rented for Russian crews in Gander. Apart from that it contributes nothing to the economy of Gander. And I do not blame some of the athletes and some of the organizers for being upset with a government that said no to the athletes and then ignored bringing economic sanctions against Russia by telling them, 'No, you are not landing in Gander. Get out of Gander'.

Mr. Speaker, it would not affect the economy of Gander in the slightest.

AN HON. MEMBER: (inaudible) traitor talk.

MR. NEARY: Kind of a traitor. I am a traitor now, I suppose. It would not affect the economy of Gander in the slightest to give the Russians the heave ho, the shirttail run, out! Them may sound like fighting words but I mean it, do not take it out on the athletes if you do not intend - how hypocritical can we be? Take it out on the athletes but allow the planes to sail into Gander and get the low-cost gas, get refuelled, go on on their journey and all Gander gets out of it is a few jobs with a catering company that is not even a Newfoundland company. The gas trucks are going to be there anyway. No new jobs there. And they rent a couple of apartments from some real estate outfit in Gander. Now that is the extent of their contribution to the economy of Gander. And so, Mr. Speaker, I would say it is about time that we got rid of this double standard

MR. S. NEARY: and stop these Russian aircraft from landing in Gander, cut out their landing rights in Gander, do not allow them to come in there.

MR. J. CARTER: You said that. Say something else.

MR. S. NEARY: Yes, and I will go a step further and I am going to say something else too, that I heard the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan) and I heard the Premier of this Province bellyaching about the foreigners fishing both inside and outside the 200 mile limit, abusing their privileges and one of the biggest culprits in this particular matter are the Russians. And we open up our ports and open up our homes with open arms to the Russians. They have the whole world on the brink of war, they have the whole world in turmoil. And Canada says, big Canada, big-hearted Canada says, 'Oh, no the athletes cannot go to Moscow but the Russians can land their planes and bring their ships into Newfoundland ports, bring them in! We do not need the Russian ships in here, Mr. Speaker -

MR. HOLLETT: We do for the synchrolift.

MR. S. NEARY: My hon. friend says we do for the synchrolift.

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, that is the reason.

MR. S. NEARY: Well, if that is the reason for bringing them in here I would say, 'God help the synchrolift. God help the synchrolift', that is what I would say. Because the first sign of trouble and strife in the world, they will be gone like a shot out of a gun. We used to have the Germans in here before the First World War, Bell Island was one of the big suppliers of raw material for the blast furnaces in Germany before the war and after the war too. They used to take Bell Island ore and they came back in 1941 and 1942 and torpedoed four ships right off Bell Island and the Russians will do the same thing.

MR. S. NEARY: I hope, Mr. Speaker, there is nobody in this House who thinks that the Russians are doing Newfoundland a favour by using our ports.

AN HON. MEMBER: They want the Northern cod.

MR.S. NEARY: They want access to our cod stock, especially our Northern cod. Mr. McGrath, I used to hear him bellyaching when he was Minister of Fisheries for a few months up in Ottawa when he had it all in his own hands. He could have cancelled their licences and driven them out of the Atlantic ports, ports on the Atlantic Seaboard -

MR. L. STIRLING: He did not do it.

MR. S. NEARY: No, he did not do it and I doubt now if our friend, as good as he is, Mr. LaLonde will do it and he is pretty good -

MR. L. STIRLING: Mr. LeBlanc.

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. LeBlanc rather, I doubt if he will do it. But, Mr. Speaker, it makes one wonder sometimes. And when you are into a debate like this where you have all the time you want ahead of you, no restrictions, although the government have tried to muzzle the Opposition, they have managed to move the Estimates off the floor of the House, they have limited and restricted debate in the House, fortunately, today, I am in a position where I can go on forever, as long as I want. Whatever I have on my chest I can get it off now, I was never in a better position in my life in this House than I am today. I probably will not get the opportunity to do it again but I guarantee you while I have the opportunity I have a few things that I want to say and I am going to say. Because we hear so often about Newfoundland being in a strategic position - that was one of our main points, by the way, that Newfoundland should have gotten more benefits out of Confederation because we are the gateway to the Atlantic,

MR. S. NEARY: we are strategically located out in the middle of the Atlantic. This old rock happens to be very strategically located and when the Government of Canada wants to assist its ally, the United States, in bringing pressure to bear on Russia, to try to get them out of Afghanistan, all they can think of is, 'Do not allow the athletes to go! Do not allow them to go when there are other things that they could have done which, put them all together in various parts of the world, could bring the Russians to their knees.

Mr. Speaker. I am told - I asked the hon. Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. Barry) a question today about his statements outside of this House about patrolling Newfoundland and especially the offshore developments. I was not sure if the hon. gentleman was talking about the provincial government having its own army, navy and air force: or if they were going to petition the Government of Canada to increase their surveillance in their patrolling

MR. S. NEARY:

offshore. When I heard the hon. gentleman's answer it was not quite clear to me whether he was trying to get more defence dollars here in Newfoundland or if he was concerned about the offshore development. But I will say this, Mr. Speaker, if the hon. gentleman was talking about getting interceptor fighters in this Province then I would have to agree with him. Right now when long-range Russian aircraft are picked up on the radar off the Atlantic coast, especially off the coast of Newfoundland, they can leave Russia or Russian dominated countries and they can fly off the coast of Newfoundland and return to their base without refuelling, Mr. Speaker. Let me repeat that in case Your Honour missed what I was saying there. Your Honour was preoccupied, probably, with something else. Long-range Russian bombers can leave their base in Europe or in Russia, fly in off the coast of Newfoundland, have been picked up and are being picked up on the radar, they can inspect their fleet on the Grand Banks or off Labrador or off Greenland and they can turn around and go back to their home base without being refuelled. Or they can be refuelled and are being refuelled in the air. And you know, Mr. Speaker, every time that the military ask for interceptor planes to go out and check on these objects that are picked up on radar, they have to come from Chatham, New Brunswick. By the time they get to Newfoundland they have to be refuelled and by the time they get out to where the object was sighted, the long-range bombers are turned and gone back home. So if that is what the hon. gentleman is talking about, then I would be inclined to agree with him, that we need interceptor planes on Newfoundland soil and we need to step up our patrolling and our surveillance and the coastguard needs to step up its activities. So if that is what the hon.gentleman was referring to, then I would have to agree with him. But it is going to be very difficult to get the Government of Canada to agree to do this, to station interceptor planes in Newfoundland when you have a provincial government that are trying to kick them outside the 200 mile limit who are saying to Canada, 'You have no business in here - Newfoundland owns this.' I mean, where do you draw the line? Who is going to be responsible for protecting the offshore? If King 'Brian' gets everything, if King 'Brian' gets it all and there is no revenue going into the Canadian

MR. S. NEARY: Treasury, does King 'Brian' then expect the Government of Canada to protect the offshore, to protect our oil reserves and our fishery, to send in the aircraft carriers and the destroyers and the airplanes that are necessary to patrol and carry out surveillance of these important resources? Or will the Government of Canada just say to King 'Brian' and his knights, 'This is your responsibility now. You are getting all the revenue. You own it - you say you own it. Well, now, you patrol it.' And that has been the concern of a lot of people in this Province and outside of this Province all along. King 'Brian' and his knights, if they own the resource, if they take all the revenue, take all the benefits, then how does the hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. L. Barry) expect the Government of Canada to patrol the area?

MR. NEARY: Will the hon. gentleman then have his own air force and his own navy? Is this the intention behind this flag?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. BARRY: (Inaudible) British Columbia.

MR. NEARY: Now, Mr. Speaker, I think I put my finger on the real reason for having this flag, they want their own empire.

At the end of the year now King 'Brian' will have his own honours list, his own honours roll like the Governor General has up in Ottawa. He will design a medal next. The next thing you will see now is a provincial medal for bravery and for outstanding contributions to the Province. And at the end of every year there will be an honour roll.

MR. BARRY: There will be a medal of honour and the first one for who has spent the most hours in the House of Assembly listening to you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the people of this Province are beginning to realize that not only is the hon. gentleman rather naïve, but he is also a little bit nasty, a nasty individual. He is also very nasty. That word seems to be coming through these days. Arrogant and nasty. And it is too bad because -

MR. HANCOCK: Very little class.

MR. NEARY: That is right. And so they will have their own medals, they will have their own awards that will be given out every year, they will have their own army and their own air force and their own navy. And you know, Mr. Speaker, Your Honour has a smile on his face and I do not blame Your Honour for smiling because -

MR. SPEAKER(Simms): I always smile.

MR. NEARY: - that may sound far-fetched, Your Honour, but with the - I was going to say the anti-Canadian feeling that is being pushed in this Province at the present time by King 'Brian' and his Knights and their little army of separatists making Rene Levesque look like a rank amateur. That is what they are doing, Mr. Speaker. I will tell you right now the flag is the beginning.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: It will only be a matter of time when we will have a very strong separatist movement in this Province. We have it already. It is in a mild stage right now. We will have a separatist movement in this Province and King 'Brian' and his knights and their little band of separatists will set up their own empire. And if that does not happen, if Quebec decides to separate and they are successful in their move to separate, well, then, that creates a lot more problems for Newfoundland, Mr. Speaker, more headaches than we realize.

We may have to take a look South of the border. If we cannot have our own empire with King 'Brian', we may have to look South of the border. Maybe someday my hon. friend's dream will come true.

MR. JAMIESON: It took a long time.

MR. NEARY: It took a long time, over thirty-five years but his dreams or aspirations may come true.

MR. JAMIESON: My former dreams and aspirations.

MR. NEARY: Former dreams, maybe, not so today.

MR. JAMIESON: No.

MR. NEARY: Former dreams and aspirations may come true and we may have to take a look at economic union or some kind of political union with the United States in the event that Canada separates. It is something we have to think about very seriously in this Province, Mr. Speaker.

And I know I will be accused tomorrow now of rambling all over the countryside talking about world affairs, but world affairs, Mr. Speaker, do have a direct bearing and influence on this Province.

We have the fishery, we have the richest fishing grounds in the world and we are going to have the second largest, I am told, oil well in the world, offshore. The biggest one is in Mexico, the second largest one is in Newfoundland, off the coast of Newfoundland.

MR. YOUNG: I thought you did not agree with that.

MR. NEARY: I did not agree with what? And so the attention of the whole world is going to be on Newfoundland the same as it is on Saudi Arabia and Iran. And then, as I have said, we have Newfoundland a stepping stone to Europe; Russian planes going through, Russian ships into our ports. So anybody who says, 'Well, Neary is rambling all over the countryside', I think I am making a lot of common sense, and I gave a lot of thought to these matters.

MR. S. NEARY: And I get myself pretty well steamed up when I hear about the athletes not being allowed to go to Russia, to Moscow.

AN HON. MEMBER: Do you agree with it?

MR. S. NEARY: Certainly I agree with it but I also agree with kicking the Russian planes out of Gander, they should not be allowed to land there.

MR. WARREN: Do you agree with that?

MR. S. NEARY: Does the hon. gentleman agree with that?

AN HON. MEMBER: Never thought about it.

MR. S. NEARY: Never thought about it. Well, I think about it, I think about a lot of things in this Province.

MR. HANCOCK: That is what is wrong with the government, they can not think.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, if that is all it is a PR job then I am inclined to think the hon. gentleman is wrong,

MR. L. BARRY: A PR job for the Russians.

MR. S. NEARY: I am inclined to think that the United States wanted to retaliate with all of the force they could to get the Russians out of Afghanistan and the way to do it was not by just merely token resistance by not allowing the athletes to go, but stop the planes from landing in Gander. It does not mean anything to the economy of Gander. If it did, I would have to think about saying it publicly but I have discovered there are only three or four jobs out there.

AN HON. MEMBER: Get (inaudible)

MR. S. NEARY: Get who on my back? Well, if we are depending on the Russians for the syncrolift, I say, God help Newfoundland and God help the syncrolift.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this Party, when they were campaigning before they became the government, they told the people of this Province there would be no increases in taxes. Well, I can not weep because they increased corporate taxes although I would assume that

MR. S. NEARY: a lot of these corporation taxes that are increased will eventually be passed on to the consumer. It is always the consumer who pays in the end. So I am not going to worry too much about an increase in corporate taxes but I am concerned, Mr. Speaker, about the increase in municipal taxes in this Province that has been forced on people by this government, by their introduction of the Municipal Act in the last session of the House that received so much debate, forcing the property tax on our people. So directly the government may have kept their promise, they may have said, "Well, we did not increase taxes, we did not put up the retail sales tax, we did not put up the income tax but they are forcing municipalities to impose a property tax and increase property taxes and that is an increase in taxes that can be charged against this government. They are forcing school tax authorities to increase their taxes and they are putting in school taxes where we never had them before -

MR. D. JAMIESON: And increasing them.

MR. S. NEARY: And increasing them, forcing increases on the people, that is an increase in taxes. I would not even, unless I weeped a few crocodile tears over cigarettes and tobacco, I would not even worry too much about that. But I am concerned also about the way the government is increasing the cost of permits in this Province, marriage licences and so forth. and then the other day announced an increase to the Provincial Parks.

Somehow or other, Mr. Speaker, the government have themselves convinced that these are not taxes. These are hidden taxes. So what they could not do by the front door they have done by the backdoor. Taxes have gone up in this Province. I think the worst example of how this government is socking it to the consumer is the increase in the revenue on the sales tax. This government has a vested interest

MR. NEARY: in inflation in this Province. The more the cost of commodities and items increase, the more revenue the government gets under 11 per cent Sales Tax. Every item that is sold, the government collects 11 per cent. If that item goes up, because of inflation, up goes the revenue to the public treasury. The tax goes up, the amount of the tax goes up, and the government gets more revenue. Then they have the face to come into this House and say, "Last year we collected \$15 or \$16 million more on the Retail Sales Tax.

MR. JAMIESON: Bragging, bragging.

MR. NEARY: Pardon?

They bragged about it.

MR. NEARY: Bragged about it, that is right, boasted about it, bragged about it, that the revenue on the amount of the Retail Sales Tax went up by \$15 or \$16 million. So they have a vested interest in inflation. They are hoping inflation will go sky-high, because that is the only way they can keep her afloat, instead of reducing the Sales Tax and giving the consumers in this Province a break that they badly deserve. So let us hear no more talk, Mr. Speaker, no more nonsense about no increases in taxes, because there have been increases in taxes. There are going to be more increases in taxes, increases in permits, increases in access to our provincial parks. That raises another interesting point, too, talking about provincial parks, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Tourism, Recreation and Culture (Mr. Dawe), following in the footsteps of his predecessor, has told the people of this Province that the provincial parks are going to be turned over to private operators, turned over to private enterprise. We have not heard so much about it lately, but the understanding that we have in this House is that the minister and his bureaucrats are in the process of just working out the details of turning these parks over to private enterprise. Mr. Speaker, can you imagine, can you imagine a government that would take the taxpayers' money, go out and build parks, provincial parks, recreational facilities for our people, and then turn around, after spending the taxpayers' money developing these wildlife and provincial parks, turn around then and give them to private operators? What kind of a policy is that, Mr. Speaker, what kind of a policy is it?

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. NEARY: I ask you, Your Honour. "Excellent policy", the hon. gentleman says. Take the taxpayers' money, take the taxpayers' money, build provincial parks and wildlife parks, and then, after you get them done and set up and Newfoundlanders start to enjoy them, then give them to private operators, private operators who nine chances out of ten will not look after them, and will charge exorbitant rates and fees for Newfoundlanders and their families to get in and enjoy a park that they themselves paid for constructing in the first place. Now, that is some policy, I guarantee you. That is a wonderful policy, a wonderful policy, Mr. Speaker. We should be building more parks. The government of this Province should be building more recreational facilities and more parks, rather than giving out brewers' retail licences. The number of brewers' retail licences in this Province has tripled since the Tories took over, tripled.

MR. STAGG: Right. And are not given out on a partisan basis.

MR. NEARY: "Not given out on a partisan basis", the hon. gentleman says. That is a mouthful

MR. HOLLETT: The voice of the people.

MR. NEARY: Yes. It would be far better, Mr. Speaker, if the government built more provincial parks and operated more provincial parks, rather than open up brewers' retail outlets in this Province and bistros and cabarets and booze joints. They have tripled the number of brewers' retail outlets in Newfoundland in less than seven years, and one of the greatest curses in Newfoundland today, Mr. Speaker, is not drugs, but it is booze.

MR. S. NEARY: The greatest curse in our Newfoundland society today, I would say, is booze.

MR. BARRY: Would you substitute marijuana for it?

MR. S. NEARY: The hon. gentleman asks me would I substitute marijuana for it? Well, the day will come when we will have government pot shops. That day will come. I am not recommending it. I tell you one thing that I am in favour of, decriminalizing marijuana. And I spoke in this House a year ago about the same thing, the hon. the member for Ferryland (Mr. C. Power) is not in favour of decriminalizing marijuana.

MR. HANCOCK: Why is that?

MR. S. NEARY: Well, he has his own reasons. The Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. L. Barry) is in favour of it. But I am not going to get sidetracked off on that. I happen to be in favour of it myself. We have too many young people, Canadians, young Newfoundlanders serving time for simple possession - a criminal record.

MR. STAGG: Not many.

MR. S. NEARY: Oh, yes, Mr. Speaker, more than the hon. gentleman thinks.

So I welcome the move on the part of the Government of Canada to decriminalize marijuana. The day will come, maybe not in my time, when the same as you have government booze shops - the government owns all the beer and liquor produced in this Province - you will have government owned pot shops.

MR. JAMIESON: The tobacco companies are ready for it now.

MR. S. NEARY: Sure, I would not be a bit surprised but what they are ready for it. You cannot stop it.

MR. HANCOCK: That is what they should do. Look at the money they are losing on it. Yes.

MR. NEARY: But, Mr. Speaker, that is one of the greatest curses in our Newfoundland society today - booze. The government does nothing about educating our people into the evils of alcohol. It is one of the main

MR. S. NEARY: sources of revenue in the Province and it is one of the things that government spends the least amount of money on, educating people into the dangers and the hazards of alcohol and of drinking.

MR. WARREN: (Inaudible). Goose Bay.

MR. S. NEARY: So the government in its wisdom, rather than proceed on a programme of providing recreation, more parks, more recreation and sports facilities for our people, have instead elected to open up the vats of the local breweries right across this Province through the Brewers Retail Outlets. Never before, Mr. Speaker, in the whole history of Newfoundland has the beer flowed in Newfoundland like it is flowing today.

MR. STAGG: (Inaudible).

MR. S. NEARY: No, but I think it is time to put a freeze on, time to jam the brakes on. Sir, put the freeze on, that is what I would say. And this crowd knows how to put freezes on. I would put a freeze on the Brewers Retail Outlets in this Province.

MR. BARRY: No, not on the Brewers Retail outlets.

AN HON. MEMBER: On the lounges.

MR. S. NEARY: No, on the lounges and the bistros and the cabarets and the clubs.

MR. BARRY: Close them all down, boy! Close them all down!

MR. S. NEARY: No, I would not close them down. You cannot do that. You have to be objective about it. But it is a big problem in this Province, Mr. Speaker. The evil of drinking, the effects of alcohol, is a big problem in Newfoundland and Labrador, Mr. Speaker. But it is like everything else in this House, Mr. Speaker, you are a voice crying in the wilderness when you raise these matters. It is looked upon by the government as just a big joke. Somebody, for the sake of something to say, just got up and shot off his mouth - in one ear, out the other - babbling, rambling, that is all you are ever accused of. These things are important, Mr. Speaker.

MR. S. NEARY:

They are important to me as a family man with four young children, very important to me. I think it is about time that government took a look at this serious problem. I suppose it is responsible for breaking up more families than anything else in our society. It is responsible more, I suppose, for battered wives.

MR. S. NEARY: We have not heard the hon. Minister of Education (Ms. L. Verge) speak on that yet. Sorry to beat her to the punch on that. The hon. minister, no doubt, will support me in my attempt to try and persuade the government to reconsider, the government of which the hon. minister is a member, to reconsider their no answer to the group who tried to get a transition house established in this Province for battered wives.

MR. HOLLETT: Does she agree with that, I wonder?

MR. S. NEARY: Well, the hon. minister probably agrees with it but we have not heard very much about it.

I would say, Mr. Speaker, that most of these cases are the result of booze, drinking. Drinking causes more problems, Mr. Speaker, in our Newfoundland society today, I would say, than anything else. And it is the one problem that government pays -

AN HON. MEMBER: It is not being properly controlled.

MR. S. NEARY: It is not being properly controlled.

I wish my hon. friend would get up in the budget debate and explain that to me.

AN HON. MEMBER: We will.

MR. S. NEARY: Not being properly controlled by whom; by the government?

MR. HANCOCK: They do not have enough inspectors.

MR. S. NEARY: They do not have enough inspectors.

MR. WARREN: Right on.

MR. S. NEARY: Enough inspectors, what does the hon. gentleman mean by that?

MR. HANCOCK: There is about 5,000 outlets for every one inspector.

MR. S. NEARY: There is about 5,000 outlets for every one inspector, so they do not have enough inspectors.

MR. WARREN: And he knows what he is talking about.

MR. S. NEARY: Well, I do not know what the problems are but I do know there is a problem. Teenagers have access to booze, too much booze and liquor and beer in this Province.

MR. WARREN: Fourteen outlets in Goose Bay alone.

MR. STAGG: It was always that way.

MR. S. NEARY: It was not always that way, it was never thus if that is what the hon. gentleman is saying.

MR. WARREN: Fourteen outlets for a population of 6,000 people.

MR. S. NEARY: Where is that to?

MR. WARREN: In Happy Valley - Goose Bay.

MR. S. NEARY: In Happy Valley there are fourteen outlets my hon. friend tells me. And so this is a real problem, Mr. Speaker, that the government has not addressed itself to yet. They are more interested in flags and preoccupied with offshore oil and gas; they do not have time to pay any attention to the real problems that are affecting the every day lives of people in this Province.

And, Mr. Speaker, what about our educational system? What about it? Are we getting the true value, are we getting value for the educational dollar? I do not think we are, Mr. Speaker. I have been saying for years, again falling on deaf ears. When we had the embezzler and the gangster and the thief running this Province, he would ignore our plea for a fact finding inquiry into our whole educational system right from kindergarten right on up to university education. And if we needed it then we need it more so today.

MR. HOLLETT: What has he done about the task force?

MR. S. NEARY: I am told, Mr. Speaker, I do not know for sure, I am told that the drop-out rate over here at the College of Trades and Technology would knock your eyeballs out - 60 per cent drop-out. Is that true? The hon. Minister of Education (Ms. L. Verge) has not addressed herself to that problem yet.

MR. STAGG: It is not true.

MR. S. NEARY: It is not true. Is the hon. gentleman answering for the the Minister of Education? Well, Mr. Speaker, it was my hon. friend behind me said 60 per cent but it is pretty high. I do not

MR. S. NEARY: know if it is that high. The drop-out rate-I would like to know the cause of it. What is the reason for it? Why do we have such a high drop-out rate at the College of Trades and Technology? What is the problem? Is it the administration? Is it the instructors? Is it the students themselves? We are pouring literally millions of dollars into vocational and technical training every year and these stories coming back to us, that the drop-out rate at the College of Trades and Technology where we are training our technicians, an institution that we look to to train the technicians of the future in this Province,

MR. S. NEARY: getting no direction from the minister or from the government. And what is behind it, what is behind this high drop-out rate? I do not know what is behind it.

MR. D. JAMIESON: And how much is it costing?

MR. S. NEARY: And how much is it costing?

AN HON. MEMBER: I wonder do we have the proper courses?

MR. S. NEARY: Well, that may be the reason. Maybe they are not running the proper courses, I do not know.

MS. VERGE: You have a copy of the estimates.

MR. S. NEARY: I beg your pardon.

MR. G. WARREN: We got no answers there.

MR. S. NEARY: We will have three hours on the hon.

minister's estimates on the floor of this House where the estimates should be debated. The hon. minister may think she has gotten a free ride until the estimates come back into the House, where they should be. One thing that hon. John Crosbie and myself agree on, he was on last night bellyaching about the committees up in Ottawa, "The dice are loaded against the Opposition", he said, "because the government controls the committees. They have the majority of members on them." Where did the members hear that before, Mr. Speaker? And who argued about taking the estimates off the floor of this House and putting them out in the boardrooms and so forth? Who complained about that? Who said it should not be done? Where did we hear 'Crosbie's' argument that he was stating on television last night? Where did we hear it all before?

MR. D. JAMIESON: You did not hear it from him when he was down here.

MR. S. NEARY: No, I guarantee you did not hear it from him. And so the hon. minister says I should have come. I should have come to the committee to debate the hon. minister's estimates. Well, Mr. Speaker, in the first place if I never said a word inside of this House or outside the House, in Committee of the Whole, or at committee meetings outside of this House, it is the duty of the hon. minister

MR. S. NEARY: in presenting her estimates, to provide these details, to provide the facts about the spending of the educational dollar. The hon. minister should not have to be asked. If there is a problem at the College of Trades, let the hon. minister say so. If there is a problem at the College of Fisheries, let the hon. minister say so. The people have a right to know even if the hon. minister tries to hide, sidetrack, conceal, not produce the information. If the hon. minister wants to cop out, well, that is her affair.

MR. D. HANCOCK: Where are the statistics we asked for?

MR. S. NEARY: My colleagues, I am told asked the hon. minister for certain statistics on the drop-out rate. They have not been produced yet. So what would I have gained by wasting my time going to a committee meeting, asking the hon. minister questions and not getting any answers. My hon. friends asked the hon. minister questions for three nights in a row and did not get any answers. Will they get the answers?

MS. VERGE: (inaudible)

MR. S. NEARY: They got the answers. Did my hon. friend get the answers?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No, no!

AN HON. MEMBER: They did not ask the right questions.

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, it is high time, it is high time, Sir, that this government took this matter seriously, of the question are we getting true value for the educational dollar? The answer is, No, we are not. The answer was no five years ago and it is more so today. The College of Fisheries is in a shambles. They have put in for an expansion, new facilities - turned down, thumbs down.

AN HON. MEMBER: It had nothing to do with oil.

MR. S. NEARY: No, it had nothing to do with oil, that is right. If you cannot relate the College of Trades and the College of Fisheries and the new Technical College that we have been promised now by this administration for seven years,

MR. NEARY: if you cannot relate that to oil, if you cannot get the oil jargon in there then forget it, forget it, they are not even going to think about it. Too preoccupied with offshore ownership, with attacking the Leader of the Opposition and the Prime Minister of Canada and the ministers up in Ottawa. But, Mr. Speaker, some real problems are occurring and developing in education in this Province.

AN HON. MEMBER: Grade XII.

MR. NEARY: What about grade XII?

AN HON. MEMBER: What about grade XII (inaudible).

MR. NEARY: What about grade XII? We have a minister that cannot even implement grade XII. You know as I have said before in this House, Mr. Speaker, there are times when you feel like - well, you get so discouraged when you see the academic arguments, the obstruction that is thrown in the way, it would almost make a poor old ignoramus like myself sit down and weep. You would not know but we were bringing grade XII into the Province for the first time. They ran grade XII over at St. Bon's for years. My brother did grade XII.

MR. MORGAN: Your older brother?

MS. VERGE: It is not the same.

MR. NEARY: It is not the same?

MR. WARREN: That was under the Liberals 'Steve'.

MR. NEARY: Where was the other place they had it - Bishop Field was it?

MR. BARRY: (Inaudible) Grade XII.

AN HON. MEMBER: And they sent you home.

MR. NEARY: My brother did grade XII at St. Bon's.

AN HON. MEMBER: They sent him home.

MR. NEARY: At St. Bon's he did grade XII at St. Bon's, it was one of the best things he ever did in his life. They have had grade XII in every other Province of Canada for numerous and sundry years and grade XIII and here we are here - we always say 'we are the pace setters,

MR. NEARY: Newfoundland should never take a back seat to anybody, let us pioneer things, let us show the rest of the world that we do not have to depend on them, that we can develop our own ideas. We will pioneer in the field of matrimonial property, municipal taxes and oil and the like, -

MR. WARREN: (Inaudible) council.

MR. NEARY: - but where you have grade XII and grade XIII in Canada - 'Oh, well, we cannot do that down here, we have to take our time, it is going to take five years to implement that'.

AN HON. MEMBER: Part of the five year plan.

MR. NEARY: Three to five years to implement grade XII. And I never heard so many foolish arguments in my life of why we should not go full speed ahead with grade XII. Foolish arguments, irrelevant and stupid.

AN HON. MEMBER: But she has got her programme worked out now.

MR. NEARY: Now, here the Minister of Education accepts this. She tries to meet the academic jargon head-on by responding in academic terms-jargon.

MR. HOLLETT: (Inaudible) She is taking her advice from the Minister of Health.

MR. NEARY: From the Minister of Health? Well, I wish they would put the Minister of Health back in Education, I mean he is useless where he is.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: What is that?

AN HON. MEMBER: He is coming now. He is coming back.

MR. NEARY: What did he say? I mean he was well-liked, I suppose, in the field of education amongst educators in this Province.

MR. HOLLETT: (Inaudible) He was not well-liked as a minister though.

MR. NEARY: He was not very well liked as a minister, he was weak-kneed and wishy-washy -

SOME HON. MEMBERS :

Hear, hear!

MR. S. NEARY:

But at least he was one of them,

he was an academic, one of them,

AN HON. MEMBER:

No he is not an academic, ugh !

MR. L. THOMS:

Not because you are a teacher, you know,

you are necessarily an academic.

AN HON. MEMBER:

No, (inaudible) the Minister of Justice.

MR. S. NEARY:

He was one of them so, therefore, they had

to tread lightly because they did not want to criticize him too much,

one of their own, and so they let him get away with an awful lot but he

was considered to be the joke of the administration in the academic

world, the joke of the administration. He is like, now, the Minister of

Fisheries (Mr. Morgan). What they are saying about the Minister of

Fisheries, now, we will leave him there because he is so soft

and stunned ; that we will get everything we want out of him. Leave

him there,

MR. S. NEARY: that is what they are saying about the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan) and that is what they said about the Minister of Education (Mr. House). But nevertheless he was there, and he was one of them, so they had to go along, tread lightly and not criticize him too much. But I wish they would put him back in Education because as useless as he was in Education he was better than the present minister.

MR. L. THOMS: Not as good looking though.

MR. S. NEARY: No, not quite as good looking. Maybe the Premier should do a switcheroo. Take the present minister of Education and fling her over in Health and put the minister back, because as useless as he was at least he did manage to keep her afloat. But the whole system now is breaking down, is deteriorating and it is sad, Mr. Speaker, what is happening in the field of education in this Province. So, I still contend, as I did five years ago, six years ago, seven years ago, eight years ago, I still contend that we need a fact-finding study of our whole educational system in this Province. And I would say, Mr. Speaker, the sooner the better. The sooner the better, Sir, the sooner the better. Let us find out what is going on within the walls of these vocational schools and College of Trades, the College of Fisheries, and what has happened to the Poly-Tech? What is going on in the high schools and the elementary schools? What is going on over at the University? Has the enrolment gone back up at the University? And if it is rising, are they full-time students or part-time students? As I understand, Mr. Speaker, they now have a formula at the University to offset this adverse publicity they were getting for a reduction in the enrolment over there and they are doing it by running part-time courses, getting the public involved in part-time courses. They claim this drives up the enrolment when in actual fact the situation at the University is just as sad and just as pathetic today as it was three years ago, as it was five years ago. Half the courses they are running

MR. S. NEARY: over there are irrelevant and have no relation to reality in the work-a-day world, none at all.

MR. HISCOCK: A rich man's university.

MR. S. NEARY: And it is developing into a rich man's university as my hon. colleague says.

MR. D. HOLLETT: Ask her what happened to public participation in Grade XII.

MR. S. NEARY: Public participation in Grade XII? I am on to University now.

MR. D. JAMIESON: You have graduated from Grade XII.

MR. S. NEARY: Yes, that is right.

MS. VERGE: What about nursery school?

MR. S. NEARY: What about nursery school. Yes, what about it?

What about it? What about the Pine Grove School? What about that one? I could give the hon. minister a good argument on that one I will tell you. I happen to have a little niece who attends that school. If the hon. minister wants to debate that one I would be glad to do it, any time. That is shameful what they did with that school. Utterly shameful!

AN NON. MEMBER: (inaudible)

MR. S. NEARY: Well, what they are going to do with it? Shut it down.

AN HON. MEMBER: There is nothing wrong with (inaudible)

MR. S. NEARY: Oh, is it? Is that so? Now, do you want to debate that. Does the hon. gentleman want to debate that matter now.

MR. W. HOUSE: There is nothing to debate. There is nothing wrong with that one.

MR. S. NEARY: I see. You should think about what you are doing. Think about what you are doing.

Mr. Speaker, I think that is about all I could say about education. I am rather dismayed, concerned, saddened by what is happening in the field of education in this Province. The whole thing seems to be becoming

May 5, 1980

Tape 1293

MB - 3

MR. S. NEARY: a shambles. No direction from the minister,
no direction whatsoever. Two ministers in a row now, weak-kneed, showing
no sense of direction

MR. NEARY: and, as a result - education is a hard, hard thing to judge, Mr. Speaker, it is hard to get a handle on it, because the effect of a poor education system, the effects of a breakdown in education will be not seen, maybe, for years. It is something that you cannot see immediately, it will take years before you really see the adverse effect.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) where will you be sitting?

MR. NEARY: You know, Mr. Speaker, if you are not in the hon. gentleman's class, if you are not in his class, if you are not a member of the cocktail set, you are only scum in the eyes of the hon. gentleman, you are only just dirt in the eyes of the hon. gentleman. If you do not hobnob around with the big shots, downtown St. John's in the cocktail set, then you are only just dirt in the eyes of the hon. gentleman, 'Holy Willy, Holy Willy'. This happens to be a very serious matter, Mr. Speaker, this matter of education, and we have a minister who has been so preoccupied with women's lib -

MR. HANCOCK: Men hanging out clothes.

MR. NEARY: - men should be hanging out clothes - that she cannot think of anything else, cannot think of anything else, cannot run the department. It is too big for the hon. minister, cannot comprehend it, it is too big for her, and the sad part of it, Mr. Speaker, is that it is your children and my children who are suffering and will suffer. As I say, that is hard, hard to evaluate, because that may not be seen for several years down the road, several years down the road.

Mr. Speaker, that brings me, I think, just about to the end of my few remarks on the Budget, a few brief remarks. I am concerned also, and I think hon. members should be concerned, about the number of bankruptcies in this Province. They are talking as if Newfoundland was booming.

MR. JAMIESON: Small business is in the worst state it has ever been in.

MR. NEARY: Small business, that is right, as the hon. Leader of the Opposition says, is in the worst state in Newfound-

MR. NEARY: land that it has ever been in in its whole history.

MR. ROBERTS: They should get out and see - our people are hurting.

MR. NEARY: Of course, they are hurting, and that is why I raise it now, because there are more bankruptcies this years so far -

MR. LUSH: The first quarter.

MR. NEARY: - the first quarter of this year, more bankruptcies than the whole of last year. Why, sometimes I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if this crowd are not presiding over the destruction of the Province. We will have the new flag flying as Newfoundland goes down the drain.

MR. STIRLING: We do not have enough accountants to handle all the bankruptcies.

MR. NEARY: That is right. I tell you one course they should increase over here at the College of Trades or at the university, it is the accounting course. They should double it up because there are not enough accountants in Newfoundland right now to handle all the bankruptcies in this Province at the present time. It is shocking, Sir, shocking, and all this crowd can think about is oil and flags. It is sad, Mr. Speaker, it is very, very sad indeed, very sad.

I started out in the beginning talking about roads - well, I started on the flag actually but then I swung into roads and water and sewerage and the cutback in the capital works expenditure of \$50 million. It is going to be the worst Summer, Mr. Speaker, this is going to be the worst Summer on record for construction workers in this Province. It is going to be the worst Summer on record, I would submit, for demonstrations and picket lines. I believe we should get off in this House, we should get off oil and gas for awhile. People are fed up, fed up with hearing about oil and gas, and I think we should shove that in the background for awhile. Let the government

MR. NEARY: go on and do whatever they have to do on getting control or management or whatever it is on offshore gas. Let them go on and do their job. Let them go on up to Ottawa and negotiate or take it to court, whatever they want to do with it but let them govern, let them do what they have to do and let us get on with it for awhile in this House and in this Province and let us talk about some of the real problems that are facing the people of this Province, namely, record unemployment, the high cost of living, vandalism and crime, no fishery policy, the high cost electricity and heating fuel and gas.

MR. JAMIESON: No help policy.

MR. NEARY: No help policy, although the people of my district welcome, I have to say this, they welcome the new district hospital in Port aux Basques.

MR. ROBERTS: But there is not much money in the estimates for it.

MR. NEARY: One million dollars, which is not very much, will do some of the site preparation maybe but that is about all.

MR. ROBERTS: The hon. gentleman is going to have to get a commitment because, as he will remember, there have been an equal number of plans done for Burin, and Clarendville and everywhere else. The trouble with this crowd is you cannot believe their word.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on and on but I have no intention of abusing my time and my privilege in this House. I could go on and on forever. There are so many - look, Mr. Speaker,