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Speaker: Honourable James Russell

Thursday

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The House met at 3:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):
Order, please!

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY:
Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the hon. Premier a couple of questions about the proposed trip of two ministers and their entourage that are going to the Orient. Does the hon. gentleman think that is wise in this time of restraint? And could the hon. gentleman tell us -

MR. BAIRD:
I wish you were going to the Orient.

MR. NEARY:
The two ministers and their entourage, I understand are going to Japan, going to Hong Kong and to Korea.

Now, Mr. Speaker, could the hon. gentleman tell us who is going in that group, what ministers and what officials? The minister told us in his announcement of this trip that senior officials of various government departments are going. Could the hon. gentleman tell us how many are in the group? What departments are in the group? How much is it going to cost the taxpayers to send this group off on a trip to the Orient just a couple of weeks before Christmas?

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):
The hon. Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I do not know off my head how many people are going but I will find that information out for the hon. member. There are two ministers going, the Minister of Development (Mr. Windsor) and the Minister of Mines (Mr. Dawe). It is a very important trade mission. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, we are a bit late. We had a number of ministers travel to Japan and the Far East, and we are a little bit later than most of the other provinces. As a matter of fact, I think all of the other provinces now except Newfoundland. I think Premier Lee is going, Premier Levesque just got back. I think all of the other Premiers have been there two or three times. I think I am the only Premier, as a matter of fact, that has not gone there.

But there is opening up in the Far East some very interesting possibilities, not only as it relates to investment back into Canada, but as it relates to market opportunities for a number of commodities from Newfoundland or from Canada. So we are somewhat late in the day on it, as a matter of fact. And we need to be there to compete with some of the other provinces who are getting a little bit of a head start on it. So it is a very important trip. I will get all of the details in the next day or so for the hon. member on just exactly what the ministers will be doing while they are over there and so on.

MR. NEARY:
We know what they will be doing.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
We have had the Japanese over here, plus some people from Hong Kong and Singapore and Korea in the last year or so. As a matter

of fact, one group representing fishing interests came over from Japan. Really they should be also going to China, because one of the other areas that is really opening up now is China.

MR. NEARY:

Red China you mean?

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Yes. And just about all of the Premiers of Canada have been there and many of the departments of the various provincial governments. I will get the details for the member, but it is an extremely crucial trip. We have had, as I said, a group from Japan here some time ago on the fishery, the squid fishery specifically but other aspects of the fishery as well. We have made some very good links there now. As a matter of fact, the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) was in Japan just not too long ago to finalize the loan that we did, the yen loan that we did with the Japanese, and has given me a fairly detailed report on opportunities in the Orient and the minister has passed that along to the Minister of Development (Mr. Windsor) as well to use on his trip. So it is a very important trip and I will get the details for the hon. member. The only regret I have is that we are a tiny bit late on our trade mission to a part of the world where Nova Scotia and PEI, New Brunswick, and the other provinces West of them have already made some firm and good contact. So we have to try and catch up and get in on the act as well because there is substantial foreign investment and substantial markets for a lot of our product.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. member for LaPoile, a supplementary.

MR. NEARY:

I would say the only thing that hon. gentlemen on that side regret is that they are not all going to the Orient this time of the year.

Now the hon. gentleman has undertaken, I would assume from his answer, to get me all of the details in connection with the officials who will be going including their titles. The minister said in his statement senior officials would be going. I would like to know if secretaries are going, if the minister is taking his secretarial staff with him. And could the hon. gentleman tell us if the minister and his entourage will be travelling economy or will they be travelling first-class on the air travel on their trip to the Orient? And will the hon. gentleman inform the House if representatives of business and industry in this Province and a representative from Mount Pearl town council, if they will be paid for out of government funding, directly or indirectly for their travelling or any part of their travelling or accommodations or any part of their accommodations? Will any of their expenses be paid or do they have to look after their own expenses in the case of the Town of Mount Pearl, and in the case of the businesspeople that are going, their business will look after their expenses? Could the hon. gentleman enlighten us on that matter?

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Yes, I will so, Mr. Speaker. No

problem.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, would the hon. gentleman also inform the House if the trip is being made at the initiative of the administration there opposite or, Mr. Speaker, were invitations issued to go to the Orient? If invitations were issued, would the hon. gentleman table the information in the House? If it is at the initiative of the administration would the hon. gentleman tell the House what appointments they have made in advance apart from the social aspect of it? Will the hon. gentleman tell us what they propose to do when they are in the Orient?

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Absolutely. No problem, Mr. Speaker. No problem at all.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I heard on the news last evening that the Premier indicated that he will be willing to do something in the long and protracted strike between the Newfoundland Telephone Company and its workers. And the question I have for the Premier is does this mean that he now supports the position of the striking employees?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Obviously, Mr. Speaker, for anybody to take sides, especially the Premier of the Province, in a dispute of this nature would not be wise, I do not think. The Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn) with his officials in conciliation and so on has been trying valiantly to do something to solve the dispute. What I indicated yesterday was that as one Newfoundland, and I guess as Premier of the Province I am becoming increasingly concerned about it. There have been a lot of people on strike for a long period of time. It has gone on, as the hon. member says, for a long period of time, and therefore I was expressing, I think, the concern that perhaps a lot of Newfoundlanders throughout the Province feel as it relates to any protracted dispute of this nature. So, therefore I do not think it would be wise at this point in time, in an effort to try to get the matter solved, to take sides. That would not help anybody or help the dispute get solved.

But I am becoming increasingly concerned about it and I did indicate to the President of the Federation of Labour in meetings that I had with him and his people several days ago that I was very concerned about it. And subsequent to that, the President of the Federation of Labour wired me and requested that I become personally involved in trying to solve the matter. I responded to the President of the Federation of Labour, telling him that I would take it under consideration. But I do express concern about it. Right now the situation in the Province is that in the fishery

situation both sides are back at the table, which is a good sign, but that has gone on far too long as well. But both sides are now back at the table and that took a bit of doing. The school board maintenance workers, if you will, or support workers, have signed new collective agreements on the West Coast and on the Burin Peninsula. And if we can look optimistically at the fishermen's situation, that by going back to the table and by both sides agreeing that they want to solve it and that there is a better than 50 per cent chance that it will be solved, we are left before Christmas with one outstanding labour dispute. I think it would be nice if we could enter the Christmas period with no labour disputes in the Province. I am as concerned as the hon. member is about it. Whether we take any additional action besides expressing concern is under consideration at this time.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. member for Menihek on a supplementary.

MR. FENWICK:

As I listened to the Premier's reply there I got the impression that he was not going to say whether he was in support of the strikers themselves. Since one of the major issues of dispute here is that the telephone company is insisting that their employees take a level of wages less than those people in the Maritimes, I would like to ask the specific question of whether the Premier supports this policy on the part of the telephone company that the wage settlement should be less than that in the Maritimes?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to get into the various issues because that again is only doing through the backdoor what I have already said I was not willing to do through the front door which was to take sides in the dispute. From a theoretical point of view to argue against 'parity', whatever that means and whatever its context is sounds like you are going against motherhood. I am not totally familiar with all the details, how much they have offered to increase their wages over what they are getting now, how far that means they are going to get closer to parity, these kinds of things, so I do not think it would be wise for me to get involved. Every circumstance is different.

MR. NEARY:

You are really subdued today, this is really boring.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

That is just because the questions are not stimulating enough from the other side, Mr. Speaker. If I get up and I speak like this I am subdued, if I get up and speak in another way I am a madman and a separatist and a confrontationist and I am an emotionalist and I do not deal with logic, I only deal with emotion.

MR. NEARY:

You look like a beaten man.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member means that he is going to come to Green Bay next time around, that will be fine with me. I would not mind that. We will see who will be a beaten man. But I do not think it would be fair to get into the specific issues at this time. Number one, I have expressed on

behalf of the government our deep concern about the situation and, number two, we are taking under consideration whether any initiatives should be taken by government in this particular dispute, so I do not think it would be wise for me, until I have that consideration out of the way, to take sides on the specific issues. I do not think anything is being served by doing it that way. But after we have considered the matter and considered the request from the President of the Federation of Labour and made a position known on that, then after that, I think, it might be more prudent to say more on a specific issue dealing with the dispute.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Whether we are taking a position or not in this individual dispute, what is obvious at this point, I think, is that the attitude of the management of the company has been such that it has forced this prolonged strike to last for quite a period of time. And the Chief Executive Officer of the Newfoundland Telephone Company is at present, I believe correctly, the Vice-Chairman of the Newfoundland and Labrador Economic Council which gives economic advice to the provincial government. My question to the Premier is in view of the bad management practices of Newfoundland Telephone, which we can all agree to, would he be willing to remove the Vice-Chairman of the Newfoundland and Labrador Economic Council so that we will not give the same bad advice to our own government.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, the difference between myself and the hon. member for Menihek (Mr. Fenwick) is that he has taken a side. Now the difference between the hon. member for Menihek and this government is we have not taken a side, we are not in a conflict of interest situation. We are in the middle. Every question now that the hon. member for Menihek asks he is in a conflict of interest situation in the sense that he has taken a side. Now he has the liberty to do that, the hon. member does, because he is a private member of the House. As a government, if in fact we do intend to take other initiatives besides the ones already taken to solve the dispute, surely it would be extremely imprudent for that government to take a side one way or the other. That is a sure sign that you do not want the dispute settled. It would seem to me that if I want to signal a sure sign that I want the dispute settled is to stay in the middle and that at sometime then there would be some respect from both sides if in fact they took another initiative. So I think the hon. member for Menihek (Mr. Fenwick) in continuing to ask questions is really implying that he does not want the dispute settled because he knows that if the government did take a side one way or the other it would inhibit the strike being settled. So I would caution the hon. member that if his line of questioning continues, then I would have no choice but to accuse the hon. member of wanting the dispute to continue on because he is asking and insisting that government take a position and taking a position, obviously for

one side or the other, would complicate matters and insure that the strike and the dispute continued well beyond Christmas.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Premier whether in light of the new approach to federalism being exhibited by Premier Rene Levesque of Quebec whether the Premier or his government has made any new approaches to the government of Quebec with respect to obtaining a settlement of the Upper Churchill dispute and with respect to obtaining a right of way or a method of moving power from the Upper Churchill across Quebec to where markets might be in the United States or elsewhere?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, we indicated some time earlier this year that the Government of Newfoundland was contemplating new initiatives along the lines of trying to resolve the problem and the obstacles relating to the Upper Churchill contract and further development of hydro resources in Labrador. We indicated at that time that when we were ready we would inform the people of Newfoundland, if the House was open through the House, what that new position is. At this point in time I am not in a position to do that but as soon as I am I can assure the hon. Leader of the Opposition that I will inform him.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:

Would the Premier tell us whether the Premier has taken up Mr. Mulroney on the offer which he made prior to the federal election to assist the Province in obtaining a resolution of the dispute with Quebec? Has the Premier made representation to the Prime Minister of Canada on this point since the federal election? If so, could we have a copy of that submission and could we have the response of the Prime Minister? Or is this another case where the Premier does not want to put the Prime Minister on the spot?

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, obviously this is a very crucial and important matter for the Province and as I indicated in answer to the previous question when the government thinks it is in the public interest we shall inform the public and inform this hon. House of initiatives that the government are taking as it relates to representations to the Prime Minister and representations to the Province of Quebec on this very important issue. At the present moment I do not think it is in the public interest to release any information on the initiatives that the government may or may not have taken on the issue but in due course obviously we will provide the full details and information on the initiatives that are being undertaken if in fact some are being undertaken.

MR. BARRY :

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Speaker, this is a very interesting new approach that we are seeing being taken by the Premier in recent days. Not only are we seeing the Premier being concerned about the Mr. Freeze image, Mr. Speaker, we have seen the Premier backing water on that track.

MR. NEARY:

He is moving like a squid on that one.

MR. BARRY:

Yes, the squid like function of the Premier in that particular issue has been noted but, Mr. Speaker, we are also seeing a disturbing trend with respect to concealing from the public and from this House information which the people of the Province are entitled to have.

Now, I would like to ask the Premier whether in light of the fact that there are still no initiatives with respect to a start on either a Lower Churchill development or obtaining power from the Upper Churchill for use where it is needed, would the Premier tell us when the next generating source will be needed for the Province if power is not available from Labrador or what is the latest date when the construction of a transmission line from Labrador would be needed? When will this Province reach the point where the demand for electricity will not be met by the existing generating sources?

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

First of all, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barry) is completely wrong when he

talks about I am backing away from our position as it relates to the freeze on public servants' wages. I met with the President of the NTA, I have met with the President of NAPE, I met with the President of the Federation of Labour and I have indicated to them, because of our present current account difficulties, that we would have to continue with that policy. So I have not backed away one iota from that policy so the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barry) is completely wrong in his allegations along those lines. Obviously I am still interested in disputes that are ongoing whether it be in the fishing industry of with the Newfoundland Telephone or with the school boards as is the hon. member and all hon. members of this House. But our policy as it relates to the wage freeze remains in effect because of the financial problems that we have on our current account, on our operating account. That is number one.

Number two, the Leader of the Opposition mentioned the Lower Churchill. He knows as well as I, as do most Newfoundlanders who have looked into the situation at all, that the cost of the Lower Churchill, either Gull Island or Muskrat Falls at this point in time is extremely high. It would be somewhere perhaps in the range of sixty to eighty mils per kilowatt hour. If the Leader of the Opposition is saying he wants those to go ahead immediately, he is asking the people of Newfoundland to almost double or triple their power rates. Perhaps that is the new Liberal position, that they want to increase power rates in Newfoundland by starting the Lower Churchill. That is the effect it would have, Mr. Speaker, right now. So to throw out this

thing again of the Lower Churchill tends to get people's hopes up that somehow we can have stable electricity rates. There would be stable electricity rates but they would be very high stable electricity, like sixty to seventy to eighty to ninety mils per kilowatt hour and that would be extremely high. That remains a very big problem. On the question of an additional site, the situation there is the Cat Arm development is just about completed now. It comes onstream I think in January and that is about 110 megawatts. We finished the Upper Salmon which was somewhere around seventy to eighty megawatts and the one before that, Hinds Lake, was somewhere around eighty or eighty-five megawatts. That leaves us without any other significant hydro site left on the Island. There are no other hydro sites left on the Island that we can develop and keep costs at a relatively stable level. Other smaller hydro sites would be very, very expensive. So we are now examining the alternatives that are available to us for additional power if and when we need it. I would have to answer the question with the qualification that I may be a little bit out because it is several weeks now since I have seen the exact data, but I think within eighteen months we have got to make a decision on a new generating source which therefore we would need two or three or four years beyond that. So in other words, we would have to have more generation in place in the late 1980s, around 1988 or 1989, somewhere around there, but we would have to make a decision for the lead time to build it somewhere in the eighteen month period.

MR. CALLAN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the member for Bellevue.

MR. CALLAN:

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Premier a question regarding the future of the Come By Chance Hospital. A couple of days ago a meeting was held with the new Minister of Health (Dr. Twomey) and at that meeting the minister reiterated that there is no change as far as he is concerned in the government's plan announced on February 27, 1984 that the Come By Chance Hospital will close in six months or so, in other words about the same time that Clarendville Hospital comes onstream. Let me say to the Premier since February 27, 1984 a lot of water has gone under the bridge, a lot of things have changed. I assume that the reason for closing any hospital would be financial, and I assume as well that with all of the things that have happened since February 27, 1984 this Province is on the verge of a new era financially and everything else, that is what the Premier will be preaching no doubt. So let me ask the Premier is there any circumstance or are there any set of circumstances under which the government would reverse its decision regarding the Come By Chance Hospital and its closure?

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

No, we do not see any circumstance where it would be necessary to change the decision on the Come By Chance Hospital. Furthermore, let me just elaborate, we are really not saving money except in its very narrowest sense. Unfortunately, CBC television

again sees fit to give the narrow parameters of the issue of Come By Chance Hospital. What we are doing is we are going to be spending more money on health care in the Trinity Bay area, in that whole area of Come By Chance - Sunnyside, than we are now spending because we are building a brand new \$15 million hospital. I think it is \$15 million, the member for Trinity North (Mr. Brett) could perhaps give me the exact figure but we are spending around \$15 million on a brand new facility to upgrade health care services in the area of Come By Chance - Sunnyside. Why will not CBC television and the member for Bellevue (Mr. Callan) show the full story on the situation as it relates to the Come By Chance Hospital? Futhermore, we are going to keep that facility opened as a clinic and have X-ray facilities there as well as a couple of beds in case of emergencies. So the operating cost of the new hospital in Clarenville is going to be I would say three or four times the operating cost of the hospital that we are closing down at Come By Chance. There is going to be more money spent in that area on health care as a result of the new hospital in Clarenville. By the way, a lot of the people in Come By Chance and Sunnyside will not have to drive to St. John's then for some of their specialities, which they do now, which costs them money for their gas and money for their car and money for taxis and all the rest of it, they would only have to go a shorter distance to Clarenville. The image that is painted out there to the public is that somehow what government is doing is reducing health care services in that area or in the Province. We are improving and spending more money on health care

services and especially in the Come By Chance, Sunnyside, Clarenville, Shoal Harbour, Northwest Arm, Southwest Arm area. I mean, it is unbelievable the perception that is being perpetrated upon the people of Newfoundland. We are going to be spending more money as a result of the Clarenville Hospital to improve the facilities, to have people not come to St. John's but be able to get specialist services and more sophisticated diagnostic services in their own area. The people of Bay d'Espoir right now have to drive to Grand Falls for a hospital, they have to go ninety miles or something for a hospital and all we are saying to the people of Come By Chance and Sunnyside is we can provide you with a better service, with a better hospital in Clarenville, which is the center of that area and where a lot of people happen to live right now.

So, no, there is no circumstance that we can foresee which would change that decision. The decision is final, the Come By Chance Hospital will be closed out, it will be changed into a clinic to service that area for the people, we will not close it out completely, and we will open a brand new facility in Clarenville to better serve all the people of that area, not just Come By Chance and Sunnyside but Clarenville and Shoal Harbour and all the other areas in Northwest Arm and Southwest Arm and we think that that is a sound policy from every point of view including the health care point of view.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):
The hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. NEARY:
We are having a nice fireside chat today.

MR. TULK:
Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Premier concerning the Newfoundland seal fishery. Last year, the Premier will recall and the House will recall, in a confused state of affairs, the Tory spokesman in Ottawa, at the time, for Fisheries first declared that they were against the hunting of seals under one year of age and then they moved the next day, after some pressure, to a moratorium just on whitecoats, which certainly indicated to me that they were, in some ways, backing off in favour of Greenpeace, and I believe the government felt the same way.

Mr. Speaker, the sealing season is now, I suppose you could say, just around the corner, and I would like to ask the Premier if he has discussed the policy of the federal government with the federal minister or with the Prime Minister regarding the seal fishery and, if he has, just what is their policy now that they are in government in Ottawa?

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

PREMIER PECKFORD:
I have not personally discussed it, Mr. Speaker, with the Prime Minister at all up to this point in time. Obviously, our position is on the record and we stand by it strongly and firmly and will continue to do so. So I am not aware through the Prime Minister what their policy is. I noticed in the paper today that the

Greenpeace people have been accepted into this international organization and, you know, whether that is good, bad or indifferent, I do not know. But we will be forcefully putting our position to Mr. Fraser and to the other people in the federal government that the seal fishery is an integral part of the fishing industry of Newfoundland and that we will continue on our course unabated as we have in the past.

MR. TULK:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):
The hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:
Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Premier that indeed, the new federal Minister of Environment (Ms Blais-Grenier) did not oppose the entry of Greenpeace into this international conservation group -

MR. RIDEOUT:
Why not?

MR. TULK:
That is not the question I want to ask the Premier if he will now contact the Prime Minister through letter or Telex - which he was very famous for a year ago in this House; there was one going almost every day - to restate our position in this House? And I would like to point out that I think if the member for Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout) had not become a minister and thereby had to remove his Private Members' resolution from the Order Paper, that indeed there would have probably been unanimous consent or unanimous agreement in voting for the member for Baie Verte - White Bay's (Mr. Rideout) resolution. I think it states the position of this House very well.

So I would like to ask the Premier, once he has ascertained that indeed the federal minister did do what she is reported to have done, if he would Telex or send a letter to the federal minister or the Prime Minister, stating that, indeed, our position in this Province is what it has always been?

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

That has already been done a month or so ago, Mr. Speaker. On all the major issues between the Government of Canada and the Government of Newfoundland, we have gone back to both the Prime Minister and all the Cabinet ministers in Ottawa.

But just let me show how shallow are these questions from the Opposition. Obviously, the member for Fogo (Mr. Tulk) is trying to imply what he did when he clearly said that the federal government have now changed their position on sealing.

Now, the hon. the member for Fogo knows that in The Evening Telegram today, if this is valid - and we will check to see if it is valid - that Guy David, Press Secretary for Environment Minister, Suzanne Blais-Grenier, said, 'The minister learned about the matter only after it was brought to her attention by Opposition parties and Greenpeace.' And he went on to say, 'After a review of the issues, she ordered the Canadian delegates to withdraw from the debate.' David said that that did not represent a change in the Canadian Government's official position on sealing, it is simply the minister's personal opinion

that a government should not interfere in the free association of non-government groups. So the reason why the Minister of Environment in Ottawa (Ms Blais-Grenier) took the position that she did was not because the position of the federal government on sealing had changed, it was because she, personally, felt that the Government of Canada had no business interfering in the free association of non-government groups.

Now, you can argue with that reason all you like, and if I were the Minister of Environment in Canada, I quite likely would not have taken that position, I would have still argued that Canada should take a stronger position with that international organization.

MR. BARRY:

Why are you not doing that now?

PREMIER PECKFORD:

But, what I am saying is that for the member for Fogo (Mr. Tulk) to say that the Canadian Government's position on sealing has changed is not borne out by the facts. Because it was for a different reason that the Minister of Environment took the decision that she did.

MR. BARRY:

Oh, I see. To wipe out the seal fishery.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

No. That is joining an international organization, that is different from saying that you are somehow opposed to the seal hunt.

Now, as I said, I, personally, if I were the Minister of Environment in Canada, I would not have taken

the position that this minister took, no way!

MR. BARRY:

Why did you not indicate that to her?

PREMIER PECKFORD:

We will. They already know our position on this. We have told them our position on this, loud and clear.

MR. NEARY:

What a nice fireside chat we had today.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The time for Question Period has expired.

MR. BARRY:

Too bad!

MR. SPEAKER:

Before we continue, I would like to welcome to the gallery some twenty-five Grade XI students from the Democracy class of Queen Elizabeth Regional High School with their teacher, Lloyd Johnson, from the district of Conception Bay South.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

PRESENTING PETITIONS

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. member for Eagle River.

MR. HISCOCK:

Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition on behalf of the residents of Williams Harbour, Labrador, concerning their phone service. The prayer of the petition says, "We are writing concerning the state of the phone service in our community of

Williams Harbour. It in itself is in an unmentionable state and for all the years we have our phone service in it remains in a static state. For many years we have had our phone service consisting of one single phone that serviced all the people. It was only in recent years this changed. The change was an addition of a second phone that was to be stationed at the local fish plant. People trying to use this phone recently were denied its use by the plant management, thus showing that the so-called benefit was not beneficial at all. This goes to prove that all the efforts to improve service was futile and we think that we deserve better."

And the many reasons the phone service should be improved, one states the lack of personal privacy which comes from using a radiotelephone. People with radio receivers can listen in on such calls and this has been the case for many years.

In addition, many individuals in this town fought long for changes over the last decade or so and despite this effort nothing has come of it. Although nothing was done to hold back change over the years, not much development has occurred and they think they deserve some progress in this matter.

The petition, Mr. Speaker, is signed by over forty voting people in the community of Williams Harbour. The community, as I said, only has a phone at each end of the community. There is a polio victim at one end of the community, and a lot of the children are in the extreme ends of the community also. When the Board of Public Utilities held hearings back in 1980, - I was

the first person to attend its hearings asking that improved telephone service be done along the Labrador.

In fairness to Newfoundland Telephone, a lot has been done, but one of the things that need to be done is individual phones put in the community of Williams Harbour. We take a lot for granted in our urban areas and one of course is privacy. We have stated that the community of Williams Harbour wants a basic thing, a telephone so they can have their privacy and conduct their business instead of everybody in the community listening in on shortwave radios.

The Newfoundland Board of Public Utilities gave Newfoundland Tel a rate increase and the company erected a new building costing over \$12 million. Considering the current financial state of the company there is no reason individual phones cannot be installed for Williams Harbour and the telephone service improved in Pinsent's Arm and in Norman Bay.

Mr. Speaker, the community is asking for something basic, something that, as I said, we in urban areas expect. I hope the Premier is going to be having dialogue with Newfoundland Tel and that he will also bring up the request of the people in Williams Harbour that they should have the bare necessities by having individual telephones in their community.

The telephone strike, Mr. Speaker, is affecting Labrador moreso than any other area of the Province because of its isolation. When a single phone goes out of order on the Coast, the company does not fly in repair people right away by

helicopter from Goose Bay but wait until a batch of phones go to make the trip worthwhile, so you may have to wait two weeks or more.

Mr. Speaker, with regard to the strike, I asked by way of a press release that the Premier reconvene the House to deal with it. I believe the Premier should get the parties into binding arbitration. I feel that this has gone on long enough that if we have to wait for both sides to settle this matter, then I am afraid that it will not be done. I think that the Premier should use his good offices to try to get them together personally, and if that fails then go to binding arbitration.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. member's time has expired.

MR. HISCOCK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask that the petition be tabled, referred to the appropriate minister and a copy sent on to Newfoundland Tel.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the petition on behalf of the people of Williams Harbour. I believe everybody in the community has signed it, virtually. I believe that it is worthwhile to notice, Mr. Speaker, that it is Newfoundland Telephone that would have the responsibility here. The Premier yesterday indicated that he has a degree of sympathy with the people who are on strike at Newfoundland Telephone. However, Mr. Speaker, the Premier's words

are ringing somewhat hollow because of the lack of any action by the government, Mr. Speaker, whether it be only persuasive, and that may be all that the government can do in an instance where it is a utility, publicly traded, that is controlled by the Public Utilities Board. But, Mr. Speaker, the Premier can go further than merely expressing a degree of personally sympathy, and maybe, Mr. Speaker, if we had that strike settled, Newfoundland Telephone would be able to get back to carrying out the function that it should be performing which is ensuring that proper telephone service is available to all parts of the Province, including Williams Harbour. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that government should take notice that Newfoundland Telephone, while it does have a degree of proficiency of service in certain parts of the Province is far from doing its job properly in all parts of the Province, that there are people suffering today because they have not settled their strike. And, Mr. Speaker, the quicker that strike is settled the better, the quicker that strike is settled, the quicker we will see management, instead of being involved in doing the work that is done by the people on the picket line, become involved in the planning that will be needed to ensure that telephone services are provided to areas such as Williams Harbour.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

I would like to speak to this petition as well and to support it, but not along the lines that the Leader of the Opposition just used. If I am not mistaken, and

the member for Eagle River (Mr. Hiscock) and the member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren) can correct me if I am wrong, how many years is it - four or five years - since Newfoundland Tel has taken over? How long have they been responsible?

MR. WARREN:

For Labrador?

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Yes.

MR. WARREN:

I moved to Labrador in 1967 and they were there then.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Not all parts of Labrador were they responsible for.

MR. HISCOCK:

They took over Labrador West a few years ago.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

So was just Labrador West they took over four or five years ago. I remember being in Williams Harbour, as the member for Eagle River (Mr. Hiscock) knows, and I do not know how many more people are in Williams Harbour now than in those days, twenty-three or twenty-four years ago. But I do have a lot of sympathy for what the member for Eagle River has presented today. He did go on to say, and I think he was being very fair in presenting his petition because I have learned this over the last two or three years, that in recent years there have been a lot of improvements on the Coast to telephone service in many of the places that did not before have it.

I remember being in Fox Harbour or St. Lewis in 1961 when there was only one telephone, or it was a

radio telephone then in the harbour. I do not know what the story is in St. Lewis today. I would say there is more than one telephone there today, I would hope so after twenty-three or twenty-four years. I guess they have a full scale - system now in St. Lewis or Fox Harbour. In Port Hope Simpson, do they have a full-scale system now in Port Hope Simpson? They do in Mary's Harbour, I know for sure. I do not know if they have it in Cape Charles yet or not. They do in Cape Charles.

MR. HISCOCK:

It is only Williams Harbour.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Georges Cove and Pinsent's Arm.

MR. HISCOCK:

Williams Harbour, Pinsent's Arm, Northern Bay.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Right. There are only three areas left. So in other words the point is that along that Coast, especially that unknown coast, if you will, South of Cartwright and North of what used to be Henley Harbour, which is no longer there now, or North of Cape Charles, if you will, that part of the coast there, there has been a fair number of improvements in telephone service.

MR. HISCOCK:

Ever since I intervened in 1980.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Ever since you intervened in 1980. The hon. member wishes to take credit for all the telephone service on the Labrador Coast and, therefore, he should see to it that it is now installed in Williams Harbour. If he is responsible for all those other

improvements, then he does not need my support or that of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barry), he can do it single-handedly on his own to complete what has already been started and there are only two places left to go. But I do, to be serious and not facetious on the issue, support whole-heartedly the petition. And if there are only a couple of small places left to do and the others of comparable size and done, then there is no reason why the company, over the next couple of years, could not make those kinds of improvements to the couple of places that are left.

I wish the hon. member well in his ongoing valiant effort to improve the phone service on the Labrador Coast and I fully support him.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

Before proceeding to Orders of the Day, there was a point of privilege raised yesterday by the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barry) to which I feel I should respond today. It has to do with, of course, the basic motion of the six month hoist. I wish to refer to that point raised by the hon. Leader of the Opposition yesterday as to whether or not it was a debatable motion.

The circumstances leading up to the point of privilege need not be reviewed at this time. Suffice to say, nobody's privilege was breached by the incident as the motion was put without objection by any member. It was raised as a point of privilege subsequent to the division vote.

The important point, as I see it, is one of the future. Our own Standing Orders are silent. However, a precedent has been

established by previous Speakers who ruled both ways. I refer to a ruling of December 17, 1974, which said that the motion was not debatable. I refer to a ruling of May 2, 1975, which said it was debatable. On June 28, 1978 and on May 15, 1980, the motion was made, accepted and debate continued. Thus it would appear that even though no specific ruling was made in 1978 and 1980 it was accepted as a debatable motion by the House itself. However, where our Standing Orders are silent, we look to the House of Commons and our own precedent.

In conclusion, and subsequent to some extensive research, I have to rule that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barry) did not establish a prima facie case; however, it is an interesting point of order.

I have also checked with other jurisdictions and discovered that a six month hoist motion is now debatable in the House of Commons. And for information purposes it is also debatable in Ontario and Nova Scotia.

Therefore, I have to rule that the motion in our House is debatable.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

ooo

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, when I was researching this matter this morning I sent for Hansard, the verbatim report of the House. And it was delivered to me as I requested. But when I got it, Mr. Speaker, I noticed on page 15 of Hansard there was a blank space at the top; obviously something had been taken out. And I have to say, Mr. Speaker, in making my point of order, that I understand that it is a new system they are working on and it may not have been deliberate, I am not saying it was deliberate, but I am just asking Your Honour to check on it for me because after page 15 there are five pages missing. Mr. Speaker, I suppose you call it the case of the missing pages of Hansard. I would like an explanation, Mr. Speaker. Here I am trying to research, as Your Honour did, this matter, and when I get Hansard - I am not blaming anybody, I would just like to have a clarification or an explanation for it - find out these five pages are missing and there is a blank at the top of page 15. All the debate and discussion that took place after Division has been removed for some unknown reason.

At the bottom of page 14, then a blank, then the vote, and then five pages gone. I am sure Your Honour can provide me with a satisfactory explanation. When we get Hansard - this is an excerpt from Hansard that I sent for - I would like to know are these pages going to be in the verbatim report of the House?

MR. SPEAKER:

I can answer that for the hon. member. Perhaps it should be answered privately as the member is directing a question to the Chair.

However, the motion was put by the Deputy Speaker who was then in the Chair. The motion by the member for Menihék (Mr. Fenwick) was put and it was defeated by a voice vote. Subsequently, the Government House Leader (Mr. Marshall) called for a Division. Now when a Division takes place nothing else happens or should happen in the Legislature, no debate of any kind should take place. It is really a bell ringing kind of situation until the vote is taken. So there was some talk back and forth to do with the motion made by the hon. member for Menihék. It could very easily have been about anything at all. In reality and legally that debate should not and did not exist, so it is not going to be in Hansard.

MR. NEARY:

A point of order again, Mr. Speaker.

I do not want to question Your Honour's ruling, but is Your Honour saying that any time debate takes place in this House that somebody can go to the Hansard Office and say strike that from the record. It actually happened in this House and it is a verbatim report of what transpired.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

The House was not sitting.

MR. NEARY:

The House was sitting.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

A Division was called. It was all invalid. Learn the rules of the House.

MR. NEARY:

This is a very serious matter, Mr. Speaker. I do not think that anything should be stricken from

the records of this House once the business has been -

PREMIER PECKFORD:

The House was not sitting.

MR. NEARY:

The House was sitting.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Nonsense. A Division had been called.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, I have never known it to happen before. Maybe Your Honour is justified in his explanation, I do not know, but I would have to further research that. But I think it is a very serious matter when somebody can have something removed from Hansard, whether it be Your Honour, the Deputy Speaker, or members of this House. Mr. Speaker, I do not really know what to do about it now because I was hoping that it would turn up in Hansard. Maybe we can talk about it privately as Your Honour suggested, but I am certainly very concerned that there should be pages missing of debate and business that was transacted in this House, in the verbatim report of the House.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Mr. Speaker, if I could speak on it briefly, I believe that research will show that once a Division has commenced, presumably the Division commenced when there was a request 'Let the House Divide', and up until the Division vote is taken, one will see something to the effect there

shall be no proceedings in the House during that period. In other words, a Standing Vote is called for. Then there is a period of time before which the Standing Vote is taken and that there are no proceedings in the House.

MR. NEARY:

But there were proceedings.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

I mean there are proceedings either in a technical sense or in a literal sense. Of course there were proceedings, we are all here breathing. We can talk. And there are things happening, but there are no parliamentary -

MR. NEARY:

We had five pages of debate.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Yes, but of any parliamentary relevance. In other words, they were irrelevant and should not have been there. I am not making a ruling, I am just telling the Speaker what my understanding of it is, and the Speaker will do his research and make his own ruling. But my understanding of it is that once a Division has been called for and until the Division vote is taken there are no proceedings, nobody can make an amendment, nobody can move the adjournment, nobody can make a point of order legitimately, nobody can make a point of privilege, nobody can undertake any parliamentary proceeding; that is my understanding. But obviously the matter will be researched.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Speaker, it is not something that is significant in light of Your Honour's ruling on the point in question. But the point the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) has made I think is a very valid one and that has to do with the integrity of the transcripts of this House and the credibility to be placed on it.

Now it is like, Mr. Speaker, I would submit in all respect, if a member of this House says something that is unparliamentary that should not be said, that is the analogy.

Your Honour is right, there should be no further debate. It does not say there are no further proceedings, it says that there shall be no further debate. Mr. Speaker, there was debate and that was out of order, Mr. Speaker, but there was a serious matter that caused that to happen. But the debate Your Honour would rule quite rightly out of order.

But, with respect, the transcripts should not be censored in terms of removing that. It is a matter that should be there. Because, Mr. Speaker, let us have another example. It might be, for example, that the House is improperly in Division.

MR. NEARY:

Right on.

MR. BARRY:

It might be that for some procedural reason the House should not be in Division although some members might think it is. Now if there is something that takes place in that situation -

DR. COLLINS:

It cannot be left in.

MR. BARRY:

Yes, but how is that to be decided? Is it to be decided outside of this House?

With respect to the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), Mr. Speaker, what should happen is that the transcript in all its glory or all its ignominy should be there for all to see, for the people of this Province to see, for members of this House to see and if there is anything out of order there, if there anything that does not form part of a proper debate in the House, that will be noted, that will be there. If there is Division then there will be points of order and debate after that and it will be ruled out of order. It will still be there in the transcript as is much that is ruled out of order here, but it should still be there in the Hansard, in the record of the House.

We do not mean to take up Your Honour's time in these academic pursuits, but again it is the sort of thing, with respect to Your Honour, that we would appreciate if a little bit of research done on to see if there is any precedents in the House of Commons, other provinces or wherever. Because I can tell Your Honour the same thing has occurred in court, and this House is the highest court in the land, and this may be another good analogy. I have had occasion to request a transcript of a trial in order to carry on an appeal. The basis of the appeal was going to be that the trial judge unduly interfered with my cross-examination of a particular witness. When I got the transcript the interventions by the judge had been deleted. Things had gotten so hot and heavy during the course of the

toing-and-froing that had all been deleted from the transcript. Mr. Speaker, I went back and pointed out to His Lordship that I wanted a full transcript to go to the Court of Appeal with and in fact the end result of that was that there was a full transcript. Now, I submit that there is a similar analogy here. The Minister of Justice (Mr. Ottenheimer) I believe would agree that that is the right and proper thing to happen in court transcripts and I would submit it is right and proper for it to be in the transcript of this House, which is Hansard. Maybe Your Honour did not realize that we felt strongly that this is a significant matter. Could Your Honour just take this under advisement to check and see how this is dealt with elsewhere? We believe that everything here, the bright spots and the lows, the good and the bad, should be there in Hansard for everybody to see.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, to that point of order, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barry) did not put too much credence in Standing Order 82 (a). I do not know if it has ever happened, but I cannot remember since I have been in the House it coming up before? I was reading while I was sitting down listening to the Leader of the Opposition, 'When members have been called in preparatory to a division, no further debate is to be permitted.' So I would assume that the silent interpretation put on that has been that no further debate is to be permitted, hence

all debate that occurs is not permitted, so it is not appropriate or within the rules and therefore only the debate that is within the rules gets in the Hansard, I guess.

MR. NEARY:

But the House is sitting.

MR. SIMMS:

The House is in a state of suspension.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Just let me finish. That is what I would think, that is where it is comes from, the absence of having it there.

Now, let me just go on further. All I am saying is that would seem to be the reason for the gaps? But I think the point is valid and I think we should, I concur with the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barry) and with the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary), just take a look at it either in Beauchesne or May and the precedents in other places to see what happens in Division when this kind of a situation occurs. Because it is an important point in the sense that there may be incidents or discussion or debate or whatever that comes about which may be very critical to the whole piece of business and it could be on a very important matter. I do not know. All I am saying is I can understand why there is a gap because you could read it that way, 'no further debate is permitted', therefore any debate that goes on was debate that was not permitted, therefore it is not in accordance with the rules, therefore how can it go in Hansard? I can see how you can get to that conclusion and could get to that gap, but by the same token I think there is a good

point on the other side and I would concur perhaps we should look at it in a bit more detail.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

To the point raised, first let me say that there is no intention on the part of the Chair to delete anything from Hansard. It was done based on Standing Order 82 (a) that officially the debate did not take place and therefore maybe should not be put in Hansard. I will certainly take it under advisement and do some research on it and make a ruling and let hon. members know just as soon as possible.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Order 27, Bill No. 59.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order 27, Bill No. 59.

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act To Amend The Newfoundland Human Rights Code." (Bill No. 59).

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Mr. Speaker, I informed hon. members yesterday in giving Notice of Motion what the thrust of this amendment of this bill is, that it is an amendment to the Human Rights Code with respect to mental disability. As I pointed out, during the past few years there have been a number of amendments to the Human Rights Code, in 1974 excluding discrimination based on marital status and in 1981 there

was a further amendment to prohibit discrimination based on physical disability and then there were further amendments in 1983 to prohibit harassment and to allow the Human Rights Commission to approve affirmative action programmes for disadvantaged groups in our society.

So, the result of this amendment will be that after Royal assent - and I point out that it will come into affect not on proclamation but immediately, immediately in the sense that it is only on Royal assent the bill can come into operation - upon Royal assent it will be contrary to the Newfoundland Human Rights Code, which is a statute of the Province, to discriminate with respect to mental disability in any of the areas covered by the code, and those areas include, most importantly, fair employment practices and fair occupation practices, also with respect to harassment, also with respect to affirmative action programmes and also with respect to the prohibition in terms of publications which would discriminate against people in these various categories.

As the Human Rights Code now stands it is contrary to the Code to discriminate against a person in any of those areas, in fair employment practices, in residential practices and the others - I will not name them all up each time - to discriminate against a person on the grounds of race, religion, religious creed, sex, marital status, physical disability, political opinion, colour or ethnic, national or social origin of the people or the class of persons. To that will be added 'mental disability'. So it will be contrary to the code to

discriminate against a person in terms of fair employment practices, in terms of fair occupation practices and the other areas because of mental disability.

MR. TULK:

What about physical disability?

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Physical disability was covered several years ago. It was covered in the 1980s, a few years ago. Physical disability was also a proscribed ground for discrimination.

Newfoundland will be the fourth province in which mental disability enters into the code as it does in Ontario, Manitoba and British Columbia. I have not had immediate access to the Quebec Code, I do not know, but in, if you wish, the common law jurisdictions, Ontario, Manitoba and British Columbia. Of course, mental disability is included in the Charter of Rights with respect to prohibition of discrimination which comes into effect April 17, I believe. This, as the hon. members will see, and the bill itself is quite a small one, is very important, I think, in its effects, in its consequences, in two ways; both in real terms of prohibiting discrimination where it exists, in that respect, and I think also for want of a better term what I will call its normative value. In other words, law statutes, human rights codes, law in that kind of an area should also set norms, values, objectives, goals, something to be strived for. So both in its normative value which is something similar, I suppose, to its educational value, in that respect but also in its real applicable respect as well, because it will make such discrimination not only

unintelligent, ill-informed, anti-social, irresponsible, insensitive and whatever else one can say about it, which it has always been - intelligent people do not need an amendment to the Human Rights Code to know that discrimination based on grounds of mental disability any more than based on grounds of religion or sex or whatever is insensitive, is anti-social, is frequently irresponsible, is uninformed, is a number of things - but it will also make discrimination illegal. I suppose that is the value of law, that it not only sets standards of norms and has an educational value but it also has teeth, it can be implemented. That is what the affect of this amendment will be. In general, of course, the rest of the bill deals with, the procedures, and the procedures are the same for all grounds of discrimination. Whether it be on grounds of marital status or sex or physical disability or mental disability, the procedures are the same, they are there, and there is no need really to go into that because the whole and exclusive thrust of this bill is to include mental disability. We have put in definitions of metal disability, we have examined the existing legislation, and there can always be two sides to an argument, or frequently many more than two sides. You know, some people say do not put in any definition at all, and I am inclined to think that that is too open-ended especially here where we are breaking new ground, so we have put in definitions and we have based our definitions on studies which have been undertaken in Ontario. And mental disability, as hon. members will see in the bill, is defined as "(i) a condition of mental retardation or

impairment, (ii) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language, (iii) a mental disorder." I think that three is quite all-inclusive, because if you try to define in an exclusive manner then you are hardly ever going to identify obviously all of the aspects of something and that is the reason that we, I think quite wisely, have in a quite general category as well. But in that we have made use of research and the study and terminology which is used in the Ontario code in terms of our definition.

I am not sure that there is a great deal more that I can say about it. The government is very pleased to introduce this legislation, it is very pleased to have what I understand will be the unanimous support of the House in this. We frequently in this House pass laws which have enormous effect in terms of finances or sometimes in terms of industrial developments, of intergovernmental agreements, of various things. But it is not too frequently that we have the opportunity to bring in legislation, any of us, and I do not mean bring in in the sense of a government minister, it is not very often, as legislators, if you wish, we have the opportunity to put pass laws which, I think, have such a high ethnical value and which can have an immediate and beneficial and progressive and enlightened affect not only on the people that it is meant to aid but also on society in general. To a very large extent I think one can judge the value of a society by the sensitivity it displays toward its less fortunate members. I think that is as good a definition of civilization as any other. And

that gives all of us an opportunity, the support of this legislation if you wish, to enhance the civilization of this Province and the people therein and the norms and standards and judgements and mental attitudes we bring to bear. So I am very pleased to introduce this bill. As I say, the effect of it will be that not only will discrimination with respect to the mentally disabled be insensitive, ill-informed, and all of those things, it has always been that, but it will now be illegal and that law enforceable.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for us on this side to support the legislation proposed by government in this instance. The member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren) on behalf of caucus initially raised this matter in a question to the Minister of Education (Ms Verge) and the minister passed it over to the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ottenheimer), who was not here on that particular day, I do not believe. We are pleased to see the government act to amend the Newfoundland Human Rights Code to prevent discrimination - it may not be prevented but it will be illegal if it happens now - to prohibit discrimination on the grounds of mental disability. Mr. Speaker, if we go back in history and we look at the situation with respect to certain physical diseases, for example, leprosy, for centuries, I guess for millenia, and until very recent times the unfortunate suffers of that disease were shunned by their fellow human beings to a large extent because they appeared different, they were so obviously

different. There are a lot of people in the world ill with different types of diseases, but there was a fear created by the appearance of these individuals and they were shunned, they had to go around ringing a bell to alert people that they were coming. Epilepsy, Mr. Speaker, again until recent years, very recent years, those suffering from epilepsy were also regarded as people who were so different that they had to be prevented from employment in certain areas and were discriminated against, that is the only word that can be used, by their fellow human beings. Now, again, there was a matter, Mr. Speaker, because of a fear that we all have that is engendered by the sight of an individual losing control. In the case of epilepsy, Mr. Speaker, it is a loss of control that often is not very threatening in that there is an inability to be harmful to another individual. The real concern often is harm to the person suffering from the disease itself. But it was only through education, Mr. Speaker, that the suffers of these types of diseases lost the stigma of the pariah, the person who should be shunned and removed from human company. Now today we have the same problem with respect to the mentally ill. The notion of mental illness still, Mr. Speaker, causes a certain fear to develop because of the notion of an individual losing control, not being responsible for his actions. And, Mr. Speaker, let us be realistic, there are times when we do have harm being suffered by some people at the hands of another who is mentally ill. Mr. Speaker, the answer to this, however, is not for us to put aside the treatment of the mentally ill, it is not for us to make it more difficult for the

mentally ill to adjust to society after they have been treated, it is not for us, Mr. Speaker, to help the stigma continue which is now attached to a person who is mentally ill; on the contrary, Mr. Speaker, the way to avoid harm to society, the way to avoid incidents where another person is harmed by the actions of an unfortunate human being who suffers from a mental illness is to remove the stigma that is attached to somebody who seeks help, remove the notion that because a person goes to a doctor for a mental as opposed to a physical illness, that somehow from then on there is something wrong with him. Now, Mr. Speaker, we have seen this raised in the course of political campaigns in the United States, I believe if not the last the second last presidential campaign. We had the medical record of an individual being raised. It was not Muskie, but one of the Democratic presidential candidates.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Was it Wallace?

MR. BARRY:

No, it was not Wallace. It was one of the Democratic presidential candidates. He had had treatment for a mental disorder, or disease -

MR. TULK:

That was a few years ago.

MR. BARRY:

That was a few years ago. And, Mr. Speaker, that was an issue that was thrown up against him in the course of the campaign. I think it was the vice-presidential candidate actually.

MR. TULK:

No, it was not, he was running for president.

MR. BARRY:

Was it president? That was thrown up against him in the course of the political campaign. Now, Mr. Speaker, if we keep this notion that somehow this stigma will continue to attach to any person who seeks treatment for mental illness, the natural result is that there will be many individuals going around who should have treatment, whose condition is deteriorating, who are coming closer and closer to the point where they actually may be harmful to other members of society, as well as possibly to themselves. Now, Mr. Speaker, the answer is to get rid of that stigma, to encourage people, the general public, to take the same attitude towards the mentally ill as they would towards the physically ill.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that will encourage people to seek help earlier, it will encourage their families to have them helped earlier than is often now the case. Because the individual, or his or her family, is often concerned about the fact that the person is going to have to bear a continuing stigma during his lifetime if he is recognized as a person who has had to be treated for a mental illness.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we should not, I would submit, become too self-righteous here in this House either in condemning the people of Amherst Heights for their opposition. We could hope that all of us could be more enlightened and all of us could be more willing to accept certain risks, but we have to recognize, Mr. Speaker, that that fear still exists in society and that we all have a lot of work to do to educate in order to make sure that

we get rid of this notion that a person who has been mentally ill, and has been treated, and whom the doctors have indicated are suited now to get back into society, that somehow they should be treated differently than other people.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that sometimes people are released from mental hospitals who may still be a threat or a harm to society, but I would submit to Your Honour that the risk of that is no greater than the risk of there being a violent injury done, or a fatality in the course of a domestic dispute. I submit that the risk, Mr. Speaker, of a person from this transitional home for patients from a mental hospital, the risk of their being a threat to the people, whether it be in Amherst Heights or whatever street they are located on, the risk is no greater than the normal risk that exists in society of somebody, whether for a mental illness or for an unacceptable uncontrollable rage, in the heat of an argument, a fist fight on the street, a domestic dispute in his own kitchen, Mr. Speaker, if you look at the statistics you find that most injuries, most violent crimes involving serious injury and fatality occur between people who are very close to each other, either close friends or family in many cases.

But, Mr. Speaker, I have sympathy for the people on Amherst Heights. I disagree with the approach that they took but I can understand the concern that they have that somehow their children might be at risk from the fact that they have this home located in their neighbourhood.

Now I do not believe that that would be the case. I do not believe

that there would be any unacceptable risk there. And I think that is the value of legislation such as this that all we are doing is starting a process of education, starting a process of having society look at the mentally ill in a new light and it is not something that is going to change overnight. It is not an attitude that is going to change overnight. But we have to try and change that attitude that looks upon the person who has been mentally ill and treated as somebody who is suspect and is to be feared and is to be discriminated against and kept away from the opportunities for public housing, employment and so forth that is available to the rest of society.

On one technical point - the minister is not here but I will raise it in the hope he is listening - mental disability is defined as including a mental disorder. Mental disorder is fairly broad. Maybe we resolve this at the Committee of the Whole stage and get the opinion of the minister as to whether it might mean that a person who is mentally ill but not yet treated, whether it would involve or entail discrimination for a person to avoid giving access in employment or in private or public housing to an individual who in fact is suffering from a mental disorder and needs treatment. It seems to me that that would not be the case, that it would not be discrimination for a person to act reasonably in a situation where the protection of his property or his person or his family would be required, that the test would be what would be reasonable for the ordinary person in such a circumstance.

But overall, Mr. Speaker, this is a bill that I believe is a good step forward. It is a bill that will have, I hope, an educational function, and will help to get rid of this stigma that now attaches to those unfortunate people who have had a mental illness and have had to be treated and who are now back on the road to recovery but who unfortunately still often bear the stigma for many years after the actual treatment.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

The hon. member for Kilbride.

MR. AYLWARD:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to have just a few brief words on this Bill No. 59, our amendment to The Newfoundland Human Rights Code. I certainly am wholeheartedly in favour of this amendment. In my own experience on this matter I consider myself to be rather fortunate in that during my upbringing I was fortunate enough to have a parent, my father as it happened, who worked at Waterford Hospital for approximately forty years. I have known many patients at the Waterford Hospital who visited our home very frequently and the fear, I guess, of the unknown was removed from my knowledge of these people. Persons who happened to be friends of my father, who was at the Waterford Hospital, some were patients, some of them were, some of them were not, but they visited our home, shared our meals and it helped me in understanding some of the problems that they do have.

We have shared vacations, pretty well everything with patients of Waterford Hospital. I think the main suppose, the instigation or what happened to Amherst Heights

in St. John's a couple of weeks ago cannot be blamed on the people from Amherst Heights. It should be blamed more or less on the lack of understanding of the situation.

I would make a small recommendation, which is mostly the reason why I did want to speak on this, to the people who work with patients from Waterford Hospital or anyone who has a mental disorder sometime during their life, and the people who are proposing the Transition House for somewhere in the city, the recommendation that I would like to make to them is rather than go to a municipality or someone for permission to open a Transition House in any area, that they spend some time before making application in trying to educate the people, the neighbours in that neighbourhood as to how the home would operate and what type of people would be living in this home.

If there has been some PR work done on Amherst Heights, I would say that this situation of a week or so ago most likely would not have happened. People were afraid of the unknown. Had they been informed of what was going to happen in this Transition House, I am sure that most, the majority and probably all of the people in that area would have accepted the Transition House as an asset to their neighbourhood rather than something that they were not willing to have there.

From my own personal experience once again, in my own neighbourhood there is a boarding home and ex-patients from the Waterford Hospital living there. There was no controversy in these

people moving into our neighbourhood. There was not any specific application for a Transition Home, but it is just an accepted part of life that people, once they spend sometime in any institution, once they are cured, they need to have some place to live. If these people had been in the Health Sciences Centre for a heart attack or for some physical disease, there would be no problem for them to move into a neighbourhood. But the fact that they come from psychiatric care or have suffered a psychiatric problem seems to instill some fear of the unknown into people.

But I am sure if the Committee who wanted this Transition House, or anyone working in the mental health area were to have some public PR work done in any neighbourhood where they wish to go, just to inform the people of what is going to happen, I do not think there would be any great problem in the future from any neighbourhoods. That is generally all I would like to say. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to say that I am going to support this bill. I am going to support the amendment to The Newfoundland Human Rights Code. I think that anybody with half a conscience at all would have to support this bill.

Let me talk for a moment about the timing of the bill. I heard a point of view being expressed this morning publicly that all the provinces of Canada were in the process of making recommendations to the Government of Canada and to

the Parliament of Canada for amendments to the new Canadian Constitution. And this amendment that we now have before us, was probably in the pipeline anyway, and the administration in their wisdom thought it would be very timely to introduce the bill in the House at this particular time because of what happened at City Hall and the decision on Amherst Heights.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that was an unfortunate situation indeed very unfortunate. Mr. Speaker, we all profess to be broad-minded, we all contend that we are not bigotted or not prejudice in any way. You know, when people are put to the test they do some pretty desperate things. It has happened before, it could happen again. It is happening in other provinces of Canada that where mental defectives, ex-psychiatric people are being put out into the community, they are having problems in some towns and cities on the Mainland as well as here in this Province. It is a very delicate matter. It is one that I am not going to go into great detail on now except to say this, that it is a good programme. It is an excellent programme. I cannot find words sufficient to describe the way that I feel about this programme. It is excellent and that is about the best word I could use, I suppose. It is an excellent programme and all those who are developing that programme should be commended and should be congratulated. And I want to congratulate all those who are playing such a major role in developing the transitional housing programme, especially the Transitional Housing Association, Mr. Speaker, who have taken the lead, are right up in the forefront developing, pioneering

really, what they are doing is pioneering, although the home care programme for ex-psychiatric people has been around for some time in this Province, ten or fifteen years. I believe we have one of the best home care programmes in the whole of Canada. The hon. gentleman there opposite responsible for this programme should take pride in that fact. And I realize there are problems with the programme, too.

Now, Mr. Speaker, apart from congratulating those who are taking the initiative, those who are on the firing line, those who are developing and pioneering the care of ex-psychiatric people, apart from congratulating these people for yeoman service, I also want to congratulate all those people who have opened up their homes to the care of ex-psychiatric people, people who have at one time or another been patients at the Waterford Hospital or at some other hospital and who still need care. That is one area, by the way, where I have to commend the present Minister of Social Services (Mr. Hickey) and, I suppose, to a large degree, the Minister of Health (Dr. Twomey), for this programme.

MR. BUTT:

I cannot agree with you.

MR. NEARY:

You cannot agree with me? Why?

MR. BUTT:

We have a lot of those homes in my district.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman says he cannot agree with me - dissentation in the ranks. The hon. gentleman drew my attention to

Conception Bay South. Probably there are more homes for psychiatric care in Conception Bay South than in various other parts of the Province. I am not going to get into that, Mr. Speaker, I will leave that for somebody else to debate. The fact of the matter is that people, whether they be in Conception Bay South or in other communities, have opened up their homes to the Waterford Hospital and to the other hospitals and to the Department of Social Services and the Department of Health, and I believe that the ex-psychiatric patients are being very well cared for today. Now, the programme is not perfect. There are a few problems and I will mention one or two, Mr. Speaker. The hon. gentleman just reminded me of one, that you seem to have a heavy concentration of such homes in Conception Bay South from, say, the overpass to Holyrood. But, in other parts of the Province, I have a feeling that the programme has not been all that well accepted, that people do not understand the programme, that there needs to be an educational programme to indoctrinate people in other parts of the Province to accept these people into their homes, to open up their homes for the care of mentally defective and ex-psychiatric people.

Now, the question we have to ask ourselves, I guess, is this, Mr. Speaker: Are these people now accepted by the Newfoundland and Labrador society? Are they accepted by society generally? Well, I asked the question and I will attempt to answer it. In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, we have made a great deal of progress. The people of Conception Bay South, to whom my hon. colleague referred, are to be commended for the way they have accepted a large number

of these people in their community. So I would say that we have made a great deal of progress, but, Mr. Speaker, we have a long way to go yet. When people are put to the test, Mr. Speaker, then you run up against the problem, and we saw that happen in the case of Amherst Heights. For instance, let me ask this House, Are these people accepted by employers in this Province? Now, remember, Mr. Speaker, that these people, former patients of the Waterford Hospital - or maybe they were not even patients, maybe they were out-patients. Let me ask hon. gentlemen if, in their hearts, they feel that these people are accepted by employers in this Province? Is it easy for them to get a job? Now, I realize that we are into a period of high unemployment in this Province and, of course, that makes matters worse. Can they compete for jobs? Are they properly trained? Are they adequately trained? Not properly trained, that is not the right word, are they adequately trained to accept employment? Is there really any attempt being made at training them for suitable employment or is the funding not available? The Minister of Education (Ms Verge) should play a prominent role in that regard, Mr. Speaker. It is one thing to say that these people can attend vocational school or the College of Trades or the university, for that matter, or any other educational facility, but can they go into a normal class? Can they go in for upgrading with other people? Will they be accepted? Will they feel inferior? Will they be laughed at? Will people poke fun at them? Will they feel shy about entering these classes? I believe, Mr. Speaker, that is an area that we have to take a look

at. These people have been released from the hospital. I suppose, in pretty well every case, they are still under medication. They are put out in homes and in society to live a normal life. They can vote the same as everybody else. For all practical purposes, they are now free to do as everybody else does in a free society. They are free to do it, but can they do it, Mr. Speaker? That is the question I ask. Can they do it? Will employers accept these people? Can they compete when they are looking for jobs?

Just to show you how sometimes prejudice comes out in people, I employed a couple of these people one time and I paid them a living wage. The hon. the minister knows that I could have, if I had wanted to, paid them the minimum requirements under the regulations, whatever that is, but I paid them the full amount, I paid them the living wage, and I have the documents to prove it. I was entitled to hire them the same as anybody else in society. But I remember, on a number of occasions, the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Young) making a sarcastic crack across the House about my employing these people when I was building a house. And, Mr. Speaker, what defence does a member have against that kind sarcasm and that kind of innuendo?

Anybody can hire these people, but, Mr. Speaker, I do not think that everybody is inclined to do it, and that is one point that I would like to make concerning the rehabilitation and the employment of these people. It is a problem. It is one that I feel has not sufficiently been addressed although, as I say, I have to commend the Minister of

Social Services (Mr. Hickey). If there is one thing we agree on, it is the way he has handled the home care programme, both for his own clients and for the ex-psychiatric people. I have to give him credit for that. I do not know if the programme was there when I was minister or not, but the rates have substantially increased. I suppose one could argue that some of the owners of these establishments are doing it for the money, I suppose that could be argued, but I think the minister will have to agree that the people are being better cared for today than they were previously and are being better cared for than I suppose if they were in an institution. I think that is a fair statement, Mr. Speaker, but that is not to say that there are no problems and there may be some problem with allowances for these people. I believe these people, at least when I was there, when we had people in boarding homes, that they received a minimum allowance. I do not know what it is now. I believe it was only \$35 a month or something when I was there.

MR. HICKEY:
\$65.

MR. NEARY:
The minister says it is \$65. Well, \$65 to live a normal life, when you go out into the world, you go back into society it is certainly not very much. Anybody who smokes it would not keep them in cigarettes, I suppose. That is something the hon. gentleman should take a look at. These people have, I presume, are living a normal life just like you and me, they have to provide themselves with razor blades and cigarettes and tobacco, they have to clothe themselves and they have

to buy deodorants and after-shave and all that sort of thing, so I would hope that that situation will change in the foreseeable future because the allowances are too low. They are too low. They have increased, granted, there is progress being made, but they are too low. And, Mr. Speaker, I believe these are the only points that I want to make in connection with the programme itself. My main point had to do with employment of these people, with training for these people. I know the training opportunities are there. I know that. I know, for instance, in the case of Conception Bay South that in Seal Cove there is a vocational school and there is the College of Trades, but really, I mean when you look at the problem, is it there? That is the question I ask, is it there or is it not there? I would imagine that a lot of these people have very low qualifications and very little education so I would think there would have to be an awful lot of upgrading. But if the programme is going to be successful, if the goals and objectives are going to be accomplished, then I believe first of all there has to be an education programme. Maybe through our debate today the word might go out that the employers in the Province have to accept these people. The training institutes and the educational institutes and schools and colleges have to zero in on a programme that will be of benefit to these people. And I think their allowances will have to be looked at. As I say, \$65 a month is hardly enough. I agree that the situation has improved, but it is still not enough. For instance, if you are living in Bay Bulls, bus fare in and out of the city, or if you want to go to a movie or to a concert or if you

smoke, certainly it is not enough, Mr. Speaker, so I do not think the goals and objectives -

MR. TULK:

Do you not agree that he should see that they get more?

MR. NEARY:

That is what I am saying.

MR. TULK:

But the minister should see they get more.

MR. NEARY:

Oh yes. Mr. Speaker, the programme is a good one. It is an excellent programme. We have made a lot of progress. We have a long way to go but we are getting there. And perhaps now as a result of the controversy over Amherst Heights that people in this Province may -

MR. TULK:

It could be a lighthouse.

MR. NEARY:

It could be a lighthouse as my hon. friend said. And that is a good expression, it could beam out a message, a light to the people in this Province, it could be the lighthouse whereby the people will see that there is a big problem in looking after and caring for these people and that if there are any barriers in the way that they have to be smashed and broken down, the barriers have to be removed. When the doctor, the psychiatrist, releases these people to go back in society they have every right under the Constitution of Canada, under the Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Code, to enjoy life just the same as you and I, and any obstruction or any barriers in the way should be broken down and should be removed.

MR. CARTER:

The protector of human rights.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, maybe I am.

MR. TULK:

The hon. gentleman from St. John's North (Mr. Carter) is so bigoted he cannot even see the truth.

MR. NEARY:

We heard on the radio in the last couple of days that the city council who rejected Amherst Heights have now approved two houses on LeMarchant Road, so we were told by the mayor and members of the city council. But, Mr. Speaker, the problem is this, that the Transitional Housing Association say, I believe in the case of one that the cost is prohibitive and in the case of the other it is unsuitable. And the Transitional Housing Association do not want the two houses in the area that the city council is going to rezone and tell them that they can have. It is not up to the city council to determine or decide where these homes are going, that is a job for the professional people, the experts, the Transitional Housing Association, Mr. Speaker. What the city council is attempting to do is to foist two homes on LeMarchant Road onto the Transitional Housing Association. That is what they are attempting to do. And they are only wasting their time. It will not work, that is not the proper procedure, that is not the right way to do it.

So, Mr. Speaker, I hope that the city council will reconsider what they are doing. I know the Transitional Housing Association are desperately looking for homes in areas where the people will have access to ordinary, everyday

life, the same as everybody else. And I know that is a big problem. But there is no point in aggravating the situation by the city council saying, "Well, look, to salve our conscience, to smooth over our conscience and to try to get the heat off of us, we are going to give you two homes on LeMarchant Road" that the Transitional Housing Association say they do not want.

MR. TULK:

What a bunch of hypocrites.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, they are being a little bit hypocritical I think in that regard. They are now trying to smooth things over, get the heat off themselves for making themselves look like a crowd of what? What would you call them? I do not want to say they were prejudiced or bigoted or anything, that is not the word I am looking for.

MR. DINN:

Who? Who are you talking about?

MR. NEARY:

The city council. But, Mr. Speaker, what they do not realize is there comes a time in every man's elected life, or woman's life, there comes a time in every person's elected life when they have to vote according to the dictates of conscience. They have to vote sometimes on moral issues, on a matter of principle. That is what members of city council by voting against transitional house have thrown out the window. They threw their principles and their conscience out the window and they yielded to the temptation to get a vote, Mr. Speaker, that is what they did.

And I tell you I was somewhat hurt

and disappointed when I saw one of the ringleaders of that whole affair on television, a gentleman who stuffed the ballot boxes one time at the Waterford Hospital, I believe, and caused a strike.

My hon. colleague should not leave the House.

MR. FENWICK:

And so are you.

MR. NEARY:

Yes, and still am.

This former labour leader held himself up as the champion of the downtrodden, the deprived, the meek and the lame and the poor and the underprivileged, held himself up as all these things, and I had a lot of dealings with the gentleman when he was active in the labour movement. I believe it was since the hon. gentleman became Minister of Manpower (Mr. Dinn) that the ballot boxes were stuffed.

MR. DINN:

I do not want to comment on that.

MR. NEARY:

The hon. gentleman does not want to comment on it but I do because that made me so angry.

MR. TULK:

Are you chicken?

MR. DINN:

I am not going to attack people who cannot come into this House and defend themselves.

MR. HODDER:

It is indefensible.

MR. NEARY:

It is indefensible.

This former labour leader is now saying if you put these people

near my home the value of my property is going to go down. Mr. Speaker, I will say this, you will be surprised how people react when they are put to the test. But I tell you this, Mr. Speaker, I have had a fair exposure to a good many of these people and I would not hesitate to have them living in my back yard. Or, Mr. Speaker, the homes these people are living in, do the people who own these homes keep their children away from these people? These are family people who operate these homes. Do they hide their children away? No, Mr. Speaker, their children mix around with these people and so they should. I realize it is a very difficult subject, it is a very delicate topic. MR. DINN:

You are not finding it difficult.

MR. NEARY:

I am finding it difficult. My colleague and I know why I have to pick and chose my words. But, Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is I hope this will be a blessing in disguise.

MR. DINN:

The mayor might call you stupid again.

MR. NEARY:

Well, I do not care, he has called me that before. I have been scolded by the mayor before. But I hope, Mr. Speaker, that this is a blessing in disguise, that this will open people's eyes and let them see that there is a large problem, an enormous problem in our community in caring for people who have been unfortunate enough to have to undergo psychiatric care. There is a large problem and maybe as a result of all this controversy, maybe one or two persons or a dozen persons or a hundred or a thousand or a hundred

thousand may now have a guilty conscience and now start to accept these people as they should be accepted, as normal human beings. Mr. Speaker, it is not very often that I do this in this hon. House and if I do sort of praise somebody or say something nice about somebody I get accused then of wanting to cross the House - Mr. Speaker, I am a Liberal and it is not my nature to cross the House - but I do have to commend the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ottenheimer). Whether he was trying to make a little bit of political hay, whether it was timely or not, the fact of the matter is I congratulate him for introducing this amendment and I hope it will do the job. I hope there will be no legal wrangles develop as a result of this, no jurisdictional problems. Perhaps when the minister concludes second reading he can enlighten me in that regard. I hope it is straightforward, it will cut through all the red tape and that we will have no more foolish nonsense like we have had in the last couple of weeks in this Province when you want to put human beings out to live an ordinary life just like you and I.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):

Order, please! Before we continue with the debate, it being Thursday 5:00 o'clock I have to inform the House that we have three questions today for the Late Show. The first one is from the member for Bellevue (Mr. Callan), 'I am dissatisfied with the answer given by the Minister of Education (Ms Verge) regarding school tax authorities.' The second one is also from the member for Bellevue, 'I am dissatisfied with the answer given by the Premier regarding the future of the Come By Chance Hospital.' The third one is by

the hon. the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary), 'I am not satisfied with the answer to my question to the Premier re the trade mission to the Orient.'

The hon. Minister of Social Services.

MR. HICKEY:

Mr. Speaker, I want to make a few comments in support of this legislation. I first of all, Mr. Speaker, want to deal with a couple of things the member for LaPoile referred to. I can tell him that I can agree that the personal care allowance for those people in the Community Care Programme in licensed boarding homes certainly is not as much as we would like it to be. And I can tell him that the matter is presently being addressed and hopefully something will be done. I say hopefully because I have no authority, of course, to say it will. But certainly I am supportive of it and my colleagues are too and hopefully something will be done through the budgetary process to increase that. Let me say, Mr. Speaker, that there is a whole lot of issues that one can address in this amendment because it has far-reaching effects with regard to the disabled community. But the area of the mentally ill requires some attention and requires some comments in view of the fact that we have seen such a blatant disregard by the city council. I believe it is fair to say, Mr. Speaker, that a lot of eyes have been opened in this Province and especially in the city by the recent action of the city council. Whether they know it or not, it will live with them for as long as they are in public life because, Mr. Speaker, they have again, either unknowingly or unintentionally, discriminated

against a target population in the most blatant way that I have ever witnessed. Mr. Speaker, the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) touched on it and as far as I am concerned - as he has said, we do not find ourselves in agreement every day - he is just so right and so accurate when he talks about there comes a time when people in public life notwithstanding pressure groups, Mr. Speaker, are required and should deliver a decision based on principle and a decision based on the right reasons and not the wrong ones. I do not wish to single out the Mayor of St. John's any more than I have to, but because of the position he holds and because he has articulated council's position on this matter it requires some answers by someone. I certainly hope to provide a couple to him. He refers to the house on Amherst Heights as an institution, he refers to the proposed Transition House as an institution. I do not know how many children there were in the mayor's family but I do know this, Mr. Speaker, that he has sent a message out to many families in this Province where there were ten children or eight children, ten members of a family, and in so doing I am sure they will all be delighted to hear that as far as the Mayor of St. John's is concerned they grew up in an institution. I am sure that will be music to their ears. The mayor obviously does not know where he is coming from on this issue. The mayor obviously reacted to a situation which he found himself in by having failed to provide leadership when it was most required, to bring an enlightened approach to the disabled in this Province and especially in his city. He failed with his colleagues, all except one

councillor, councillor Osbourne, who provided the only bit of leadership in that issue, Mr. Speaker, by acknowledging the need for an enlightened approach, by acknowledging the need to recognize that here is a target group that requires an acknowledgement of their rights their rights being very basic, like yours and mine, including the right to live in any part of any community and to find their way back into society with the help of councils, people in leadership and all people to be rehabilitated back into the mainstream of society as opposed to a put down and a labelling in the most discriminatory way that ever I witnessed. The mayor, Mr. Speaker - just to finish the issue on His Worship - no later than yesterday, the people of the Province who watch television were treated to yet another mouthful when he said, 'The people who have reacted and criticized councils decision were acting in a stupid way.' Mr. Speaker, I suppose, those of us, therefore, who have made any pronouncements in support of the transition house and in criticism of the council are deemed to be stupid. If that is the case, Mr. Speaker, I have never been so proud in my life to be stupid because Mayor Murphy should realize an old, old saying, that it is a long, long road that does not have a turn. Mayor Murphy has not left this planet yet and if Mayor Murphy does not know people who suffered mental illness during his lifetime I would be astonished. So, Mr. Speaker, really what are we saying? We are saying that council had an opportunity to lead the way with an enlightened approach, acknowledging the needs of those people, but, Mr. Speaker, most importantly of all acknowledging

that those people are the same as you and I except having different needs, acknowledging that they have a right not only to receive treatment but to receive support from all levels and segments of society in their way back from an illness that can strike anyone. Mental illness, Mr. Speaker, any more than mental retardation, any more than physical disability, is not determined by class, is not confined to certain economic strata in terms of society, it is not based on the rich and the poor or the upper class and the lower class, it hits people in all groups, in all target populations. That is what is even more astounding when one finds the outburst, the so-called surprising statements coming from some of the residents of Amherst Heights. I do not wish to dwell on the residents of Amherst Heights. In fact, I have said publicly outside this chamber that I do not blame very much the people of Amherst Heights. It is a very natural reaction for residents who have been used to a very quiet, simple, residential area, not used to a transition house or a group home, that when they hear of it at first, not being as well informed as they might like to on the issue, react. Mr. Speaker, I suggest that not all the people of Amherst Heights, and I do want to say this as a matter of record because I think it deserves to be said of those people, not all the people of Amherst Heights are against this project, were against it or are against it now. Indeed, fewer are against it now because they are a little better informed on the issue. The transition board of directors, Mr. Speaker, made an application and requested approval in principle. That is a very key issue. Approval in principle simply means that they

would go on from there and provide details and in the process of that inform the residents of Amherst Heights as to precisely what they planned to put in that area of the city. And the council jumped and reacted to a group of citizens who, as I said, however, some people may not feel they were behaving normal, I happen to believe they were. I happen to believe that an ill-informed public will react and it may surprise you and I, Your Honour, but being realistic and if one acknowledges and makes allowances for the lack of being informed on the issue, it is quite understandable that they would react. So I do not have much criticism at all for those people. What I do find somewhat surprising is the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) mentioned Mr. Locking. I did an interview with Mr. Locking and I dealt with that. He should be well informed and even if he was not so well informed he should have continued the posture that he was so dedicated to as a labour leader, crisscrossing this Province, highlighting the rights of people and yet when it comes close to home he wishes and in fact sees to it that the rights of the mentally ill are denied them. Quite a change. Then there is also an old saying that also covers that and it goes something like this, 'The hell with you, Jack, I am all right.' So maybe it is understandable why Mr. Locking would take this approach now as opposed to the one that he was so well known for when he was head of the Newfoundland Association of Public Employees.

Mr. Speaker, something else that has got to be said Your Honour, is I am devoting most of my few minutes on this with the hope of

providing some education to the citizens of St. John's on the issue at hand and the issue which this legislation will cover.

The City Council of St. John's through the mayor yesterday outlined a new proposition namely two houses on LeMarchant Road. I want to say to the Council of St. John's and to the mayor in particular that it is not his place nor his councils to determine the policy and programmes that are to be made available to the mentally ill of this Province. That is not the council's role but that is the role they seem or appear to be taking on by saying to the transition house board of directors, 'You cannot develop a transition house in Amherst Heights, you are going to develop one on LeMarchant Road because that is the only area we are going to approve.' Mr. Speaker, let me address that. One of the key components to rehabilitation for those people is for them to have the opportunity to rub shoulders with people who live in a residential area to normalize their lives, having had a bout of mental illness, to the greatest extent possible and one is not going to achieve that, Mr. Speaker, if they are huddled in an area which is mostly commercial. Indeed, the setting of Amherst Heights happens to be an ideal environment for this kind of project.

Mr. Speaker, what is even more astounding and alarming - and the mayor did not mention this, of course - is there has been great hoopla about the fact that Amherst Heights is a quiet residential area in the city and that this institution, so-called by the mayor and the city, cannot go

there. The City of St. John's is not very mindful of its by-laws. I am not sure they know their by-laws, Mr. Speaker.

The City of St. John's is prepared to violate their own by-laws or stretch them in order to approve a transition house on LeMarchant Road because the zoning on LeMarchant Road does not permit a transition house or boarding house or a group home. But, Mr. Speaker, the way the city is going to get around that is they are going to give conditional approval under the heading of a home for violent individuals or individuals who have been associated with violence. In other words, Mr. Speaker, it was not bad enough that they turned down the transition house on Amherst Heights and Mayor Murphy went all over the place saying that he did not feel the fears of the people of Amherst Heights were well-founded, that those people were fine people and so on, and he kept saying all of that, but now he is prepared to approve two buildings lot on LeMarchant Road and the only way he can approve that in that area is by associating those people with people who have committed violent crime.

Mr. Speaker, those people we are talking about are not under that heading at all. There is a thorough screening that goes on before those people go into a transition house from the Waterford Hospital. Those are not people who have broken the law and committed acts of violence. They are people like you and I who have been stricken with mental illness. They are people like you and I who have the potential to be stricken with any kind of illness, mental illness just being one.

So, Mr. Speaker, the city in so doing has made a farce out of its whole position on this matter by holding up the zoning regulations and holding up what could go in to an area such as Amherst Heights, on the one hand, and then conveniently finding a way to get around it on LeMarchant Road so as to accommodate the Transition House Board of Directors, so as to get themselves out of a very touchy and very serious situation.

Mr. Speaker, let me say that my department will not consider funding a transition house on LeMarchant Road. And let me send that message to the Mayor which I am conveying to him in letter form. But let me send it to him through this House, Mr. Speaker. He and his council will not dictate the kind of programme that the Transition Board of Directors and my department will make available to the mentally ill. City Council will not dictate that. As the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) said it is the professionals who work with those people who have expertise in this area, who will determine that and nobody else. And we will not let the City of St. John's interfere and change that. If the City of St. John's persists for a few more days, Mr. Speaker, until this amendment, until this legislation becomes law, then let them, but I say it is sad that one has to wave a law in front of a leadership in this city in order to jolt them the reality that people should have the rights which are their's and which are enshrined in the Charter of Rights and which this Legislature is acting upon.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know where this issue ends insofar as the project that I have referred is concerned, but I do know it is a

sad way to educate the community on the issue of mental illness. I suppose, again as the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) mentioned, if anything flows from it that is positive it might very well be the informing of the public in a greater way of the attributes of the mentally ill as opposed to the negative aspect. And, Mr. Speaker, further to that it should be pointed out as well that whilst there have been some arguments that the Board of Directors of the Transition House should have gone into this area and totally informed the people and got the people all on side, Mr. Speaker, I have two minds about that. I agree that has to be done and should be done, because really there is a great argument to be made for acceptance of a target group in a community, because only with the help and support of those people who live around them whom they mix with will the true form of rehabilitation take root and prosper. And so there is a real argument made for that.

Mr. Speaker, I submit my department in its quest to deinstitutionalize, our citizens, because institutions have no place in the lives of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, no place except for treatment, except for cure for short periods of time, that whilst education and whilst getting people on side and promoting the cause, so to speak, is very important, I do not think there should be a prerequisite to get approval from a local government such as the City of St. John's. Because, Mr. Speaker, if that is the case then really what we are saying is that there is government in this city by pressure groups. In other words, go out and get everyone on side and we will approve anything, whatever you

want, how every crazy it might be, or however inappropriate it might be. I guess that gets back to the issue of one making a decision based on principle and not on expediency. Mr. Speaker, enough said with regards to the City of St. John's. If they have not learned the wrong of their ways from this exercise, then there is no such thing as teaching them. And it is a sad commentary that one has to even approach the issue of teaching a council that is elected by the people, to serve its people for the best interest and the general well-being of its people, not target groups per se. And there have been a few things said and a few comments made, Mr. Speaker, that I want to very quickly respond to concerning my own participation in this. I am involved in this issue not simply because of the Transition House, but because it gets right to the heart of a policy of this government that I very strongly support and had something to do with bringing about and that is the deinstitutionalization of our citizens, the providing of the opportunity for our citizens no matter what their stake in life be it mental illness, mental retardation, physical disability or anything else, that they be allowed to go back into society, back in the community and take their rightful place. Because the best work of rehabilitation is done at the community level and not at the institutional level.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, this issue is of such importance to me because it tends to violate everything that we try to do. We are in the process of closing Exon House and moving adult people who suffer mental retardation out into the community. Are we too conclude now that this city would

want all of those people housed in Donovans Industrial Park, as one resident suggested, or have them all on LeMarchant Road? Mr. Speaker, it should be pointed out that rural Newfoundland had led the way and the City of St. John's should take a lesson from some of the actions of rural Newfoundland and places outside of the city.

Let me give you one example, Your Honour, before I conclude. Conception Bay South, my colleague's district (Mr. Butt), has twenty-one homes housing 278 people who suffer from mental illness. And to those people who talk about property devaluation, Mr. Speaker, there is no property devaluation in Conception Bay South. In fact, the last time I checked, which was just last week, the indication was that property values continued to rise. So, Mr. Speaker, I think it is sufficient to say that the sooner this legislation is approved the better and the sooner the city comes to grips with its problem the better. And its problem is not this legislation, its problem is that it needs to take a more enlightened approach, a more enlightened view of the world they live in and get out from behind their high board fences that obviously house them when they make their decisions on matters such as this. There is a world out there, Mr. Speaker, and there are various target groups in the world. And the members of the city council, with the exception of Councillor Osbourne, have to live with those people the same as you and I. So, Mr. Speaker, it is a good day for me. I am very supportive of this legislation and it is with a great deal of pleasure that I support it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. HISCOCK:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):
The hon. the member for Eagle River.

MR. HISCOCK:
Mr. Speaker, this legislation is long overdue. The Mayor of St. John's asked why it was being brought in at this time. I feel that if were possible that I could delay this legislation by voting against it, then I would do so but, obviously, you cannot vote against a piece of motherhood legislation like this.

What we are seeing, in my opinion, is a publicity stunt of great magnitude by this government and it is nothing but platitudes. But the basic question has to be answered by all of us. It was not only the people of Amherst Heights who turned it down, there were others. The Minister of Social Services (Mr. Hickey) said, 'There is a world out there.' This piece of legislation was brought in yesterday and tabled today, which I think is rushing it. No matter how good a piece of legislation it is and how motherhood-oriented, it is still being rushed.

The minister, well-informed, said nothing in his speech, other than to criticize council, by way of informing the public and letting the people know there is a world out there for the mentally deficient. Do we all know that mental illness is a disease? Do we know how many are in hospitals, how many are admitted each year and what are the causes of their problems? Are there family problems, financial problems? How many of these people return to

their old jobs? How many are turned down because of having been mentally ill? Are there any job training programmes for them? What happens to their children?

I believe that the Minister of Education (Ms Verge) and the Minister of Health (Dr. Twomey) should be here listening to this. I would also expect the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Hickey), under whose responsibility this matter lies, to get up and educate us, not only this House, but the media and the general public, and not merely issue a press release and inform the Mayor of St. John's, 'I am sending you a letter, but you will hear a report on the evening news that I will bar any funding for a transition home on LeMarchant Road.' Another reason why, Mr. Speaker, one might withhold one's vote with respect to this piece legislation is whether or not this is being brought in as a matter of one-upmanship over the council?

MR. HICKEY:
Not at all!

MR. HISCOCK:
Not at all! Not at all! No, it could never be that way!

MR. HICKEY:
If they did not know this before, they were ill-informed so we had to hurry it.

MR. HISCOCK:
What has the minister done to inform the council, other than to criticize it and get involved in a battle? That is not going to do anything for the mentally disabled. Where are the commercials produced on television by the Department of Education and the Department of Social Services and the Department of Health?

What about the monthly \$65 payment brought up by the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary)? The minister now says that is under review. But if this incident had not come up, would it have been under review?

With respect to Conception Bay South, it is the area in which I grew up.

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

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):
On a point of order, the hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. HICKEY:
I am not going to try to disrupt the hon. gentleman, he was very courteous and quiet when I made my few remarks, but I just want to correct one thing just for record purposes. The review of personal care allowances was an issue which was discussed with my colleagues before the Amherst Heights issue ever arose.

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

MR. SPEAKER:
To that point of order, the hon. the member for Eagle River.

MR. HISCOCK:
I will probably retract what I said on that but, in the meantime, the question is always in one's mind when something like this is brought up.

MR. SPEAKER:
To that point of order. The hon. member has retracted his statement.

This being Thursday at 5:30 p.m., it is now time for the Late Show.

MR. HISCOCK:

When are we getting on to this again?

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):

The first question, which was presented to me this week, is a question for the Minister of Education (Ms Verge). I wonder would the member who presented it, the hon. the member for Bellevue (Mr. Callan), wish to put this on second? The minister might be here by that time.

MR. CALLAN:

It does not matter, it is fine with me.

MR. SPEAKER:

The question presented by the hon. the member for Bellevue for consideration is: 'I am dissatisfied with the answer given by the Premier regarding the future of the Come By Chance hospital.'

The hon. the member for Bellevue.

MR. CALLAN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, when I asked the Premier today if there was any circumstance or any set of circumstances under which the government would change its plan that was announced on February 27 of this year that the Come By Chance Hospital would close once Clarendville came onstream. When I asked the Premier that question today, I tried and failed to get a transcript of the Premier's rather lengthy answer, but in essence I think what the Premier said, to boil it down to one simple word, was no. There is no circumstance and neither is there any set of circumstances under which the Premier and his administration will change their mind about

retaining the Come By Chance Hospital. In spite of many factors, Mr. Speaker, in spite of the arguments put forward by the concerned citizens, in spite of public meetings being held in Arnold's Cove, and of course in spite of the fact that the Premier himself during the the by-election campaign of 1981 said that it would never close as long as he was Premier, Come By Chance Hospital will close. But more importantly than that, Mr. Speaker, the Premier maintains that stand in spite of the fact that now the impact study that has been conducted by Mobil Oil indicates that Come By Chance, the facility that now is occupied by the \$20 million wharf and the storage tanks and the refinery that has been shut down since 1976, in spite of the fact that there is every evidence to point to the fact that that facility, that site, will be one of the sites in this Province chosen in connection with the offshore oil development for the manufacture and fabrication of platforms associated with the offshore. And, Mr. Speaker, of course, naturally if there is going to be 300 or 400 or 500 men and women employed there in construction type activity, that should point to the additional need to keep the hospital as is.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps I can quote from Dr. Fowlow's update that he sent to the Arnold's Cove Town Council. I believe these comments, Mr. Speaker, are the comments for which Dr. Fowlow was told, "You have no choice but to hand in your resignation." Dr. Fowlow says, "We are a rural society in Newfoundland and there is a place for a rural health centre in our area as we have at Come By Chance. To say we do not

need in-patient beds is wishful thinking. Government seems to feel people can be cared for at home. I submit to you that unless and until there are sufficient funds available to set up community support professionals and groups in every rural community in this Province, the cheapest and the best alternative is a central grouping of professionals with in-patient care facilities." He is describing the Come By Chance Hospital.

Mr. Speaker, the Come By Chance Hospital is located just off the TCH on the Isthmus of Avalon, where you can look across and see Placentia Bay and Trinity Bay on the other side. In our winter weather, and with our lack of public transportation it seems logical and sensible that people have such a facility as near as possible. Walwyn Cottage Hospital, Come By Chance, fulfills this role well for the people of the immediate Isthmus of Avalon area. For the people of Clarenville, Mr. Speaker, and Random Island, the new hospital in Clarenville will do the same as the Come By Chance has been doing, and should continue to do for the people in that area, Fair Haven, Little Harbour, Southern Harbour, Arnold's Cove, Chance Cove, and of course down the Burin Peninsula to Bay L'Argent and Swift Current and all these areas, and Southwest Arm.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Jeffrey Fowles says, "I feel, gentlemen, that unless the Walwyn Cottage Hospital, Come By Chance, remains open, the people of this immediate area, already disinherited by resettlement, denied a livelihood by the promised refinery, and denied any infusion of government funds or even government interest by years of apparent willful

neglect, will again be victimized."

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):
Order, please!

The hon. member's time has expired.

MR. CALLAN:
So that, Mr. Speaker, is my five minutes.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health (Dr. Twomey) has made the position on the Come By Chance Hospital clear to the delegation who came in here from that area a couple of days ago, and I made the position clear again today, that in our considered opinion we cannot foresee any circumstance where the decision would be changed. And furthermore, and more important as I said in my answer today in Question Period, the long and short of it is, CBC television notwithstanding -

MR. CALLAN:
What have you got against CBC?

PREMIER PECKFORD:
CBC television, not CBC radio.

MR. CALLAN:
You are not only against CBC television, you are against the other CBC, Come By Chance.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
I am for Come By Chance and Sunnyside and all the other areas and that is what I wanted to say, Mr. Speaker, because we are not satisfied with the level of health care being provided to the people of that area now. That is why we are building a \$15 million facility in Clarenville to service that area, to have the people in

Come By Chance and Sunnyside get better health care, have a better facility, than they have now. At the same time, in appreciation that for a long period of time they have had a medical facility we will keep the medical clinic open there, the doctors can be there, and there will be X-ray and lab facilities kept there as they are there now, and a couple of extra beds in cases of emergency. But we have got to be fair to all parts of this Province, and we are being more than fair to the people of Come By Chance and Sunnyside, and that area, more than fair. We are going to spend more money now than we have ever spent before in that area for health care services to give the whole area a better health care delivery system with a higher level of health care than they have now because we will be able to attract specialists and get more sophisticated diagnostic machines and so on into that larger, bigger facility in Clarenville. So that is what we are trying to do. We have to be fair to the people of Clarenville and Shoal Harbour as well as Come By Chance and Sunnyside. What about the people of Bay d'Espoir who only have a clinic? The people of St. Alban's and Milltown and all that area have only got a clinic, all they have is a clinic and they have to drive all the way to Grand Falls to hospital. I mean let us face it, we have to be fair.

So as we regionalize health care service, as long as the experts in Health say we are not diminishing health care or somehow sacrificing the people of Come By Chance or Sunnyside or the area there, or Arnold's Cove or other places, or Norman's Cove or whatever, you know, I mean that is the situation. And we are being more

than fair. We are upgrading health care facilities in that area. I can defend that to the death, Mr. Speaker, and as a matter of fact I do not think it is fair for the hon. member to take the approach he has taken. He has taken a very parochial approach to health care in this Province. If we were to do what the hon. member is suggesting we would have a hospital in almost every community in Newfoundland, that is what we would have. In any case the decision is a good decision. It is supported by the health care professionals. We are going to improve the health care service in that area. The operating costs at Come By Chance, whatever it is per year, is going to be increased many, many times over by the larger facility in Clarenville which will do a better job in serving all of the people in the area, not just Come By Chance and Sunnyside and area, but also Clarenville, Shoal Harbour, Northwest Arm and Southwest Arm and so on. For example, CBC television the other day were quick to have one of the members of the delegation say, "This is a political decision, they are taking it out of a Liberal district and putting it in a PC district." How about the first hospital in the Hospital Care Programme which went to LaPoile district, in the then Leader of the Opposition's (Mr. Neary) district.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD:

So when CBC television does a story, why do they not balance it off and give the facts of the matter? We cannot trust the member for Bellevue (Mr. Callan) to do it but surely we can trust a

so-called objective television service in the Province, that we are paying money to support, to give all the facts of it.

The truth of the matter is, and everybody knows it, the truth of the matter is that there is going to be a better health care delivery system in that area after Clarendville opens than before. Everybody knows that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

Question number two for debate is the hon. member for Bellevue (Mr. Callan) and the Minister of Education a question concerning the school tax authorities.

The hon. member for Bellevue.

MR. CALLAN:

Mr. Speaker, I was trying to get three questions on. But anyway, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Education, the lady member of Education since there are two, as I was saying on the Question Period, I think it was Friday past, on April 13, I paid my school tax bill, \$90, to the Trinity - Placentia School Tax Authority and I produce this as exhibit number one in this court case, Mr. Speaker. It was deposited to the account of the Trinity - Conception School Tax Authority on April 18. I received a little cheque from the government, exhibit two, on May 1, and here I was, my wages were attached, for \$10 school tax. I talked to the Department of Finance and I talked to the School Tax Authority in Conception Bay and of course, lo and behold, on June 12, the same day that the minister made his infamous road statement, another cheque from the

government, again wages attached for \$10 school tax. I received my refund on August 23, 1984 - my daughter's birthday actually - on August 23, I received my refund. Mr. Speaker, these two instances, number one, the fact that my wages were attached when I had already paid it and, number two, the lateness of getting my refund, it took two months, these are two prime examples of the bureaucracy, the inefficiency and the fact that most of the people who work trying to run these school tax authorities apparently do not know what they are doing. Mr. Speaker, I would say the money that is used to try and run these offices leaves very little.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when I asked the Minister of Education (Ms Verge) some questions about this, I was also concerned about people on fixed incomes, people who earn \$6,000, \$7,000, \$8,000, \$9,000 and 10,000 a year. During the course of a year I have dozens upon dozens of phone calls from people who tell me, 'You know, I do not think I should have to pay this. I was working with the Department of Highways, I got injured, now I am getting a pension and here I have to pay this school tax even though I did not have any children' or 'my children are reared up and gone away and I am still paying school taxes.' Mr. Speaker, I asked the Minister of Education would she and the government she is a part of not consider raising the ceiling. Right now if you earn \$6,000 a year or over you are liable for payment of this school tax. I ask the Minister of Education why not raise the ceiling to probably \$12,000 or \$15,000 so that the people who are on fixed income and low income will not be burdened with these bills. Mr. Speaker,

the bureaucracy that exists! If I had ten or fifteen minutes I could cite dozens of examples. A young fellow, for example, who gets a job on a LIP programme in the month of December - he has not earned a copper before in his life - he starts in December with a LIP programme through the town council and his wage, his first cheque is attached even though anybody with any common sense will know that it is impossible for him to earn \$6,000 a year if he went to work on a LIP programme in December and the year is almost up. So why that sort of bureaucracy? If you phone the tax authority they will say, 'Well, in the New Year all he has to do is come over to our offices and produce his slips and so on and we will refund his money.' But he should not have to pay it in the first place. There should be somebody with intelligence enough to know that it is impossible for him to earn \$6,000 a year if he never worked a day in his life before and here he is in November or December going to work for the first time. These are just two small examples of the kind of bureaucracy. Mr. Speaker, I am sure that there are members on the government benches, if they are doing their work at all, who hear from constituents with the very same complaints.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):
Order, please!

The hon. the member's time has elapsed.

MR. CALLAN:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS VERGE:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, it seems really unbelievable that the member for Bellevue (Mr. Callan), not once but twice in the past week, has taken the precious time of this entire House of Assembly to tell us about his petty personal problems.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, I am sure every one of us here, all fifty-one of the sitting members have personal problems that we all might like to recount to our associates and our friends but most of us have sense enough to confine our comments in this Assembly to matters of genuine public interest and even urgent public concern, which is what Question Period is designed for.

Mr. Speaker, I think I answered the points and questions raised by the member for Bellevue the other day quite adequately. His own personal situation is one that I said I would have my officials assist him with, whereupon he said that he had already gotten it straightened out. The question of raising the minimum income level for liability for school taxation is one that I said is periodically addressed and which will be addressed shortly. I anticipate initiating an increase in that minimum income level within the next year or so.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the broader question of financing education through school taxation, I want to say simply that school tax authorities turned over to the thirty-five school boards in this Province last year over \$20 million clear. That is \$20

million that was used by school boards to pay their support staff, to heat and light their school buildings, to help operate buses - we have over 1,000 buses on the roads of the Province - and to finance school board's 10 per cent share of capital projects.

So, Mr. Speaker, school taxation is an essential component of the system of financing schools in this Province, over \$20 million, net, raised for schools in the past year.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

Question number three is a question asked of the Premier by the hon. the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) pertaining to the trade mission to the Orient.

The hon. the member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, every time we hear about restraint from the Premier and we have financial statements from the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) in this House's quarterly statements, we are told by the Premier and by the Minister of Finance that one of the ways they are looking at saving money is to cut out the parties, to cut out the entertainment by ministers and cut down on the travelling. Now, Mr. Speaker, has the Premier lived up to his commitment to curtail travelling on the part of his ministers? Well, let us look at it. The Minister of Development (Mr. Windsor) has travelled more than Marc Garneau did when he was going around the world in orbit. The hon. gentleman I would say is the best travelled citizen of this

Province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let us look at the restraint programme. Here you have a group going off to the Orient in a few days, two ministers, Mr. Speaker, and a group of public servants - and we do not know what level of public servants, whether they are deputy ministers, assistant deputy ministers, directors or secretaries or what they are - but I know the Premier promised to get us the information. We do not know how much it is going to cost, we do not know what they are going to accomplish because we have already seen the Minister of Development travel extensively in connection with an aluminum plant for this Province.

MR. TULK:

He never loses his tan.

MR. NEARY:

No, he never loses his tan.

So, Mr. Speaker, these things as far as I can see accomplish nothing. If the Premier feels that he has to send a representative to Hong Kong and to Tokyo and to Korea, let him send one minister. Why send two? Do they have to go to hold each others hands when they are riding around in the rickshaws in Tokyo, Mr. Speaker? Why two? Mr. Speaker, is this just an excuse to go to the Orient to do their Christmas shopping? Is that all they are looking for? We have not seen any tangible results yet of the tripping around that is done by the Minister of Development (Mr. Windsor)

MR. TULK:

Or by anyone.

MR. NEARY:

Or by anybody in the administration. I am not against, Mr. Speaker, alerting business and industry in the world to the potential of this Province. A lot of it could be done by telephone and by correspondence and by Telex. But, Mr. Speaker, is it necessary in these times of restraints to send off such a large contingent? I might say also, Mr. Speaker, that I am not concerned about what the private businessman is spending on this trip, that is his own business. There are only two groups going, one from the elected Council in Mount Pearl and the two ministers, plus public officials who get their expenses from the Public Treasury. That is all I am concerned about. The businessmen can spend their money how they like, I could not care less. But this seems to me to be a great waste of time, Mr. Speaker. As I say, I am not against sending out brochures and Telexes and letters, I am not against the Premier sending a minister here, there or hither and yon. I am not against that if they have to go and speak or have to go and talk to people, Mr. Speaker. But I am against a large entourage of ministers and public servants leaving this Province in a time of restraint, a couple of weeks before Christmas, and no apparent justification other than the weather is getting bad, the snow will soon be on the ground, it is getting cold and damp in Newfoundland, Christmas is coming, Mr. Speaker, and they want to go off to see what they can get in the Orient in the way of Christmas presents. There will be no benefit to the people of this Province as a result of this trip. And the hon. the Premier should practice what he preaches. Now is his time to show the people of the Province that he intends to

honour his commitment that he is going to cut down on the travel of ministers and that he is going to cut out the partying and going to cut out the entertainment on the part of the ministers and the administration. Otherwise, Mr. Speaker, if he does not do that the people of this Province will just look upon him as just pumping out political rhetoric just to improve his image. Now is his chance. Let the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Dawe) or the Minister of Development (Mr. Windsor) go, but cut out the excess baggage, cut out the surplus baggage that is going on this trip.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):
Order, please!

The hon. member's time has expired.

The hon. Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) is trying to make a point that is impossible for him to make. Over the last number of years, as everybody knows, we have reduced the amount of travel. Most of the provinces of Canada actually have offices all over the world as part of their development departments, and their trade departments got offices in London, got offices over in the Far East, now some of them have established new offices to get new business. You just cannot turn a blind eye. So we reduced it substantially but you cannot eliminate it completely. In tourism promotion, we have reduced that now, it is lower this year than it was in 1974-1975, the amount that is spent on promotion for tourism in Newfoundland. You can cut it so much but you cannot cut it out completely. You have

to compete with other people who are in the same field like, for example, in tourism.

And the Minister of Development (Mr. Windsor), yes, I guess he is a more travelled minister than anybody else. If he is not, he is not doing his job as Minister of Development, out trying to attract business to the Province and so on. And he has done a pretty good job, both he and the Minister of Mines (Mr. Dawe). Minworth going down to St. Lawrence was one result. They were over in England. They travelled to England.

MR. NEARY:

They took the initiative.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

No way. We can prove that it was not. It was because of our initiatives that Minworth came to St. Lawrence. That is a fact, Mr. Speaker. That is a fact because of our promotional activities through the Department of Mines and by the Minister of Mines going to England and the Minister of Development we were able to attract Minworth's to St. Lawrence. There is one good example.

We knew about Transpacific because they were in Australia and we were able to attract them to Newfoundland to go to Baie Verte. There are two good examples of what we have been able to do over the last couple of years. And if we are just going to put our heads in the sand and not go anywhere or not compete with the other provinces, then we are going to lose out. We are going to lose out badly. And we have to continue. Even though we have reduced the amount of travel, we have reduced the amount of

entertainment, you cannot reduce it to zero. You still have to keep a certain minimum amount there to allow for the attraction of new business and so on into the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. You know, that is part of the business of governing, that is the part of business of trying to attract investment here to the Province.

I will have all of the details for the hon. member tomorrow. I do not have them all now because as soon as Question Period was over, between then and when I came back here again I had seven or eight meetings -

MR. NEARY:

CBC Television too?

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Not CBC Television, thank God - negotiations on Bowater and a whole bunch of things since the afternoon started. So I have not had a chance to get all the details. But there is not a large contingent going from the government. There is a large contingent going, I have been able to find this much out, but they are paying their own way. It is not coming out of the government purse. There is only a small contingent going from government. The rest of the group that are going, the so-called entourage as the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) mentions, are industry people and other people going at their own expense, no expense to government at all. We are not paying for the whole group that are going. We are only paying for the people who are going from government. So I want to make that perfectly clear. But we will have the full details for the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) tomorrow and just indicate to him

the kind of people that we are meeting with and negotiating with in that part of the world. And we have been very, very successful so far in attracting that kind of business to the Province. And we have to compete. The larger provinces, the wealthier provinces have permanent trade missions throughout the world. They are all doing a fair job on attracting investment and jobs. I mean, if we are just suddenly with a 20 per cent unemployment rate going to throw up our hands and say we cannot do anything, well then it is going to get worse. We still have to have a certain minimum amount available for promotion and travel to ensure that we are able to turn around some of the bad situations, as we have done in St. Lawrence, as we done in Baie Verte, as we are now doing in Corner Brook. And many times you have to travel. You cannot do it all by Telexes and letters. It does not work. You have to sit down and talk to these people. You cannot do it all by Telex and letter. I wish you could, it would be a lot cheaper. But a piece of paper does not mean as much as being there yourself.

So anyway, Mr. Speaker, we will have all of the details for the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary). But I can assure him that what comes out of the public purse is for people who work for the government that are going over, that the other people are going over at their own expense. There are no secretaries going, obviously there are no secretaries going. That is only foolishness on behalf of the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary). He just throws up little things hoping that the press will carry it. Even if it is knocked down the next day or a few hours later it

is too late then, the press are after carrying an allegation. And the member still wants to out - headline the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barry). Now he is doing a pretty good job on that.

MR. BARRETT:

That is no problem.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

That is no difficulty. But the member for LaPoile can remember well the administration that he was a part when the Premier of the day travelled twice as much as this Premier ever travelled, when the Premier that the hon. member for LaPoile reported to travelled a lot more than this Premier travelled and to all parts of the world and three and four and five Cabinet ministers in tow. And I can tell you some stories about some of the trips, if the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) wants me to get down to specifics, and talking about secretaries. I can tell the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) some delightful stories too about his administration. I can tell him stories about Claridges and and a few other places in London.

MR. NEARY:

I can tell you about your predecessor.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Well, so you may. All I am telling you is that talking about promotion and going around the world, then there is a lot of stories that could be told. But we shall provide all of the details this time, not like when the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) was in government. What we are doing we can justify and we have been successful to date and I think one of the things that is worrying the member for LaPoile

and the members of the Opposition is that we are going to be successful again. We will not only have a success story of St. Lawrence and Corner Brook and Baie Verte, we will have a few more success stories around.

Not only that, Mr. Speaker, not only will we have those kind of success stories, but we will turn around some of the failures of the Liberal party when they were in power, when they gave it all away, and we will get it all back as we are going to start to do in Corner Brook, as we have done in Grand Falls, as we have done in Long Harbour. We are going to start to turn it all around and get mills built down in St. Lawrence.

So do not worry. Do not fear.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

I move the adjournment, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER :

The motion is that the House do now adjourn until tomorrow, Friday.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Before the House adjourns, I would draw to the attention of hon. members that tomorrow we will be debating the amendment to The Labour Standards Act.

MR. BARRY:

How many bills are we going to have on at the same time?

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Well, it is important that this one get on because it is tied in with the Kruger legislation which will be coming in presumably next week, and this is tied in with it.

MR. BARRY:

Is the amendment legislation a condition for agreement with Kruger?

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

No, I did not say it was the condition. I said it was related to it.

MR. NEARY:

We have three bills in second reading now.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

This one has to be on because it is related to the Kruger legislation.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

Order, please!

On motion, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, at 10:00 A.M.