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Speaker: Honourable Patrick McNicholas

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The House met at 3:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):
Order, please!

Oral Questions

MR. BARRY:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:
Mr. Speaker, we were expecting that while Mrs. Carney was down we would have heard some indication from her, and from the provincial government, with respect to the commencement of some work to prepare for the construction of concrete platforms and to see the commencement of the Hibernia project. I wonder if the Premier would confirm whether or not he has heard what I have heard from the construction industry to the effect that Mobil has indicated that their call for tenders for project management and other contracts has been put on hold temporarily, they understand. Would the Premier indicate whether there is, in fact, any substance to this matter?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Not to my knowledge, Mr. Speaker. I know the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barry) and members opposite would love for it to be put on hold, and everything to do with Hibernia to be put on hold, but we have no knowledge to substantiate what the Leader of the Opposition is saying. It is just idle Opposition speculation,

they want to throw another negative upon Newfoundland.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:
Maybe, Mr. Speaker, the Premier would indicate whether or not he has any information with respect to the letting of contracts by Mobil. Is he aware they have requested proposals with respect to project management and when, in his understanding, will decisions be taken on those proposals?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
I am not sure what the dates are. I am aware that Mobil has various proposal calls out there on the marketplace at the present moment for a whole bunch of things, but I will have to get that information for the hon. the Leader of the Opposition. I am not sure what the dates are on it off the top of my head, but I can check it out for him.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:
Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Carney indicated that there were a number of matters that still have to be resolved before the project could commence. She mentioned the approval of the development plan by the petroleum board, she mentioned - I find this surprising - a decision with respect to which goods and services and jobs would come to Newfoundlanders - I would have thought that would have been decided by now - and the third thing, Mr. Speaker, was the

negotiation of the taxation and royalty scheme. I would ask the Premier if that is his position, that there can be nothing commence before the taxation and royalty scheme has been negotiated and an agreement completed, or is the Province and is the company and the federal government prepared to commence the expenditure of funds up to a certain level, even though these various matters have not been concluded?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, we are now in negotiations with the federal government and Mobil as it relates to the whole development of Hiberia - they started some time ago. Those negotiations are continuing now and they involve, obviously, the industrial benefits package and the fiscal regime. There are companies around which may wish to make various investments to get ready for the development, and there are a lot of people around the Province these days who are in the process of making decisions as it relates to investments on various things in order to be ready, but the major contracts as it relates to the platform and the cellar deck, whatever you want to call it, the topside, will be made after project release. But there is quite likely to be significant investment by other companies who will be vying for various aspects of the platform construction, both the gravity base system itself and the cellar deck, or the topside, who may be making investments before final project release.

MR. BARRY:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:

It would seem that one of the areas where an early decision would have to be made in order to avoid delays with respect to this development would be with respect to site preparation, and in the area of Adams Head, Grassy Point there would have to be certain work commence there. Mr. Speaker, every day that passes means a delay at the other end.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

No, it does not.

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the anticipation that some companies may be spending money, I can tell the Premier that those companies that are involved and have participated in putting in proposals for project management -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. Leader of the Opposition is now making a speech rather than asking a supplementary.

MR. BARRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and it is a good speech, too.

Is the Premier aware, Mr. Speaker, that it has already cost those companies preparing proposals for project management hundreds of thousands of dollars to prepare those proposals, and these firms, Mr. Speaker, are looking for some guidance as to when this project is going to commence? Will the Premier indicate whether - not private investors, they are already making their investment - the Province, the federal

government, Mobil and other oil companies are prepared to commence certain expenditures, or will all these expenditures await the finalization of this taxation and royalty regime?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
What a silly, foolish old question, and the Leader of the Opposition talks about delay! Delay where? What is the delay? There is no delay. If you look at the schedules that have been made public for the development of the Hibernia project, at the excavation, for example, that the Leader of the Opposition talks about for the gravity based systems, it is the Fall of this year, 1986. There is no delay. Every day that goes by now is not a delay. The schedule for the construction starts in the Fall.

MR. BARRY:
Land has to be prepared, there has to be surveys.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Just one second! Oh, my, I am not aware of any of that, Mr. Speaker. None of that has to be done. That is a brand new revelation to me, that you have survey a piece of land and you have to put a few bulldozers on it. That is brand new. I thank the hon. the Leader of the Opposition for his very enlightened observation on how construction of a project gets underway. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

Mr. Speaker, the long and short of it is there is no delay. Tomorrow, if it is not started, the schedule of construction -

MR. FLIGHT:
We have had seven years of that.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. BARRY:
We have not seen too many bulldozers -

MR. TOBIN:
Yes, we saw the one you put on the hospital site in Burin.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
We saw the one you put on the hospital site in Burin in 1975. We saw that one.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD:
I do not know if that was before or after you were defeated. The long and short of it is the public knows that the schedule for Hibernia sees excavation occurring some time mid to third quarter of 1986, which is right on schedule to have the thing built and have production going ahead in 1991 - 1992. So there is no delay. We are not to the middle of 1986 yet, or the Fall of 1986, when, then, if nothing had been concluded you would be into a delay period. So what the Leader of the Opposition talks about it just foolishness.

Obviously, the company and the government in the negotiations are going to try to expedite a green light on the project as soon as possible. We are working night and day at it now, our team and the federal team. The Minister responsible for the Petroleum Directorate (Mr. Marshall) has been in Ottawa three or four times in the last two weeks, negotiating and bringing it back to Cabinet and to P & P and to the team, and

everything is right on schedule and it is going to be a hunky dory, wonderful 1986.

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER:

A final supplementary, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Premier would confirm whether his schedule with respect to this project is going to be adhered to in the same way the schedule of announcing the decision on the Come By Chance refinery was adhered to? The Premier, the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) and the Minister responsible for the Petroleum Directorate indicated that we would, by the end of last year, Mr. Speaker, have had a decision with respect to the Come By Chance refinery. Where does that stand now? Is the Premier trying to get the Atlantic Accord through the House before the announcement to scrap that refinery is finally made by him and the federal government? When can we expect to hear what is happening to the Come By Chance refinery?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, that was a Liberal fiasco from day one, the Come By Chance refinery.

MR. BARRY:

Oh, you are scrapping it again now, are you?

PREMIER PECKFORD:

No, I never said that. I am saying that the Come By Chance refinery is a legacy of a Liberal Government that was mismanaging the economy of this Province. As we did with the linerboard and as we did with so many things in this Province over the last few years, we have spent most of our time turning around decisions that were made by the Liberal Party of Newfoundland when it was the Government of Newfoundland, and we have been highly successful in doing so.

Let me tell the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barry) and members opposite that they have no worry about the Come By Chance refinery and this Province being able to get refined products from Hibernia in that area or in this Province. No problem whatsoever! Come By Chance and the refining capacities of this Province will be looked after 100 per cent. Unfortunately, once again the Opposition have been outmaneuvered, Mr. Speaker. We are here as a government to protect the public interest. We are going to protect Come By Chance, we are going to protect Gander, we are going to protect Baie Verte, we are going to protect Labrador City and Corner Brook, we are going to protect the whole Province. Let no worry come from the opposite side over Come By Chance. We will make a decision on the existing facility when we are ready, when all the negotiations have been completed with the companies involved, and we will ensure that the best decision is made, in the interests of the people in that area.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the President of Treasury Board (Mr. Windsor), I have a question for the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins). Sir, in view of the government's sudden burst of generosity as displayed by the lavish car allowances recently given to deputy ministers and assistant deputy ministers, an allowance which allows the deputy minister to travel 85 kilometers a day, 425 kilometers a week, 1,700 kilometers a month, 16,000 kilometers a year to drive to work, in view of these facts, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the minister would indicate that these lavish car allowances are indeed an increase in disguise? It is a matter of the government trying to do through the backdoor what they have ought to have done through the front door, or it is a confirmation of the popularly held notion that the government of this Province have two wage restraint programmes, one for the elite members of the bureaucracy and one for those further down the line, one for those down in staff positions. Would the minister get up and tell us the answer to these questions?

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, the other day I complimented the hon. member on his way of giving a speech. He just gave another speech but I cannot compliment him on it, it was one of his poorer efforts. It was a rather poor speech,

actually. In it somewhere there was a sort of question, though. In some respects I wish the hon. member had not always been in Opposition. I wish he had been in government, just briefly, so he could get some concept of how government works.

Now, the hon. member seems to think that the highest echelon of official in this government only sits on his fanny in his office and drives back and forth to work. Now, that is the sort of simplistic, naive, farcical view the hon. member has of the senior members of the public service. He has no concept of what a deputy minister and an assistant deputy minister has to do in many of the departments, such as the Department of Forest Resources and Lands and the Department of Social Services and so on. He has to do a lot of work outside his office, he does not hoof it, so he has to go by some form of transportation. In the past, it had been quite open to him to either go by taxi or to go by his own car, and if he went by his own car he could put in the expense claims and that sort of thing. Now, that was a very inefficient way of doing things, and no business does things that way. The president of a company, the vice-president of a company, or the executive officer of a company - to which a deputy minister is equivalent - they do not do that kind of thing because it is the inefficient way. This government inherited that type of approach to life from previous administrations, and some of these administrations, of course, were of the same ilk as the hon. member opposite. We decided recently, to make things more efficient. It is not that there is something now being given that was not given

before, it is now being given in a different manner and it is being given in a manner that makes government operations more efficient.

MR. LUSH:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that I made an error. The figures I used should have been in miles and not kilometers, which makes them all the more significant - eighty-five miles a day, four hundred and twenty-five miles a week, seventeen hundred miles a month and sixteen thousand miles a year. Now, Mr. Speaker, in view of these excessive car allowances, in view of the fact that we have frustrated unemployed workers in this Province, and in view of the fact that these car allowances represent 50 per cent in some cases and a third in other cases of the salaries made by workers in the public service, in view of that and in view of the fact that general service workers are looking for parity, Mr. Speaker -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

Would the hon. member please ask his supplementary question?

MR. LUSH:

In view of the fact, Mr. Speaker, that general service workers are looking for parity only and this money would give them that - this \$5,000 and this \$3,000 would give these general service workers parity with other workers in the Province - does the minister not

realize how provocative this move is, how volatile he has made the negotiating climate in this Province in this particular fiscal year by this particular move?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member may not be aware that there are quite a large number of workers in the public service below the executive level, and I am not talking about managers and directors, even below that, who can claim car expenses, who can claim transportation expenses, and many of them do. Why do they do that? Because they have to travel to carry on the functions that government wants them to carry on. They can claim! They get funds, they get reimbursement for their outlays in the same way the deputy ministers and the assistant deputy ministers get reimbursed for necessary use of transportation facilities, whether it is their own or whether it is something else. Now, they cannot get both of course. If they use their own cars and get reimbursed, obviously they cannot get an allowance from government. They have to choose one or the other.

For the deputy ministers and the assistant deputy ministers we have made the choice for them. We say it is more efficient, from an operational point of view, for government to give the allowance rather than go through voucher, after voucher, after voucher. But I can assure the hon member that there is no difference in terms of travel expenses between the executive and the lower members of the public service. If a lower member in the public service has to make expenditures either for

taxi, the use of his own car or anything in that order, he will be reimbursed just like the deputy ministers were previously reimbursed. They are being reimbursed under a different form now, that is all.

MR. LUSH:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A final supplementary, the hon member for Bonavista-North.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that there are workers within the civil service to whom these increases in car allowances given the deputy ministers and the assistant deputy ministers represent 50 per cent and a third of the salaries they are making, and in view of the fact that general service workers are looking for parity with other workers, can the minister now indicate that he is prepared to give these workers the same equal treatment, the same fair, just treatment that he has given the deputy ministers and the assistant deputy ministers?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, no problem whatever, to the extent that if any workers in the public service incur expenditures that government should pick up, we will reimburse them just as we are reimbursing the activities of deputy ministers and assistant deputy ministers in this regard.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member for Gander.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Premier concerning his press conference this morning. As you know, Air Canada has applied to move international flights from Gander to St. John's. Five individuals in Gander have been notified that they have to move or lose their jobs with Air Canada, and other civil servants working at the airport are now receiving notices that they are being transferred to St. John's. In light of his press conference this morning in which the Premier left the impression that he was willing to accept this kind of transfer of jobs from Gander to St. John's, would the Premier - and this is from a one-industry town, Mr. Speaker - now state unequivocally, without qualification, to this House that he is opposed to the transfer of jobs from Gander to St. John's?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I made it quite clear in the press conference this morning where the Government of Newfoundland stands. I made it completely clear that before Air Canada made any moves at all we wanted guarantees that the international status of the Gander Airport would be guaranteed into the future, that their TOPS programme would be guaranteed into the future, because that is the core that makes Gander work.

I note with a great deal of humour the hon. member's question and the question of jobs, when he and others like him in Gander, who were part of a town council, lamely allowed EPA to move 300 jobs or 400 jobs out of Gander and into Halifax, and when I asked for a public enquiry they did not want

one. They are all full of enquiries now every day. Where was the hon. member when the 300 to 400 jobs moved out of Gander and out of the Province completely? I like the way the hon. member scurries around now and squirms to try to show that he was not in favour of saving 300 jobs or 400 jobs and now he is all in favour of saving five or six. The core to the Gander Airport is the trans-Atlantic flights and the TOPS Programme. That is what makes Gander work and we want guarantees that the international status and the TOPS programme will remain unimpaired, and if that is not guaranteed, then we oppose any transfer to St. John's.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Gander.

MR. TOBIN:

You are trying to hoodwink the people of Gander.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker, if the jackals on the other side would be quiet.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker, this member, in the EPA situation the Premier refers to, was indicating that if EPA were a Crown corporation then we could put pressure on, and the Premier laughed at it. He was not willing to make it a Crown corporation so that then pressure

could be put on, and a public enquiry was impossible and he knew it.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier: Seeing he ignores this job transfer is going on, will the Premier confirm that representatives of the provincial government have held meetings with Air Canada and have been doing so for quite some time in order to expedite this move, and that in fact his government has been supplying Air Canada with advice and figures, as has been stated by the President and Chief Executive Officer of Air Canada?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

No. No. The answer is no. That is a complete fabrication. There have been no meetings between us and Air Canada to expedite the move to St. John's. That is complete nonsense and untrue. It is an untruth that the hon. member is propagating. Here is the hon. member now, two years later, trying to be the saviour for Gander, when he allowed 300 jobs to go and would not agree to a public enquiry.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD:

You know, after the barn door is closed the hon. member wants to try to be the saviour for Gander, he and his brother, and play political football with it over six or seven jobs, when he allowed 300 jobs or 400 jobs to go out of Gander. At the time, only this government was there fighting for Gander, when the hon. members were not, Mr. Speaker. We will fight for Gander as we fought for Gander

before, and we will not do it in the measly way the hon. member has been trying to do it, two years too late.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Gander.

MR. BAKER:

I will tell you what the hon. the member for Gander was doing at the time of the EPA transfers, sitting in the front benches on the other side of the House. That is where she was.

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker, there is a lot of funny stuff going on here, as the Premier realizes. The Minister of Transportation (Mr. Dawe) stated in a meeting with the Gander town council that he has done some investigation and his figures showed that Air Canada's 85 per cent figure is wrong. Now, then, I want to know if these figures are going to be released. The investigation that was done, is that going to be released? And does the Premier agree or disagree with the figures Air Canada have used as a basis for this move?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, as far as I know, the hon. the member for Gander was not at the meeting to which he alleged certain things were going on. I note that the hon. the member for Gander has not been at a number of meetings over the last few years but has been able to purchase documents of meetings that have taken place over the last few years. I think the hon. member was on the council at the time certain documents were taken from the Gander Development Corporation and passed over to somebody. I have a good CIA, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BAKER:

Somebody in your government did that, boy.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Yes, sure! Try to skirt out from under that one now, will you. Another one to skirt out from under.

MR. TOBIN:

Keep your cool.

MR. MARSHALL:

He is getting upset about it now.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

The problem with the hon. the member for Gander, Mr. Speaker, is that he is two years too late. And to try to scurry under now to save six or seven jobs when he let 300 or 400 jobs go, we will not let him forget it.

MR. BAKER:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. BAKER:

I am glad to see that the Premier has finally confirmed what I was saying earlier, that he does not care about six or seven jobs and what might come after that. I would like to ask the Premier -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

It is impossible to have questions answered with this continuous disruption. I would ask hon. member, particularly on my left at the moment, to observe the rules of the House.

MR. BAKER:

A good ruling, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Gander.

MR. BAKER:

On May 10, I informed the Premier of this particular situation and he informed the House that within a week he would get back to the people in Central Newfoundland as well as the St. John's Board of Trade, and so on, after he had done an investigation of what was going on. I would like to ask the Premier, why this morning did he then say that he knew nothing about the situation and that he now had to ask the Minister of Transport (Mr. Mazankowski) to look into it to find out what it was all about? What did he do in the intervening eight months? Did he forget about Gander like he has forgotten about a lot of other one-industry towns in this Province?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

The application was three or four weeks ago, Mr. Speaker, as I understand it. Three or four weeks ago.

MR. FUREY:

Look at May 10.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

You know, I have to laugh at the hon. member for Gander (Mr. Baker) and members opposite talking about jobs that we are trying to lose, or we are not interested in Gander or Grand Falls or Lewisporte or any other place, and everything is here in St. John's. We have 446 people working in Gander today with the health -

MR. BAKER:

School teachers. They have to be there, right?

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Health. Health, not school teachers.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Outside health and education, there are 145 direct jobs in Gander today, people employed -

MR. BAKER:

So what?

PREMIER PECKFORD:

So what? Oh, it is 'so what' now.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Mr. Speaker, the long and short of it is that the hon. the member for Gander and his brother have missed the boat. They wanted EPA out of Gander, and not only out of Gander, Mr. Speaker, but out of Newfoundland.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD:
They did not mind trading it off to other provinces. And the Mayor of Gander said at the time, 'No problem, Gander can get over this.' 'No problem, Gander can get over this,' this is what the Mayor of Gander said at the time. Now, the same Mayor is saying he cannot get over 6 jobs. He has no problem getting over 300 or 400 jobs, but he cannot get over 6.

Our position on Gander, Mr. Speaker, is simply that we want guarantees that the core that makes Gander Airport work, the TOPS programme, the international status remains. If we do not get guarantees, then we will oppose Air Canada's move.

MR. K. AYLWARD:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. K. AYLWARD:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please! There is only time for a quick question and answer. The hon. the member for Stephenville.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please! Order, please!

MR. K. AYLWARD:
I would like to direct this question to the Minister of Housing (Mr. Dinn). Would he tell this House whether or not there are going to be layoffs at the NLHC Office in Stephenville? And if so, what are the reasons for the layoffs?

MR. DINN:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. DINN:
Mr. Speaker, I believe the last question the hon. member asked was a question on the rent increases with respect to Stephenville? Well, if he followed the situation over time he will know that the Residential Tenancies Board, during the last rate increase hearings, recommended that because there were too many maintenance staff in Stephenville that some of those should be laid off. Of course, we checked that out, we did an assessment and we found out that what they recommended to be true, and there are some three or four people who will be laid off in the next short while. You cannot have it both ways, Mr. Speaker, you cannot have low rents and have people working.

MR. K. AYLWARD:
A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please! The time for Oral Questions has now elapsed.

Answers to Questions
for which Notice has been Given

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Consumer Affairs and Communications.

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, I wish to provide a response with a little more accuracy than I did yesterday to the hon. member for Twillingate (Mr. W. Carter) on his question to me pertaining to the cost of heating oil in the Province. I indicated yesterday that some of things that I said may not be exactly accurate and I would get some further information for him. As there are some names and figures involved I would like to read the information as I have it.

The Consumers Affairs Division of my department, in co-operation with the Consumer Affairs Divisions in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, undertook an independent survey of the price of furnace oil in Halifax, Charlottetown and St. John's concurrently on Thursday, January 30, 1986, the results of which are tabulated as follows. Here are the company in Charlottetown, Halifax and St. John's and the maximum variance: Esso in Charlottetown - this is the price per litre by the way - 37.7¢, in Halifax, 38.2¢; St. John's, 41.9¢; for a maximum variance of 4.2¢; Texaco, 39¢ in Charlottetown; Halifax, 38.2¢; St. John's 42.1¢; for a 3.9¢ difference; Irving, 37.7¢ in Charlottetown; 38.2¢ in Halifax; and 41.9¢ here for a 4.2¢ difference; Gulf, 40.1¢, 38.2¢, and 41.9¢ here for a 3.7¢

difference; Petro-Can, 39.0¢, 37.2¢, and 43.1¢ in St. John's for a 5.9¢ difference; Ultramar, 39¢ in Charlottetown (we do not have any figures for Ultramar in Nova Scotia) and 43.1¢ in St. John's, for a difference of 4.1¢; and we only have a figure for Charlottetown for Shell which is 39¢.

There are no provincial taxes on home furnace oil in any of the three Provinces and the federal tax is obviously identical. It can be seen that there is a variance in price, it being higher in St. John's by 3.7¢ per litre to a maximum of 4.2¢ per litre or 16.65¢ per gallon to 18.9¢ per gallon. As I indicated yesterday, we are not sure of what the cause of these variances are. It appears to be somewhat substantial. I have written and I thought that the letters have gone out but, rather than misleading the House, the letters will be in the mail either today or tomorrow to these companies asking for an explanation from them as to why there is a difference in the prices. When we receive this information from the companies we will do an analysis of it and see if there is anything we can do at that time. It is a complex situation in a sense. Transportation costs may be a little higher and for example, with Petro-Can and Ultramar, included in their price is the Home Burner Service, where they do free calls to your house and things like that. So, there are a number of factors that we do not have information on, but that is accurate information as we have it as of January 30. I will certainly be pleased to pass on any other information when I receive it.

Petitions

MR. FUREY:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:
Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition sent to me from the Holy Cross Home and School Association in Daniel's Harbour. The prayer of the petition reads: "We, the undersigned, do strongly oppose existing conditions at the Holy Cross Schools. Both schools are in Daniel's Harbour. There are two hundred and fifteen students there and fifteen teachers whose safety and health are subject to these deplorable conditions every single teaching day. The only solution to the ongoing problems and lack of education our students are receiving is the new all grade facility recommended by the St. Barbe Integrated School Board. Right now, finances are a prerogative over the risks involved. We demand this position be reversed and funding be made available immediately." That is the prayer of the petition, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to go through a few points. I visited this school a month and a half ago and was given a tour by the teachers, the Home and School Association and a number of students. I totally support the petition.

In the elementary school - these are notes that I took, Mr. Speaker, while I was there - there are fumes coming from the furnaces which are causing sickness to the students and to the teachers. The end result is that the school is

being closed for days and sometimes weeks before the problem is temporarily resolved. The school is being closed because of general furnace problems. There is no janitor's room in this school, Mr. Speaker, and this houses children from Grade Kindergarten to Grade III. We all know the kind of chemicals that janitors have to use to clean the floors. They are stored in the hallway on shelves where children can get at these chemicals. I have a great fear about that.

The furnace room is housing two furnaces and there is no fire wall separating these two furnaces. The furnace room is under a classroom that has to accommodate the chimney. All fire safety regulations applying to this situation are being completely ignored. There are no fire doors in this school for these little children. Some light fixtures have to be tied to the ceiling with string so that they do not fall down and hurt somebody badly. The basement walls are cracked. They are letting water run through during mild and rainy weather. This includes in the furnace room.

Classrooms are overcrowded. The students have no library. The students have no lockers. Gym bags have to be hung on nails in the classrooms driven into the walls. The students have to leave their school and proceed to the high school in order to have gym, coming back either wet from showers in very mean temperatures and, in cases where the showers do not work, they are full of sweat cutting through the cold to go back to their classrooms. One gym is shared by two schools. The bathrooms are not designed to accommodate the number of people

in the schoolhouse and there is no staff room. That is the elementary school, Mr. Speaker, Grade Kindergarten to Grade III.

In the high school, there is water leaking in through the electrical room causing the school to be closed. They are frightened that people might get seriously injured. There is a phenomenon that is called ponding, especially in the Spring, on this flat roof, Mr. Speaker. The water gathers in ponds much like a blister and they are afraid that might explode and the tiles and lights might come down and hurt someone. In fact, three months ago one of these heavy metal-caged lights did fall. Luckily it was during dinnertime and luckily there were no students around. It did crash to the floor. The hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Mitchell) can smile but that could have killed a child. The leaking roof has caused all ceilings to sag and in some cases the ceilings are completely down; I talk specifically of the electrical room. These leaks have soaked ceilings, insulation and carpets, creating dampness and odors where our high school kids are expected to go to school.

The ventilating fans have been covered because of leaking around them and water coming in through. Supports keeping the windows in have rotted. Windows have blown out during wind storms. In fact, behind one of the classrooms, I believe it was Grade IX, there was a wind storm that came across the pond one day and knocked all the windows out, shattering glass in over the desks. Again, luckily it was on a Sunday and the school was closed. Thank God!

Overcrowding in the high school is

a problem. The room that served as both a library and a computer room is now being used for a classroom. This means there is no library, but it is not a loss because there was no material in it anyway. How can you have a library? You can have a name and call it a library, but if you do not have books to go in it, it is hardly a library. The hon. President of the Council (Mr. Marshall) can laugh and wave his hands, he has hundreds of libraries in St. John's. Why do you not give rural Newfoundland a break for a change?

Mr. Speaker, this high school group, along with the parents, went out and sold candy bars and did whatever they could to get computers so that little Daniel's Harbour could be caught up with the high tech that is happening everywhere else around the Province. Do you know they had the computers and they had to put them in a closet because there is nowhere to teach the children about computers. There is no laboratory, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

By leave.

MR. FUREY:

In conclusion, there is not sufficient heat in the classrooms and when the weather is really windy or cold, as it is on the Northern Peninsula, the students have been in class with Winter coats, caps and gloves on because of a lack of heat. There is no shower available for all of the 215 students, not one shower room. It has a shower room, but only one shower unit in it. There is one change room and this is

used by the girls and the boys are sent into the kitchen to change, even sometimes, Mr. Speaker, when the cook is trying to prepare meals for the kids who have to stay in for lunch. Two rooms have been patched onto this building. The school is now nicknamed the jelly bean school.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

Order, please! Does the hon. member have leave?

MR. FUREY:

Yes, they gave me leave.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I am asking as I have asked a number of times the Minister of Education -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! The hon. member has spoken over five minutes.

MR. FUREY:

By leave?

MR. SPEAKER:

Leave has not been given.

MR. FUREY:

The Minister of Career Development and Advanced Studies (Mr. Power) gave me a minute, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Leave has not been given.

Does the hon. member have leave?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Yes, yes.

MR. FUREY:

So in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that the Minister of Education (Mr. Hearn) is very aware of this. I telexed him a number of times. He will be invited to come visit the school himself, personally. I hope that he will take some of the things

that I have said into consideration so that we in rural Newfoundland can have a chance to catch up with urban Newfoundland.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HEARN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Education.

MR. HEARN:

Mr. Speaker, first of all I would like to thank the hon. member for bringing the petition to the House from the Parent/teachers Home and School Association. Certainly, they have concerns that are factual, perhaps not only in his area, but in some other areas of the Province, although maybe not as severe.

However, I would like to make it quite clear that the responsibility for school construction does not lie with the Department of Education; it lies with the appropriate DEC and certainly the school board in the area. This fact has been made known to the member. He has contacted me on a number of occasions about the condition of the Daniel's Harbour schools. Not only have I replied to the member, I have discussed it personally and I have written him on it suggesting that he contact the appropriate agency to discuss particular concerns. We have also contacted the agencies on his behalf to establish when and where something could be done to help out in the Daniel's Harbour situation. We have and he has every indication that it is considered a priority by both the school board and the DEC. So, undoubtedly that problem will be addressed.

I would like to make it clear that for a number of years the government had been providing \$15 million a year for school construction. This money was distributed on a non-discriminatory basis to the DEC committees and consequently, distributed to boards on a priority basis. Last year we increased that amount to \$20 million. Not only are we distributing \$20 million for capital construction each year, but we have given them a three year lead way. In other words, we have committed ourselves to provide that amount three years in advance so now the various educational committees can plan in relation to priorities in their district.

The school boards concerned identify priorities within their field of operation. They, in turn, make requests to the appropriate DEC Committee. That committee then allocates funds to the school boards on a priority basis. Undoubtedly, Daniel's Harbour has to be considered a priority and, I understand, that has been made known both to the board, to the parents and to the member. Hopefully, very soon the concerns that are being made known there right now will be addressed.

In relation to the present condition, some of the things he mentions we wonder about with fire commissioners and officers so very active these days. We wonder why some of these things are allowed to exist. We also know that boards try to do their best to make sure that schools that are operating, where they cannot access new schools, are in relatively good condition. We know that the amount of money for maintenance that we give them,

based on a per capita grant, is increased each year. However, with declining enrollments, sometimes the total amount is offset.

We have discussed this with school board managers, superintendents, etc. and it is well known that our department and government, generally, is addressing financial problems now faced by school boards so that they can alleviate some of the problems that they are facing in relation to school maintenance. Construction is a different matter altogether. More and more money, as I say, is going into that field.

Not only that, one remark made that really hurt was the fact that rural Newfoundland seems to be disadvantaged. I would like to inform the hon. member and all hon. members on both sides that the main emphasis of this Department of Education for the next X number of years, at least, will be in relation to looking at disadvantaged areas. If these happen to be rural areas, for not always are they rural areas in Newfoundland, then extra emphasis will be placed on it. We have at least a half a dozen initiatives underway right now, not planning, but actually underway that will help alleviate some of the discrepancies that presently exist.

The people in rural Newfoundland and the students in rural Newfoundland have the right to expect every advantage that they can find anywhere else and we are going to make sure that they have every possible opportunity of obtaining these advantages. There is no way that extra attention is given to larger areas over the smaller areas. I will make that quite clear to the member and all

members present.

We have committed funding for capital construction. We have committed funding for school maintenance, and we have also looked at the problems that are existing now because of increases in capital costs, because of lower pupil ratios and we have recommended ways that these differences can be offset.

Thank you.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

The hon. the member for Stephenville.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is with pleasure that I support this petition so ably presented by my colleague for St. Barbe (Mr. Furey). It concerns the condition of two schools in Daniel's Harbour. This petition was made up by over 200 people in his district, and all these concerns that were read out by him were ones that they wrote down and sent to him. These are concerns that have existed for a long period of time. It is not something that the hon. member has added to or made up or anything like that. These are concerns that presently exist in those classrooms there today.

When the hon. the member for St. Barbe (Mr. Furey) asked me to support the petition, I said I have no problem in supporting the petition, but when I looked at exactly some of the problems that exist in these schools, I have to wonder what year we are in today. It seems as if we have gone back

to the 1930s or the 1940s or something because these conditions are unreal. They are conditions that a school or students should not have to go through.

On the one hand, the minister says that we are planning over the next five years to address the concerns of rural Newfoundland, but on the other hand, he says we do not have responsibility for dishing out the money. I would like to know what responsibility there is over there. The Minister of Education (Mr. Hearn) said he is, and I am sure he is, concerned, but these two schools should be priorities as of right now with this administration.

It is shocking to see in this day of supposedly high technology, good educational materials and qualified teachers that we have a school that exists in the 1940s or 1930s. I hear parents saying how they used to go to school and carry wood to throw in the fire, but this is even worse. It is a fire trap. It is ridiculous and all these concerns should have been addressed long ago.

When the minister says we are going to do this over the next five years, we should realize this administration have had fifteen years to do these things so I do not take the five year promise to be worth anything. It is crazy to say that.

We have transfer payments being cut back by the federal government and this is going to affect our education system down here, but we do not hear a thing being said about it, not a thing. It is one of the reasons why these schools are in the deplorable condition they are in.

MR. HEARN:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Minister of Education.

MR. HEARN:

Mr. Speaker, some of the remarks being made by the hon. gentleman cannot be let stand on record. First of all, in relation to cutbacks in federal funding, the hon. member should know that federal funds do not come into the Department of Education. The school construction money has nothing to do with federal funding. There are no federal dollars involved whatsoever. In relation to capital construction, it has nothing to do with maintenance or the endeavors we are undertaking. We allocate each year \$20 million for capital construction to the DEC's and they decide, not us, where the priorities lie and where the money goes.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

Would the hon. minister please state his point of order?

MR. HEARN:

The point of order is that what the hon. member is saying is not factual and if he is going to make statements, he at least should listen to what is being said and then address his points to the facts.

MR. KELLAND:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order the hon. member for Naskaupi.

MR. KELLAND:

If the point of order raised by the Minister of Education (Mr. Hearn) indicates that the statement by my colleague are inaccurate and that the federal coffers have no effect on your department, I would question the veracity of that statement in the broader sense, Mr. Speaker. For example, in providing information leading up to his point of order and previously, the minister says that construction, capital works and so on are carried out on a priority basis. The situation as outlined by the member for St. Barbe (Mr. Furey) and supported by the member for Stephenville (Mr. K. Aylward), which the minister questions, is a very frightening situation, if it can be taken at face value. But even more frightening, I think, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that the minister has indicated that construction takes place on a priority basis and what he is telling this hon. House and the Province is that there are places even worse than that. But when transfer payments go into a general fund of any sort, to say that your department is not influenced in some way by that funding, I would have to question the veracity of that.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

There is no point of order.

The hon. the member for Stephenville.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, I fully support and endorse the efforts by the member for St. Barbe (Mr. Furey) to get renovations or a proper school built for the kids and the teachers in that district because the future of this Province

depends on these people being educated in the proper manner. If you look at these conditions and you look at the future of this Province, it is crazy. You are never going to get a proper education if you have to worry about a light fixture falling down on you or the place catching fire every day or every second while you are in the school.

MR. BARRY:

Are these the 'centres of excellence' around the province?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Today is Private Members' Day and I would call Motion No. 5, which is in the name of the hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans (Mr. Flight).

The hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. FLIGHT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A thought comes to my mind before I start the debate. I want to tell the hon. the Minister of Energy (Mr. Marshall), Mr. Speaker, that when he is speaking to his counterpart in Ottawa again, Ms Carney, that he tell her to pronounce Newfoundland, as in understand. That is the way you say Newfoundland. As the moderator of one of our open line shows this morning took it upon himself to point out, she should know how to pronounce Newfoundland. It is

Newfoundland as in understand.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Tell us how Jean Chretien would say it.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. FLIGHT:

The key word may be understand because we are not sure she understands. That is the key word.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. FLIGHT:

It is not her problem mispronouncing Newfoundland or the mid-Atlantic accent because of her West Coast accent or whatever, it is her inability to understand Newfoundland, as in understand.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate that we have this debate today. When I put this motion on the Order Paper some months ago I never considered that it may come up when we were right in the midst of the debate on the Atlantic Accord. But it is very appropriate and very ironic that it would because it gives one a chance, Mr. Speaker, to compare those two great resources, our hydro electric potential in Labrador and the offshore potential here in Newfoundland.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, I want some

protection from jaws from Placentia, the famous welfare officer from Placentia. I want some protection, Mr. Speaker, if you would not mind.

MR. SPEAKER (Greening):
Order, please!

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, one should compare those two great resources. It has to become obvious to one when one starts to think about it that for some reason or other this present administration, under Premier Peckford, seems to have made a career out of playing politics and deliberately denying the benefits of those two great resources to the people of Newfoundland, the offshore and the Labrador hydro potential.

Mr. Speaker, let us compare the Lower Churchill with Hibernia. Why is the priority on the offshore? Why have we put all our eggs in one basket, in the offshore? In the early 1970's, a feasibility study was done on the development of the Lower Churchill. Maybe the Minister of Energy (Mr. Marshall) would care to guess what it would have cost the Newfoundland government in the early to mid 1970 to have developed the Lower Churchill, Gull Island, in 1974 dollars? The answer is \$1.1 billion, one quarter of what it will cost to build one structure or one platform for Hibernia.

Mr. Speaker, let us compare the benefits of one Gull Island compared to Hibernia, the short term benefits. There are more short term jobs in the Lower Churchill, Mr. Speaker, than in Hibernia, without the safety hazards, without the risks to the environment, without the risks to

our fishery and without having to worry about incidents like the very tragic Ocean Ranger, no risks of that nature, no threat to our fisheries. Mr. Speaker, those are the facts on the Lower Churchill. Mr. Speaker, why have we not gone with the development of the Lower Churchill? Let us talk about the present day costs of the Lower Churchill. The last estimate I saw, Mr. Speaker, I did not have time to have it updated. Maybe the Minister of Forest, Resources and Lands (Mr. Simms), since he is being so nice to me here today, will undertake to get the figures. What is the cost in 1986 dollars of developing the Lower Churchill? In 1982 dollars, Mr. Speaker, it was \$4.4 billion dollars, up from \$1.1 billion. So, Mr. Speaker, maybe when the Minister from Grand Falls stands up in this debate he will tell us what it is.

MR. BARRY:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:

We are on a serious matter here and the member for Grand Falls, a former Speaker, is showing great ignorance as well as contempt for the Rules of this House to be interrupting the member. We would ask, Mr. Speaker, to have members on the opposite side to wait their turn to speak. It is Private Members' Day and even those in the back benches trying to get into Cabinet for a long time, Mr. Speaker, even they can have their chance to speak on this legislation at the appropriate time. They should not be shouting and drowning out the member who is making a good speech.

MR. SIMMS:

Further to that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Further to that point of order, the hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition, as a former Deputy Speaker of this House, shows even greater ignorance than what he eludes to me. The hon. member for Windsor - Buchans was talking to me and we were talking back and forth. He asked me a question and I asked him a question back. That is perfectly acceptable in debate, Mr. Speaker, and the Leader of the Opposition need not make a picky little thing out of something like that.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, I would ask all hon. members to be silent while the hon. member for Windsor - Buchans is speaking, please.

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, the member for Grand Falls should remember his New Year's resolutions that he made on NTV, that he was going to be positive.

MR. SIMMS:

If you are going to get on with that then I am going to continue to talk.

MR. BARRY:

No, you are not, the Chair will call order.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

I will ask members on both sides of the House to please be silent while the hon. member is speaking.

MR. TOBIN:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. the member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, we just had a point of order by the Leader of the Opposition because the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands responded to a question. You made a ruling on it, Your Honour, and up gets the member for Windsor - Buchans again, with absolutely nothing to do with the resolution before the House, and starts talking about a New Year's resolution that was made by the member for Grand Falls. Mr. Speaker, if he wants the Rules of the House to be adhered to, which they should, then I think that he should firstly be instructed to follow them.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, there is no point of order. The hon. member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:

So, Mr. Speaker, the present government makes a big case out of the fact that we are losing \$400 million a year on the sale of power from the Upper Churchill, \$400 million a year that we could be getting. If that is true, it must follow that if we had half that power to export or to sell we would be losing \$200 million a year.

The potential of the Lower Churchill is 2,300 megawatts, roughly half the production of the Upper Churchill. When the Minister of Mines points out that this province, as a result of the inequity, inequality and discrimination that is going on on

the Upper Churchill deal, because of what has happened in the past ten years, that this Province is losing \$400 million a year in revenue, then he must take the blame. He must understand and he must accept the fact that we are losing \$200 million a year because of his inability and his government's inability and deliberate procrastination on the development of the Lower Churchill. We are losing \$200 million a year, Mr. Speaker, because this government chooses not to develop the Lower Churchill. Mr. Speaker, although we do not have the figures for the development of the Lower Churchill in 1986 dollars, my guess is that it will be worth it regardless, or if it were \$5 billion. One structure for Hibernia cost \$5 billion. I am suggesting, Mr. Speaker, and this party believes that the development of the Lower Churchill would be worth that \$5 billion or \$6 billion, if it is \$6 billion, in 1986 dollars.

We are looking at a resource, Mr. Speaker, that goes on forever. You only have to replace a few bearings. You spend \$500 million to put the facility there and 100 years from now it is still producing electricity, still selling it clean to the United States with no environmental risks and no real safety hazards. When the minister gets up, if he gets up in this debate, would he tell this House why it is that they have continuously, since the early 1970's, played blatant politics with the hydro electrical resources of Labrador, dangled it in front of the people of Newfoundland, did all kinds of studies, telling how much was there, how much it will cost to develop, how much it is worth, how much we are losing, doing all this

year after year after year, millions and millions and millions of dollars wasted in one way or the other on the Lower Churchill, yet, to date, we are no closer to a development on the Lower Churchill than we were in the early 1970's.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier has stated that he was not prepared to discuss the development of the Lower Churchill or the hydro potential of Labrador until the Upper Churchill contract was re-negotiated. We have had, Mr. Speaker, two or three court cases relative to the Upper Churchill. We have lost every one of them. The Premier, with the support of his Cabinet, has had Newfoundland humiliated in court a dozen times, humiliated on the offshore in court, humiliated on the Churchill Falls power in court. Every time they go to court they lose unanimously and Newfoundland is further and further humiliated.

Mr. Speaker, maybe the minister, when he stands up, is going to tell us why to date we have not looked seriously at developing that resource for the short term benefit of the jobs, eight years, Mr. Speaker, of employing 3,000 or 4,000 men per year, why, given these times of high unemployment, given the need for jobs in this Province, this administration has not accepted the challenge and followed through on some of the studies and develop the Lower Churchill for two reasons, short term jobs - I see the Premier going out with his cigar, Mr. Speaker. He could afford to smoke more expensive cigars if we had the revenue from Lower Churchill coming in.

MR. MATTHEWS:

My son, how small are you?

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth (Mr. Matthews) is going to stand up shortly and explain to us why it is that the Lower Churchill has not been developed.

MR. MATTHEWS:

I am not going to talk about cigars.

MR. FLIGHT:

Why has the Lower Churchill not been developed, Mr. Speaker? Why has it not been? Because, Mr. Speaker, it is more valuable in the short term and in the long term than 100 Hibernias. It will be raining in Labrador, Mr. Speaker, when all the oil is gone off the Grand Banks of Newfoundland. It will be raining. There will be water falling in Labrador long after the hydro carbons are gone off the Grand Banks. It will be raining up there 100 years from now. It will be raining in Labrador and we will be making \$200 million or \$300 million a year 100 years from now on the sale of that power. The hydro carbons on the Grand Banks are not going to fuel aluminum reduction plants.

MR. DAWE:

Why did you give it away?

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, nobody gave away the Lower Churchill! You hypocrites will play politics with it, but nobody gave it away! You have not got the ability or the political will to negotiate with another government. Bourassa six months ago held out the -

MR. MATTHEWS:

He was not the Premier then.

MR. FLIGHT:

He said, "I understand -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. FLIGHT:

Could I have order, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. FLIGHT:

Order, Mr. Speaker, or we will turn this place upside down.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

If any hon. member wishes to speak in this hon. House I would ask him to stand and be recognized, otherwise would you please be silent while the hon. member is speaking.

MR. FLIGHT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as I said a few months ago the new Premier of Quebec, Mr. Bourassa, recognized that there were inequities, or there was discrimination maybe from Newfoundland's point of view, in the Upper Churchill.

MR. TOBIN:

That is not true.

MR. FLIGHT:

He did not suggest that he was prepared to change the Upper Churchill contract but he did suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the Upper Churchill contract could be looked at in the renegotiation or the negotiation of development of all the hydro electric power in Quebec, the five rivers and the Lower Churchill, the Upper Churchill contract could be looked at in that context and maybe we could improve our share of the

Upper Churchill by taking the lion's share or negotiating towards the lion's share of the profits or the revenues from the development of the rest of the Labrador rivers.

Why is it, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Energy (Mr. Marshall) cannot take Mr. Bourassa or his Mines and Energy Minister up on that and start negotiating? He held out the possibility for Newfoundland, he said, "Let us negotiate." Refusing, like he Premier has done for ten years, to negotiate is the action of a child, Mr. Speaker, who holds his breath until he is blue in the face.

You can play politics with it all you like, you can try to continue to hang the Upper Churchill around the neck of the Liberal Party, but the only way this Province will ever benefit from the hydro potential of Labrador is to negotiate with Quebec. There is no other way. Until the Premier, the Minister of Energy and his Cabinet is prepared to accept that fact, forget it. It will continue to flow to the ocean.

It is interesting, Mr. Speaker, that Mr. Bourassa in the past weeks and months has put together a blue chip committee, including ex-cabinets from previous United States governments, to look at the possibility of selling Quebec power to the United States. He is talking about another James Bay. He is not talking about the Lower Churchill. He could be talking about the Lower Churchill, he could be talking about the five rivers if we were prepared to talk to him, but he is talking about James Bay. Mr. Speaker, ignore him, ignore Quebec and we will have missed the boat again.

The biggest millstone, the biggest crime that this government has got to shoulder, Mr. Speaker, is its action and its lack of action on the hydro electrical potential of Labrador. There is no way to put a dollar value on what you have cost this Province.

The nationalization of the Upper Churchill cost \$200 million and we have been paying interest on it every since. What has it accomplished? In 1971, BRINCO was nationalized by this government and what has it gained in this Province? What has it gained this Province? Fourteen years later we are paying interest. How did the nationalization of the Upper Churchill benefit this Province? How did it benefit the Coast of Labrador? How did it benefit any part of this Province?

You continue to allow the hydro-electric potential in this Province to flow to the sea while you put all your eggs in the offshore basket and prop up what will turn out to be the biggest give away we ever witnessed in that Atlantic Accord. That is what it is going to turn out to be. There is going to be more recriminations in this Province over that legislation and over that Atlantic Accord than you ever had over the Upper Churchill. Do not forget it!

Future Newfoundlanders will pay just as big a price for that Accord as they ever paid for the Upper Churchill and you are doing it with your eyes open, the same way you have ignored Labrador and its power potential with your eyes open. You played it for politics, nothing else.

MR. SPEAKER (Greening):
Order, please!

The hon. member's time is up.

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, this government owes it to the people of Newfoundland to give them an accounting as why they have ignored the hydro potential of Labrador, why they have denied this Province the benefit of that resource.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. FLIGHT:

I will have some other things to say when I wind up my comments on Labrador power, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

By leave! By leave!

MR. FLIGHT:

By leave?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

No.

MR. FLIGHT:

I will try it on next Wednesday, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, this motion has been brought in, I would hope everyone would take notice of the fact, by the Energy critic in the Opposition, by apparently the putative future Energy Minister. The hon. gentleman need not look at me with such jaundiced eyes, I did not use the words 'putative father' or anything like that, I said 'putative Energy Minister', the replacement in the airy fairy as they go off in their

schizophrenic heights, and wondering if things are going to happen in the future. If they got into government the hon. gentleman would be Minister of Energy.

Mr. Speaker, seldom have there been such empty and stupid speeches made in this hon. House. I wonder veritabily why oxygen does not reject the hon. gentleman he is so absolutely stupid. If that is an indication of the hon. gentleman's intelligence, you would think virtually that the elements would reject him. Mr. Speaker, I think it is absolutely disgraceful for the hon. gentleman to get up and make a speech of that nature.

He has a motion down on the Order Paper today with respect to energy matters, and the first resolution is 'That this House instruct the present Administration to immediately eliminate the fuel adjustment charges.' Now, notice, Mr. Speaker, how he avoided any reference to that at all. He completely avoided reference to that because the fuel adjustment charge has been eliminated, Mr. Speaker.

And now, Mr. Speaker, the electrical charges are spread out on a twelve month equal basis, so we do not have that any more. Then he wants to have a freeze on - get this - electrical rates in the Province. That is what he wants to do. Now, what do you do, Mr. Speaker? You have a freeze on electrical rates, so that means everybody pays the same rate. What happens if the price goes up? What do you do -

MR. FLIGHT:

Why can it not go down?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. MARSHALL:

If it goes down, as we always do, we give the benefit to the people. But if the price goes up, instead of putting up the rates who is going to pay for it? It is not Uncle Joe. Nobody is going to pay for these other than the people of the Province.

So what the hon. gentleman is really advocating is that we put up taxes. So the hon. gentleman has to define, if he wants a freeze on electrical rates, how he is going to pay for any incremental costs in electricity? Obviously, there is only one way to do it, it has to come out of the same pocket. So what he is advocating here is that we increase taxes. So, I would ask him, what is he going to increase? Is he going to increase the sales tax by one or two points? Is he going to increase the corporate income tax, or what?

So he avoids that completely. He put this down, he did not know what it was about so he put it before the House. It is rather a contempt, Mr. Speaker, as Your Honour knows, to put a resolution before this House and to get up before Your Honour and completely ignore it when you are speaking to it. He has taken the time of the House to put this on every Wednesday.

The next thing he talked about is to renegotiate the Upper Churchill contract. What the hon. gentleman has said can only be characterized as complete and abysmal stupidity that is not worthy of a member of this House, and it makes me wonder, wherever the hon. gentleman lives when he is in St. John's, how he finds his way to this particular Assembly. His

words are, why has not the Lower Churchill been developed? And he is the Energy critic. He said, it represents half of the Upper Churchill. Sure if we had that we would be selling it and we would be losing one half. The hon. gentleman must realize that the reason why we cannot develop the Lower Churchill is because at the present time there are megawatts in excess of the needs of this Province. So what do you do? There are 1,700 megawatts in the Lower Churchill and there is a need for about 800 megawatts at the present time. So what do you do with the differential, do you charge the people of the Province two and three times the cost in order to get 800 megawatts while the rest of it just flows over the dam and goes down the river? Can you do that? Does the hon. gentleman want the electrical rates up by two or three times what they are at present? Obviously, you cannot do that.

Mr. Speaker, the only way you can effectively finance it is to sell it outside the Province, sell the surplus outside the Province until such time as you need it. You do not sell it out for sixty years as they did the Upper Churchill, but you sell it out, Mr. Speaker, on short-term contracts, where you have the right to reclaim it in the future.

But the fly in the ointment, Mr. Speaker, has been the Province of Quebec. The Province of Quebec will not allow us to sell the electricity to customers outside. They want to sell it at the border, the same way as they have with respect to the Upper Churchill, and the reason why they can do that, Mr. Speaker, and they can stick in with such confidence, is because that was a precedent

that was established by the hon. gentlemen there opposite. They should have taken the same attitude that we took on the offshore instead of taking that deferential attitude, its Uncle Ottawa, and its Quebec, and 'Whatever you say.' 'We will get the short-term jobs.' 'Yes, boy, take it, as long as we live for one or two years.' 'Take it for the next ten, fifteen, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty years.' 'Take everything away.' Hon. gentlemen there opposite, that is the way their party developed the Upper Churchill and that is one of the reasons why we are in the conundrum. I will say to you today, Mr. Speaker, if the Upper Churchill had occurred under this administration, as we have demonstrated in the offshore, there would not be any Upper Churchill because we would have secured equivalent rights to that which we have obtained on the offshore.

Unfortunately, what has happened is they created the precedent, they gave the contract. It is a situation now where instead of creating something you have to unravel, and it is only because the bunch of people who were in power at the time, who were utter clowns, who perpetrated themselves in power for years by anaesthetizing people with their own money, were prepared to do it on the short-term basis and, as a result of that, the young people that you see around, the pages and what have you and ourselves and others, are paying for it now and we will pay for it for generations yet to come.

So it was because of the stupidity of the hon. gentleman's party, which is so obviously exhibited and reflected once again in the

speech by the hon. gentleman, which I have to say is the most stupid, inane speech that has ever been made in this Assembly and it shows the hon. gentleman does not know what he is talking about.

I will answer his question: The reason why we have not developed the Lower Churchill is because of the fact that we have no ability at the present time to sell the surplus, and the reason why we do not have it is partly because and in large measure due to the precedent that was created before. I am going to tell the hon. gentlemen that we are working fairly closely on this problem but I am not going to din this House by talking about it until such time, Mr. Speaker, as we can hopefully achieve something. I am going to tell you it is infinitely more complicated, complex and difficult than the offshore, as difficult as the offshore was, because we have to approach it from the point of view of unravelling a disastrous mistake that was made, and the hon. gentleman has the gall to get up in this House and talk about it.

And why did we nationalize the Upper Churchill? Well, he asked the wrong minister that, Mr. Speaker. I suggest the hon. gentleman ask his leader, who was instrumental in the decision to nationalize the Upper Churchill. I happened to be, Mr. Speaker, at the time, luxuriating in the back benches of the government, and he will find that this Minister of Energy voted against that particular measure from the backbenches of the government side. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, we nationalized the Upper Churchill because of the consummate vanity of the hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr.

Barry) who thought he had a good thing, who treats everything completely on the surface, who does things for the glamour, who is interested in his own power, who is not interested in the people of this Province, as he indicated when he bailed out from the people of Newfoundland in connection with the original negotiations offshore, when he precluded the people of Newfoundland, when never before it was as essential as it is today, from showing a united front to the people who are trying to continue to rape the resources of this Province. So that, Mr. Speaker, is what I am addressing. The hon. gentleman can adjust his tie all he likes and he might feel a little hot under the collar, but he should be choking on his words. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, he should have eaten his words before he uttered them in this House.

MR. FLIGHT:
Newfoundland's E.T.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. MARSHALL:
And he talks about having lost the court case, as well. Who was the one who referred these matters to the court? Who was the Minister of Mines and Energy who referred the matter of the reversion case to the court? Guess who it was!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Who was it?

MR. MARSHALL:
It was none other than the putative King Leopold, the fellow who wants to be Premier, who has such consummate vanity that he is prepared to throw out once again the interests of the people of

this province for future generations.

Mr. Speaker, let me tell you, in the few moments I have left, how inconsistent the action was, because I would like hon. gentlemen there opposite to understand this. Do you know, Mr. Speaker, that when we were trying to get the power from the Upper Churchill back and we went through the courts - by the way, it is the only act in Christendom ever the Supreme Court of Canada has decided cannot be repealed. Legislatures are supreme but, somehow or other, we cannot so we have to accept that because we abide by the rule of law.

MR. FLIGHT:
What is Mulroney saying?

MR. MARSHALL:
Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, what happened when it went before the courts, because it was put before the courts and it was decided that the Province of Newfoundland would put the issue to have it declared within the powers of this Legislature. Well, do you know what happened, Mr. Speaker? When the Leader of the Opposition was Minister of Mines and Energy, he gave instructions -

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

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

A point of order, the hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. DECKER:
Mr. Speaker, in view of the flaming praise the hon. minister is heaping on members of this House, I would just like to give

him a little bit of guidance:
When you speak well of others, you
speak well of yourself.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, there is
no point of order. The hon. the
President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

My, Mr. Speaker, yes, I will take
that piece of advice, I will grasp
it to my heart and, for the rest
of the days that the good Lord
gives me in this firmament between
now and eternity, I will value it,
Mr. Speaker, and I thank the hon.
gentleman for imparting it to me.

But, let me get back, Mr. Speaker,
once more to what was done: The
hon. Leader of the Opposition,
then Minister of Mines and Energy,
refers it to court and asks the
court to have it declared within
the powers of this Province.
That, you would think, any
red-blooded Newfoundlander would
do, but do you know what else he
did, Mr. Speaker? That very
company, Crown corporation,
Churchill Falls Corporation that
we purchased, he instructed them
to oppose it. Mr. Speaker, as I
live and breathe, the record will
show that Churchill Falls Labrador
Corporation went into court and
opposed the initiative of the
Government of Newfoundland to
declare it to be within the powers
of the Province.

MR. FLIGHT:

You supported that!

MR. MARSHALL:

No, I did not support that.

MR. FLIGHT:

Oh, yes, Sir!

MR. MARSHALL:

No, Sir! I did not!

MR. FLIGHT:

Then why did you not resign?.

MR. MARSHALL:

I will tell you what I did. When
the hon. Leopold went across in
his way, because he is always
going all over the place,
everywhere; he does not know where
he is from one end of the day to
the other, which shows just how
stable the man is in this thing,
the first act I did as Minister of
Mines and Energy was instruct the
Board of Directors of Churchill
Falls Labrador Corporation that
they were not to oppose the
actions. Can you imagine, Mr.
Speaker, what we did? We took
this action to have the Reversion
Act declared within the powers of
the Province of Newfoundland and
the then Minister of Mines and
Energy instructs Churchill Falls
Labrador Corporation to oppose
it. Now, it is there, Mr.
Speaker, it is on the record for
anyone who wants to see it. It is
on the record for any member of
the enquiring press, Here and
Now or There and Gone, or
whoever it may be, to look into,
and it is there for them to see
and it is undeniable. That is
really what happened.

So I do not need any lecture, or
this government does not, from the
people who gave away the lifeblood
of this Province to the Province
of Quebec who have made it more
difficult for this Province to get
any kind of fair deal with respect
to the Lower Churchill. I do not
need, Mr. Speaker, any lecture
from the party that is led by the
hon. gentleman who on the one side
brings in with great gusto a
measure to have an act declared
within the powers of the Province
but has not got the gumption, Mr.
Speaker, to follow it through, so
through the backdoor he tells his

little directors he has appointed to CFLCo to oppose it. Now, that is a fact, Mr. Speaker, it is there on the record. And that is what we have to deal with in the Liberal Party of this Province. And do you know what they opposed it on - he allowed them to do it - Mr. Speaker? That it was an interprovincial undertaking.

The member for Twillingate (Mr. W. Carter), and I can see him smiling there, knows what I am talking about, that an interprovincial undertaking. The Province of Quebec, you see, would not bring this in as a defence, that it was an interprovincial undertaking, but the then Minister of Energy permitted it. So, Mr. Speaker, that is where we are in this Province with the hon. gentleman there opposite. And I am glad he has come in, because he -

MR. BARRY:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

A point of order, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Speaker, there comes a time in this House when the inaccuracies and the misrepresentations made by members have to be corrected. Mr. Speaker, if it could be pointed out, the Churchill Falls Labrador Corporation is a corporation which had as shareholders, and still has, this Province but also the Province of Quebec, or Quebec Hydro. Mr. Speaker, anything that was done in that court case was done as required by law, where the law says that the majority shareholder cannot oppress the minority shareholder. That is the law, Mr. Speaker. I did not make

that law. That is the law, so that the action taken was pursuant to the legal advice - not given by me - received by Newfoundland Hydro.

MR. BAIRD:

Get to the point.

MR. BARRY:

Here is the point: You will recall, Mr. Speaker, before the last federal election, the Prime Minister of this country saying that he was going to intervene to ensure that Newfoundland was protected in that Upper Churchill debate. Where is that consultation and co-operation now that Mr. Mulroney is elected, and what has the minister done to see that Mr. Mulroney lived up to that commitment? That is the question that the minister should be dealing with.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, the hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

To that point of order of my sad and jealous Tory let me tell you something: He can get on his legal issues all he likes, and he can quote all sorts of legal maxims. It is true that there cannot be an oppression of the minority by the majority. I know that. He knows that. Any grade school, Kindergarten lawyer knows that. But this was the thing, the practicality of it: Who were the token shareholders in the Churchill Falls Labrador Corporation? Quebec Hydro and the

Province of Newfoundland. Now, who was before the courts? The Province of Newfoundland brought it in so they were there, the Province of Quebec, Hydro Quebec, were in there, so how could any of them object that somebody else was not looking after their interests when they were already there, Mr. Speaker? What he did was give the opening for another concern, our own concern that we bought, to bring in the very sensitive issue that the Province of Quebec would not bring into the case interprovincial thing.

Mr. Speaker, it goes to show the political instability, the lack of judgement, and the unfitness of the hon. gentleman to execute any office in government whatsoever. And, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentlemen there opposite who gave such a consummately stupid and inane speech, based upon their own hydro policies, has attached himself to a leader who is so unstable politically, Mr. Speaker, that he is not going to prove the situation. I think the case rests.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Greening):

To that point of order there is a difference of opinion between two hon. members.

The hon. member for Naskaupi.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. KELLAND:

Thank you for the round, hon. members opposite. Mr. Speaker, thank you.

MR. BUTT:

You are making a good speech, 'Jim'.

MR. KELLAND:

You recognize one, I am pleased to see.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak to the resolution put forth in this House by my hon. colleague and I think, despite derogatory descriptions of his performance, it was well done, it was done with good intentions, and I think his sincerity is evident every time he speaks on a subject of deep concern to him, as this particular matter is. What has distressed me and continues to distress me in the House since I have been here, close to a year now, is that a number of the members opposite, in particular the Government House Leader (Mr. Marshall) seems to adopt a position that he would come out on top of any debate if he continually berates and belittles and is sarcastic to the official Opposition. I find that a little distressing in a man in his particular position, a leader often called in the media the second most powerful man in government, perhaps, as my colleague suggests, the most powerful. I find that it somehow lessens his stature in my mind, and I have known the gentleman for, I would think, thirty or forty years, as we are both from the St. John's area originally. It does distress me that he would take an approach in debate that would indicate that he prefers to put other members down.

I know when a member stands on his feet, hopefully the point is that he is expressing some concern for the people he represents in the Province. So in deriding that, or being sarcastic about that, you, in effect, are being sarcastic to and deriding the people that particular member represents, and it never ceases to distress me

that particularly the Government House Leader would resort to that sort of tactic. Probably I could pick up on a phrase the Government House Leader used - he mentioned something about as he lives and breathes - and I could perhaps suggest that that is one of the crosses this Province has to bear, if I wanted to sink to that particular level, but I do not wish to.

I would like to try to make some points in connection with this particular resolution on the floor that relates to the people of Labrador who have a very, very deep concern in the future of our Province and, as a sort of have-not region in a have-not province, I suppose we are doubly concerned of what is transpiring with the people in authority, and I am talking about the provincial government.

I know, for example, when you do talk about electricity rates that one of the communities in my district is very fortunate in having a good rate, and that is Happy Valley - Goose Bay. But even though it is of a larger population and carries more votes, if I wanted to be as base and as crass as that, it is a good thing. But we must not forget that within Naskaupi district, and certainly within Torngat Mountains and Eagle River, we have communities which are not in the fortunate position that Happy Valley - Goose Bay is, and we cannot forget that the people in the smaller communities who are subject to diesel-generated electricity certainly have equal rights with anybody else in the Province. When you protest that sort of inequality and inequity in hydro rates, you are not saying to Newfoundland Hydro and the

government, 'Let us raise the low guys' rates up to the high rates.' What we are trying to say is those people who are being, sort of, hard done by, as in the case of Torngat Mountains again, Eagle River and Mud Lake within my own district - what we are trying to say is do something about the high rates that these people have to suffer by bringing them down and making them more equitable with other communities in the Province who do get the benefit of a lower rate.

When we talk about the development of hydro and the renegotiation of the Upper Churchill contract and so on, Mr. Speaker, it is frequently cast from the government side of the House that everything is the fault of a former Liberal administration. But I can tell you - and I have travelled this Province quite a bit, I have lived here for fifty-two, almost fifty-three years - I have talked to a lot of people. I have been in many districts in the past year and previous years and I have talked to people in the districts of several of the members opposite in the past year. I have chatted on a friendly basis with people in your own district, Mr. Speaker, and got to know very many fine people in these districts. Their perception of what happened with the Upper Churchill is not the perception that the government side continually brings forth. It certainly is not that. They keep saying that a former Liberal administration sold out this Province on the Upper Churchill contract.

What most people say, and if members opposite would be truthful about their interpretation of what is being said, they would say that

in today's terms it does not look like a very good deal. It looks like a very poor deal from the point of view of our Province. Quebec is reaping the benefits of one of our resources, but they all say in this Province it is about the best deal that could have been gotten in terms of that day.

I would like to suggest that every single member opposite, some of whom were previously members of a different party, including the leader, if they were back in those days, with the terms of reference and world market conditions, the market conditions for hydro-electric power and the availability of funding and financing for a project of that magnitude, that they would have perhaps done exactly the same thing as was done by the Liberal administration in those days and perhaps, may have done a worse job.

Carrying that thought a little further, in the expression by the Premier and government members, as the wonderful, absolutely fantastic arrangements they now have in the Atlantic Accord in connection with the offshore, how do we know that twenty-five or thirty years down the road, our descendants, generations that come after, will not be saying exactly the same thing about the Peckford administration and their handling of the Atlantic Accord and the offshore; exactly the same thing about them then that they continue to say about the Upper Churchill deal so many years ago? We have no way of predicting that. There is no guarantee that the present government is infallible, nor is the Opposition infallible, but we are genuinely concerned about the welfare of the people we represent and we would like to think that

the members opposite are in the same boat. So when we get into a debate on any question, should we not devote more time to the pertinent issues, the concerns of the people we represent, the people who put us in here, rather than this ballyragging and this sarcastic approach with personal attacks on members on this side.

We represent a lot of people. I represent everybody in Naskaupi district, not just Liberals, Mr. Speaker. I have as many calls, perhaps from people who supported my opponent, with their complaints and concerns, as I do from people who voted for me. I have no way of knowing exactly who voted which way. I only know the numbers, not who they are. So when you are hard on or being derogatory towards a district represented by a Liberal member, a member of the Opposition, you not only are hurting Liberals and doing hard by Liberals, you are doing hard by the people who supported your own party. The government is in that position. They may not stop long enough to realize that.

I noticed the member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren) has now left. But in his previous role here in the House of Assembly he frequently addressed questions like I am addressing now. Is the government being hard on or giving a hard time to districts represented by the official Opposition? Now he is no longer a member of the Opposition and that is his own personal choice. It is one that he made himself, I assume, and I do not question his motives on that. He made the decision and he has moved across. But by the very same token I have heard the hon. member for Torngat Mountains rise in his place in this House and actively defend the

rights of the people he represents in Torngat Mountains - I do not think he can deny that - and on questions such as electricity, and the high rate of the diesel-generated power up there.

I think that we could address ourselves in the manner that I outlined for the member and other members who have presented points in debate. If we could stick to that and not bog ourselves down with being derogatory about members opposite, simply because they are members opposite. I do not agree with that. I find it degrading to me as a member of the House to sit and watch another member no matter on which side he is on do that sort of a thing to another member who has certain rights in the House of Assembly. I want to make those points and stress those points.

There are all kinds cracks we can all make and I suppose we frequently do that. I try to avoid heckling or something while sitting in my chair. I like to be able to express my views while I am standing on my feet and listen to other people when I am sitting when they are on their feet. I do appreciate the absolute silence I am getting from the other side right now perhaps because they have other things to be concerned with and not the motion that is on the floor of the House right now.

If we are talking about the Churchill River and the Upper and Lower hydro developments, there has been an inability by whichever administration has been in since that original deal on the Upper Churchill to do anything about renegotiating the deal. That is sad. No matter who the administration is, no matter which party they represent, we have not

been able to accomplish that goal and renegotiate a better deal for our Province. That really is a sad commentary on our ability to handle a situation like that.

It is fine for the government to sit there for fourteen and fifteen years and say, you guys, the Liberal Party, your predecessors sold out our Province on the Upper Churchill. But good heavens, come on now! They have had fifteen years to do something about it. I know the new Premier of Quebec has expressed a willingness to deal with the government of our Province with a view to working out a better deal. My understanding is that the position of the government is they will not talk about the rivers that flow into both provinces, and will not talk about development of the Lower Churchill until such time as Mr. Bourassa's administration agrees to give back or to renegotiate the Upper Churchill. That is fine. It is the fighting Newfoundlander pose that we have come to recognize and it is a little tarnished of more recent times because of the change of government in Ottawa. But I learn to respect the Premier of the Province for that particular attitude. I would have been very pleased to have been able to continue that if he adopted the same pose no matter who was in Ottawa. That is where the credibility starts to slip in my mind.

So what we should doing, our approach should be in a reasonable manner to Mr. Bourassa and the Quebec Government is that look, we would like to renegotiate the Upper Churchill situation because our Province is being hurt. Your province is not being hurt. Your province is getting rich at the

expense of ours. But we are being hurt. It is not fair, in a humanity sense it is not fair, morally it is not fair, legally, of course, I guess it has been shown that it is fair from a purely judicial point of view. However, if the government would take it upon itself, as part of this motion indicates, to make another strong, reasonable and sensible attempt to re-negotiate the Upper Churchill contract, they might consider one of the proposals, that would be supported by Mr. Bourassa, no doubt, and by our party on this side, the official Opposition, and it is a sensible approach, that some sort of a package arrangement could be looked at.

You know, would not Mr. Bourassa and his administration be more amenable to suggestions that we re-negotiate the Upper Churchill if we could also say, 'Now, we also have a certain hydro potential of the Lower Churchill or joint development of the rivers that flow into both provinces?' I think that if we took that kind of a reasonable approach it might work, but it seems to me that the present administration's attitude and role in the whole means of handling the affairs of our Province is that they would rather not deal with a government that is of a different political stripe than they are themselves. That is a really sad commentary on our approach to the affairs of our Province because it means that we have - and I say we collectively, I am talking about the House of Assembly, as controlled by the government - degenerated to the level that we are less than responsible in our duties.

It is fine that, as my hon. colleague mentioned, all the eggs

are in the offshore basket sort of a thing and that is probably true. When you get up around Labrador and they hear the government talking about the offshore and the thousands of jobs - it may never come about - and all these various benefits, the people in Labrador feel very remote from all of that. They say, "What does it mean to us? Really what does it mean to us?" How many Labradorians, how many people from Naskaupi district, Eagle River district, Torngat Mountains and Menihek, how many of these people will actually be directly employed in the offshore project? They do not know. They feel remote because it sounds to them - and I do not say this in any derogatory sense - like a bunch of Newfoundlanders on the Island talking about how many jobs and how quick they are going to get rich in the future. Very infrequently is the word Labrador used in some of these considerations except as it might relate to some of the offshore resources that may be off the coast of Labrador. That is a matter of concern, Mr. Speaker. I am sure it is to any Labrador member.

The hon. member for Torngat (Mr. Warren) is here and the other members for Labrador are not here at the moment but I am sure they are very concerned -

MR. CALLAN:
Menihek.

MR. KELLAND:
The member for Menihek (Mr. Fenwick) is here but not in his place.

I am sure you are very concerned that a fairly reasonable approach through training and so on of

Native people and people that inhabit the six communities in the Torngat Mountains region would be given some opportunity for training in the technical fields and the fields that are related to offshore development and the work that might emanate from that sort of a thing. He would be fighting for, as I would be fighting for, no doubt the member for Menihek and Eagle River would be fighting for, an assurance that their people also reap the benefits of what happens offshore. When the people in Labrador hear comments and talk about the offshore, they see it as an Island-based activity that would mean very, very little for Labrador.

So here we are, the largest part of the Province geographically, in population, of course, much less densely populated, and we are a vast storehouse of resources. The people in Labrador feel that they are sitting on this vast storehouse and, I think the term was used by a government member, that there has been a raping of these resources. They see it that way. The resources of Labrador are being taken out of Labrador with no great benefit to Labradorians. Somehow or other that is wrong.

Whether we ever reap the benefits of offshore development in jobs and anything else that might accrue from that, we do have resources within Labrador that can be sensibly developed and, in particular, Mr. Speaker, of course, and in the context of this motion we are talking about the hydro potential of Labrador. Short term jobs, and someone made almost a derogatory comment to that effect, that short terms jobs are not the answer. We know that, that short term jobs are not the

answer. However, in the hills and valleys of development and the long term question of hills and valleys when you have peak employment and then you have the trough, the very low employment and so on, these short term construction phase jobs help to fill in the trough.

You have to keep in mind that if you develop the Lower Churchill perhaps you are talking about 3,000 or 4,000 people in construction alone which might last four or five years. We are also talking about the Island connecting to the Churchill River's existing power output and that which is in the potential up there to be developed.

I would like to see some meaningful approach made to the Province of Quebec that we not get up on our hind legs and be a fighting Newfoundlander for the sake of being a fighting Newfoundlander. That is fine and it gives a certain image and it is great and do we not all admire a fighter? But let us have a fighter who is fighting with a goal in mind and therefore his stance can be somewhat tempered by a certain agree of reasonableness. Mr. Bourassa is willing to sit down and talk about it. Why would not our own government at least meet him half way in that regard and talk about some kind of a package arrangement whereby, not only are we talking about the recalls and the renegotiation of the Upper Churchill power but, future developments, on into the future. Perhaps in the long run much, it might be much more important than the offshore will ever be. Keep in mind that hydrocarbons are a nonrenewable resource as opposed to hydro electricity, which is a

renewable resource as long as our rivers flow.

I thank you for your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, and I believe I have approached the end of my time or just about. I would reiterate that I support my hon. colleague in his presentation of his motion and suggest again that the government do adopt a reasonable reproach, forget the fighting Newfoundlander pose if it is going to hurt us and fight when we have to with some meaning and some degree of sensitivity to what is going on and see our resources sensibly and properly developed for the benefit of all Newfoundlanders and all Labradorians. Let us not forget that last phrase.

MR. RUSSELL:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs and Communications.

MR. RUSSELL:
Mr. Speaker -

MR. FUREY:
Mr. Speaker, a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:
A point of order, the hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:
I am sorry to interrupt the minister's speech but, while the Minister of Mines (Mr. Dinn) is here, I would not mind asking him a question, Mr. Speaker, if it is at all possible. I have just had a flurry of phone calls from my district and this is a very serious situation, Mr. Speaker. I have been told by the families and by a number of miners, Mr. Speaker, that tomorrow in their

pay cheques, 170 workers in Daniel's Harbour will receive their lay-off notice effective eight weeks from tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, I have been raising this issue on an urgent basis for the past three months, due to world prices and the glut on the market. We saw zinc decrease again yesterday, Mr. Speaker, from \$700 a ton U.S., to \$670 a ton. Also, Mr. Speaker, the scare that has been sent through the mining community by the federal Government subsidization programme. I would just like to ask the Minister of Mines and Energy if he has been contacted by the Newfoundland Zinc Mines and whether or not these fears are valid. I kid him not, I have had a flurry of calls within the last half hour.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. member should draw his remarks to a conclusion.

MR. FUREY:
Whether or not these fears are legitimate, I would like to ask the Minister of Mines if he would like to comment on that particular situation?

MR. DINN:
Mr. Speaker, by leave, obviously, we are breaking the Rules of the House. I was going to make a statement earlier today. I did not have all the detail. I was informed earlier this morning by the manager of the mine, who the hon. member knows, Ted Hewitt, that he was notifying his people of an eight week notice period under the Labour Standards Act of a close down in the mine. Now, this obviously, and the hon. member would have to admit that

this has nothing to do with Cyprus Anvil. Cyprus Anvil will not come on stream for eighteen months. What it has to do with, as the hon. member does know, I am sure he does because he is interested in what is going on at Daniel's Harbour's Newfoundland Zinc, what is going on is that they do not have enough ore of the grade sufficient to make a profit. The hon. member attempted to point out the other day that the mine was losing money. It will continue to lose money unless they find a higher grade ore. What they are operating at now is a ore grade of about five per cent.

The hon. member mentioned the price of zinc. I was looking at the commodity prices today and it has gone from about 60¢ per pound a year and a half ago down to 33.5¢, so that is quite a drop. Whether Cyprus Anvil can operate in the Northwest Territories on the basis that the price of zinc is 33.5¢ a pound to me is rather doubtful in that they went bankrupt on the basis of the 60¢ per pound price.

The hon. member is concerned and we are concerned. I have telexed the Minister of State for Mines, the hon. Bob Layton, who I contacted earlier this year and I also sent a telegram to Mr. Harry Halbauer, who is the President and Chief Executive Officer of Tech Corporation, who is the major shareholder of Newfoundland Zinc. I intend to get more information but the hon member does have his facts right.

Under the Labour Standards Act you have to notify your employees eight weeks in advance of a lay-off. They cannot go on the way they are going. They are continuing their exploration

programme and we hope that they find grades high enough so that they can continue to operate.

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Speaker, by leave.

MR. SPEAKER (Hickey):

Order, please. The hon. the leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Speaker, we might say that we do not mean to cut into the time of the Minister of Consumer Affairs and Communications (Mr. Russell) and we would consent to any time lost in this discussion that the minister might have at the end of his speech, as I know he will need in order to deal with the issues adequately.

I wonder if the minister might agree that the member for St. Barbe (Mr. Furey) has been raising this matter regularly and consistently in this House for a number of months? I am surprised that the member had to raise it again this afternoon rather than the minister making the House aware at the time of the Ministerial Statements that this was happening. We ask the minister if he sees anything that his department can do to assist those workers?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, please!

MR. BARRY:

I am asking leave, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Hickey):

If the hon. Leader of the Opposition would take his seat for just a second, I think something should be said before we proceed further. What I am afraid of is that a precedent is being set here. There is a motion before

the House. I recognized the hon. member on a point of order and I also recognized the fact he used the point of order for the purpose of asking a question.

I do not detract from the urgency and the importance of the issue. Let me make that clear. What I am afraid of, however, in terms of the Chair allowing debate of this nature to go on is that what we have done, we have circumvented the rules on the motion which is before the House and that is a very dangerous precedent.

If we are to continue, it must be by leave of the House. The House is master of its own rules. If there is leave and if we wish to continue along those lines, fine, but at least let us make sure we are not setting any dangerous precedent.

DR. COLLINS:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:
If I may just speak to that point, we certainly concur with Your Honour's statements. I think it is extremely important because we can see what started out as a point of order, which is looked upon usually as a very brief interruption of the order of the House and, now here we are, ten or fifteen minutes later, still with the business of the House being interrupted. I think we are on very serious ground here.

What the hon. member should have done, if he has an urgent question, would be to discuss it in private with the minister and then try to reach an agreement that both sides would happily

agree to in terms of discussing it in the House, by mutual consent.

To rise on a point of order and then to try and put that into, "Do I have leave or not?" I think it really disrupts the order of the House entirely.

MR. CHAIRMAN:
I recognize the hon. Leader of the Opposition. I cut into his discussion.

MR. BARRY:
I assume the minister stood up on a point of order there. I have to say that we are talking about 165 jobs and the families of those miners. We can insist upon these pedantic technicalities. Mr. Speaker, we are only talking about a couple of minutes. The minister said ten or fifteen minutes but, it was less than five minutes that would have elapsed when the minister made that comment. If we could have just another couple of minutes, it would let the minister indicate if he sees anything that his department can do.

I might note that the minister, in response to a question not that long ago by the member for St. Barbe (Mr. Furey), indicated there was some eighteen months of reserves left for that mine. We know that reserves are dependent upon price. If the price goes down, reserves may be wiped out or disappear because it does not become economical to mine what was formerly reserve, but the price has not gone down that quickly or by that much, it would seem, to wipe out that eighteen-month reserve. Has the minister directed the Department of Mines and its geologists, or is it possible for them to participate in any fashion to help that company try and identify

additional reserves that might be there? It seems to me that it is something that should have been done over the last year rather than trying to lock the barn door after the horse is gone. We still have eight weeks anyhow when you could be operating, even though there is snow on the ground. Maybe there is something that can be done.

Will the minister commit to go back to his department and talk to the professional geologists and the professional people in that department and see what can be done to save these jobs before they disappear.

MR. SPEAKER (Hickey):

Order, please! Before the minister answers, I have to insist again that we deal with this properly. If the minister is going to answer, there must be leave given.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

By leave. By leave.

MR. TULK:

By leave, Mr. Speaker. There is no problem.

MR. SPEAKER:

There is a problem. The problem is that we are setting a precedent.

MR. TULK:

(Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Is the hon. the member for Fogo (Mr. Tulk) questioning the ruling of the Chair?

MR. TULK:

No.

MR. SPEAKER:

Well, I have made it crystal

clear, if this matter is going to be allowed to continue, let us do it properly by leave, otherwise we are on a motion which is before the House. That is all I have said.

There is leave. The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. DINN:

Mr. Speaker, to answer the hon. the Leader of the Opposition, it was only about a week and a half ago that senior geologists from the department were out to Daniel's Harbour and did an investigation, provided some information to the mine, and got a fix on what the reserves were there. Daniel's Harbour has not requested anything from the department but we are actively involved with them. As you know, we provide them with all the geo-scientific information that is available to the department and, as a matter of fact, a week and a half ago they were out there doing exactly what the hon. leader suggests, an assessment of what is there and what the capability is.

As I say, the exploration is ongoing. I indicated to Mr. Halbauer, obviously, if we had an 8 per cent or a 9 per cent or a 10 per cent grade of ore at this point, we might still be able to operate Daniel's Harbour. The price has gone, by the way, in the past six months from about 50 cents a pound down to 33.5 cents a pound. In October of this year they were at a break even point, but in November, December and January they lost considerable amounts of money, as the hon. member pointed out. But I will be speaking to Mr. Halbauer at the earliest possible time, that is what I indicated in my telegram, and I will be asking him at that

point what, if anything, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador can do with respect to helping or assisting the Daniel's Harbour Newfoundland Zinc Mine.

I think we have done just about everything that is possible to be done. You cannot do anything if the grades are too low for the market. There might be something that we can do and we have asked them in our telegram this morning, what is there, beyond what we have done to this point in time, that we can do. They have made several requests. One is with respect to Worker's Compensation, for example. They thought the rates were high. They were reviewed and the rates were put down lower than they had been.

Anything that this government can do is based on getting requests from them. As a matter of fact, I indicated to him that I will bring that up and ask him if he can identify to us anything that can be done with respect to preserving

MR. BARRY:

What about getting the type of subsidy being given to Cyprus Anvil?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. DINN:

Mr. Speaker, to answer that question it would take a long time. I can provide it to the hon. member. I have everything with respect to Cyprus Anvil. The \$18 million that is talked about is a loan from the federal government.

MR. FUREY:

There are grants in there as well.

MR. DINN:

Yes, there are some grants from the Government of the Northwest Territories through the mining programmes that they have. I have a total listing of the monies that have been provided to Cyprus Anvil for the reopening. The hon. member is quite welcome to all that information.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs and Communications.

MR. RUSSELL:

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that I will not be relevant to this resolution but I think we were all kind of surprised at the revelation about Daniel's Harbour. I am sure we would like for that not to happen. We will do all we can to try to alleviate the situation.

I would like to say a few words pertaining to this resolution. I do not plan to take up the full time that I am allocated. I listened attentively to the comments made by the hon. member for Windsor - Buchans (Mr. Flight) and the hon. the member for Naskaupi (Mr. Kelland). I was kind of impressed with the speech made by the hon. the member for Naskaupi. I am sorry I cannot say the same for the hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans.

His speech started off to the Minister of Treasury Board (Mr. Windsor) suggesting how Mrs. Carney might pronounce the word 'Newfoundland'. I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that she is certainly better capable of pronouncing it than Mr. Chretien, Mr. Lalonde or Mr. Trudeau. Certainly by her visit here yesterday, she did more for this Province in one visit than the other gentlemen that I just mentioned did in all their

combined visits to this Province, which were few in number.

This resolution, Mr. Speaker, as the hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans said, is very timely. Maybe not for the reasons which he said, but it is a very timely resolution, coming on the day following the anniversary of the Atlantic Accord and the signing of an agreement which does give this government some \$34 million to spend on various projects and programmes throughout the Province. As I said, it is certainly somewhat more than the co-operation that we received from the previous Liberal Administration in Ottawa.

It appears, Mr. Speaker, that we on this side are not permitted to talk about the sellout of the Upper Churchill while the Opposition is permitted to criticize this administration for what they consider it to be some difficulties and some weaknesses in developing the Lower Churchill.

This resolution, Mr. Speaker, deals with electrical rates, and I do not think there is anybody in this Province who would not agree with the fact that the Upper Churchill was a sellout and a giveaway by a previous Liberal Administration. If that contract had not been as it is, the electrical rates in this Province would not be as high as they are today.

One of the clauses in this resolution, Mr. Speaker, says, "Whereas government incompetence is brought to a standstill any worthwhile re-negotiation with Quebec of the Upper Churchill contract." That, Mr. Speaker, is a matter of opinion. I do not know if the hon. the member for

Windsor - Buchans or the Opposition is aware if any negotiations or to what extent negotiations are taking place with the present administration in Quebec. What they are really saying, Mr. Speaker, what they are really asking the people of Newfoundland to do is to believe what a Liberal Administration tells you.

We only have to look at the negotiations on the offshore and Hibernia, as they relate to Mr. Lalonde and Mr. Chretien, to ask ourselves whether or not we can believe any Liberal. Certainly the record of the previous Federal Liberal Administration as it pertains to co-operation with this Province on Churchill Falls, the Hibernia oilfield and many other things leaves a great deal to be desired.

Somebody mentioned the fuel adjustment clause. The third WHEREAS is "the fuel adjustment charge is simply a convenient method of increasing electricity costs to consumers while appearing not to" do so. That again, Mr. Speaker, is a matter of opinion.

Certainly the cost of electricity in this Province is extremely high. There is no question about that. I would be the first one to admit it. I think that given the financial picture of this Province and the fact that this government is subsidizing electrical rates in the area of approximately \$40-plus million per year speaks highly of our attempts, at least, to try to do what we can to alleviate and help the consumers in this area. Sure I would love for it to be more and I guess every single member in this House would like for it to be more as obviously consumers out there would love for

it to be more.

Mr. Speaker, what we need in this Province, as has been said by this government and by the Opposition, boils down to the need to acquire more and new dollars. Hopefully with the kind of co-operation that we are receiving from the present administration in Ottawa will, as it pertains to the Atlantic Accord, as it pertains to the development fund, in the long term, will give us the kind of dollars that we need to enable us to reduce the cost of electricity to consumers. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that negotiations continue and reach a successful conclusion with Mr. Bourassa and with anybody.

MR. FLIGHT:

Have you started negotiations yet?

MR. SPEAKER (Hickey):

Order, please!

MR. RUSSELL:

I think the Premier has indicated some weeks ago, in the Fall session, that subsequent to Mr. Bourassa forming a government in Quebec, he had already sent him a telegram congratulating him on his victory indicating that at the appropriate time or when it was convenient he would like to sit down with him to talk about the Churchill Falls contract. I think that question is more appropriately asked as to where negotiations might be and what is going on to the Minister of Energy (Mr. Marshall).

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I hope that negotiations take place and continue and that, as I said, a successful resolution is reached to this problem. I think it is only by negotiation and by discussion that a successful

conclusion can be reached to this very important issue facing this Province, particularly as it relates to rates being charged to consumers in this Province.

One other part of this resolution says, "BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that this House instruct the present Administration to immediately eliminate the fuel adjustment charge and place a freeze on electricity rates in this Province until a study of the method of power generation and distribution is carried out."

Well, Mr. Speaker, the fuel adjustment charge we can say has been eliminated to a certain extent. Certainly it is spread out or the electrical bills are spread out over a twelve month period.

MR. FLIGHT:

It probably means more profits for Newfoundland Hydro, by the way.

MR. RUSSELL:

I am not convinced of that. I do not think it is. That is another issue which I think was addressed somewhat in the last sitting of the House. Anyway, what the consumer once had to pay, I suppose, over a three or four month period is spread out somewhat over a twelve month period with certain other regulations and guidelines brought in. Again, every single person in this Legislature, I think, agrees that the electrical costs are very high. I think that this government is doing all it can with the limited financial resources that it has to subsidize the electrical rates. If we continue to get the same kind of co-operation from Ottawa as we have been getting, particularly through the Atlantic Accord and

Hibernia, it will enable us down the road to provide electricity and provide many other services to this Province that are so badly needed.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think that this is a very timely resolution, but not for the reasons that the hon. member for Windsor - Buchans indicated. Thank you.

MR. FLIGHT:

Are you going to support it?

MR. SPEAKER (Hickey):

Order, please!

The hon. member is not in his seat. The hon. member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, I thought you were referring to me so I started looking around to see if I could see my seat.

MR. SPEAKER:

I was referring to the hon. member for Windsor - Buchans who cannot speak unless he is in his own seat.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, the day before yesterday and today, I have never in my life time or since I served in this hon. House saw two such important items of such concern to the people of this Province, so politicized, so trivialized, Mr. Speaker, so degraded. Never before, since I have been a member, have I heard the level of the debates go so low, all orchestrated and brought about by the member for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall). Mr. Speaker, I ask why on these two occasions did the member for St. John's East take the low road? Why did he take the low road? I might say followed by the member for

Lewisporte (Mr. Russell). That rather surprised me. Why did they take the low road? Why did they take this narrow, political partisan approach? The narrowest that could ever be taken dealing with such important topics for the people of this Province.

Mr. Speaker, I certainly wish, again, that this House could be televised because we are not likely to get our message through to the people of this Province. We are not likely to be able to do it. It does not seem like we can convey the message of what is happening in this House. Oh, that there was television! Oh, that the cameras could be here so that the people could see what has been going on in this House for the past couple of days.

The member for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) trying to discredit the Leader of the Opposition for his own political advancement, trying to discredit the hon. gentleman. Mr. Speaker, I hope the press is listening so that they will give the truth to the people of this Province. Imagine a government trying to duck out from under responsibility all of a sudden and blaming all the decisions on one Cabinet Minister.

Mr. Speaker, we have such a thing in British Parliamentary Procedure as collective responsibility and nobody can sneak out and duck out from under bad decisions and blame it, all of a sudden, on one Cabinet Minister. They cannot do that. All hon. gentlemen in the Cabinet there, whatever happened in the past seven, eight, ten years, they are all responsible! They are all responsible, every single one of them!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

For somebody to try to slither and duck out from under responsibility, to try and discredit somebody else, Mr. Speaker, is absolutely disgraceful. The performance of the member for St. John's East in the last couple of days has been nothing short of a disgrace to the people of this Province!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

I hope, Mr. Speaker, when the press is relaying this message to the people of this Province that they relay it accurately. The people of this Province are not stupid!

AN HON. MEMBER:
You are.

MR. LUSH:
The Minister from St. John's East -

MR. BARRY:
Is this the high level of debate?

MR. LUSH:
Listen to the Minister of Stupidity and Cupidity there! Take your seat! The Minister of Stupidity and Cupidity that is what he should be. If there is not one named, they should name him the Minister of Cupidity and Stupidity.

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

MR. SPEAKER:
A point of order, the Minister for Culture, Recreation and Youth.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, I know the hon. member is probably emotional and believes everything he is saying. He is putting on a good act.

MR. BARRY:
It is true.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. BARRY:
Collect your thoughts now, collect your thoughts.

MR. MATTHEWS:
Do not worry about me collecting my thoughts, the hon. Leader of the Opposition needs to collect a few other things besides his thoughts.

MR. BARRY:
You might have to search for awhile.

MR. SPEAKER (Hickey):
Order, please!

The minister stood on a point of order.

MR. MATTHEWS:
Brilliance! The brilliant Leader of the Opposition, the big lawyer - a law school Dalhousie graduate, medals in law school - looks down his nose at the rest of the Province! No one in the Province is intelligent but the Leader of the Opposition. No one has ever passed in school.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please! Order, please!

The minister rose on a point of order, I take it.

MR. MATTHEWS:
My point of order, Mr. Speaker, is this: As I was saying, I know the member was emotional when he was

speaking; he believes in what he is saying. There was a comment that came from behind the Speaker's Chair that I guess the hon. member attributed to me. I just wanted to rise on a point of order and tell him that I did not in any way make a remark. When he was speaking, it was not me. I was the one who looked around and saw the hon. member, but I did not make the remark.

MR. BAIRD:

Now, apologize! Apologize!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

I accept the word of the minister and I am sorry. I did hear sounds and they appeared to come from that direction. I accept his apology. But, Mr. Speaker, I think the decorum that is in this House in the last couple of days is symptomatic of how the member for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) has lowered the decorum of this House.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to talk to these two issues; I wanted to talk to them as issues. I did not want to get involved in narrow, political, partisan politics, innuendo and character assassination. I did not want to get into that. That is not my style, Mr. Speaker, but it gets to the stage where one must fight fire with fire.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

It gets to that stage. It gets to the stage where the people of this

Province have to be told the truth, and the truth is that nobody can try to slither out from under and duck out from under decisions made by a government by blaming it on a particular Cabinet minister, whether that Cabinet minister was responsible or not for the decision. Once a decision is made in Cabinet, it is the decision of the whole government.

It is nice to hear the member for St. John's East say that he did not agree with the nationalizing of BRINCO, of Churchill Falls. It is too bad that he could not have been very powerful at that time and have stopped it.

MR. TULK:

Why did he not resign?

MR. LUSH:

He has done that a couple of times, but he is such a Tory that he has to go along with the decision. This is something else, Mr. Speaker, how it is that hon. members do not get taken up on this issue. They think, Mr. Speaker, that they can duck out from under responsibility. The things that have been said in this House and accepted are absolutely ridiculous! These ministers should be nailed for trying to duck out from under responsibility, when they were a part of the Cabinet that made it.

We had an example the other day of the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Brett) running off at the mouth, condemning a programme that his government, his Cabinet, was party to with the federal government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

And nobody said anything about it. The member had no choice but to resign. If he did not agree with the programme, he should have resigned, because it was his government that accepted it. We have the member for St. John's East playing the same kind of low-level politics today. Mr. Speaker, I want to tell hon. members that they cannot any longer run with the hounds and hunt with the hares. They cannot do it!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

Let them stand up and be a part of the decisions that are made instead of trying to slither and duck out from under responsibility. Let them be men and stand up! The nonsense they have been getting on with! The nonsense that we have had to listen to here! Mr. Speaker, if I were in the classroom, I would have ordered them all out! The nonsense I have had to sit here and listen to: 'Oh, Mrs. Carney, because she is a Tory she believes in Newfoundland. She is going to do everything for Newfoundland.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

Well, Mr. Chretien, because he happens to be a Liberal, 'Oh, no, he is against Newfoundland.' How silly! How inane! Can we not beef up the level of debate in this House? If we cannot beef it up, get out! Go somewhere else! Go and join a kindergarten class, if we are going to try and tell the people of Newfoundland that because all of a sudden you are a Liberal, you do not believe in Newfoundland, whether it is a

federal or whether it is a provincial. But if you are Tory, you are all for Newfoundland. Let me tell hon. members, Mr. Speaker, that patriotism, somebody has said, is the last resort of a scoundrel.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BAIRD:

Sit down 'Tom'.

AN HON. MEMBER:

By leave!

MR. LUSH:

When a person gets cornered, when they have no defense this is where they go, this is what they do start barking, and they will use character assassinations, they will use innuendo, they will use every trick in the book. That is what has happened over the last couple of days. This is a defeated government, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

This is a government that has lost all hope. They have lost control of this Province.

Unemployment is raging out there, and they know that the people of this Province have lost confidence in the government that asked for a mandate to create jobs. The people are still looking for them. They know, Mr. Speaker, that they have lost the confidence and now they are trying to put up smoke screens. Oh, the Atlantic Accord! We might be able yet with that to beef up our support again. We are so bad, if we can get this issue to work and concomitantly with this, if we can discredit the Leader of the

Opposition, if we can do that, if we can destroy him, we might bring ourselves up a few points with the people of this Province. I am telling you, Mr. Speaker, we have news for them.

The people of this Province are not going to be bought, they are not going to be coerced into changing their mind by these silly tactics. It is time, Mr. Speaker, that they realize that we have an intelligent electorate out there. They are following what is going on, if it can get reported. This is why I would like to see the T.V. cameras here, so that the people of this Province would get the truth of what is going on in this hon. House.

Mr. Speaker, there is nothing going to come before this House, no legislation, no resolution, no motion going to come before this House as important as what is here today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

I do not know how hon. members have the face to go to their constituencies because if they get this problem thrown at them the way I get it thrown at me, I do not know how they have the face to go out there. At least, I am in the Opposition I can tell them that I am fighting for them, but hon. gentlemen in the government, what defense do they have? What defense do they have when they run into the people because this is the hottest issue in Newfoundland today - the cost of electricity. Mr. Speaker, it is becoming a tremendous burden for those on fixed income, it is becoming onerous burden for those on fixed income. It is becoming a

horrendous burden for those people, senior citizens, in particular.

I think the resolution says that it has doubled in the last ten years. There was a time when electricity was almost just a side issue, something you could pay out of your pocket. Today it has become one of the largest items in the family budget, electricity, and people cannot take care of it. There are people in this Province today who are going hungry because they have to heat their homes. There are children going hungry and not being clothed properly because people have to somehow take the money from out under one area to heat their homes. If they are not hungry and if they are clothed, they do not have warmth in their house.

Mr. Speaker, this is one of the most important issues facing this Province today and it disconcerted me to see the member for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) who so trivialized this very important resolution that is before us today. The people of this Province are out there waiting for something to be done.

Mr. Speaker, it is small consolation to the people of this Province, particularly to senior citizens and others on fixed incomes, and not only to these groups, actually everybody who is burdened by these electrical costs. It is small consolation when they read in the paper tomorrow, or hear on the news that the member for Lewisporte (Mr. Russell) said he appreciated the problem. He knew that the rates were too high, or that they were excessively high, he knew that. Or if the member for St. John's East said he knows that the rates

are high, or if all of them get up and say they know that the rates are high. But what are we going to do about it? Imagine, Mr. Speaker, somebody on the government side taking this defeatist attitude and said, "We know the prices are high but what are we going to do about it?" I say resign, resign if you cannot do anything about it. Resign and let somebody else take it that will do something about it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

What nonsense to sit down and listen to hon. members, they, the government, and the people of Newfoundland out there listening to them. "Yes, we know the prices are high, but there is nothing we can do about it. Please people will you understand it? Will you understand it? We cannot do anything about it." The Government of the Province of Newfoundland cannot do anything to control electrical rates in this Province. What can they do anything about?

Mr. Speaker, this resolution not only identifies the problem but it also makes some suggestions that will help alleviate and help solve the problem of these horrendous high costs of electricity to the people of this Province. This resolution addresses this when it asks the government to do something to get the negotiations with the Upper Churchill contract and to do something with the Lower Churchill.

One wonders, maybe the government is not at all concerned about these electrical rates. Maybe what they are concerned about is getting themselves elected again.

Now, Mr. Speaker, they are going to have to get some issue issue for these hon. gentlemen to get themselves re-elected. Yes, they have been able to carry on for a number of years now but the people are catching up on them now.

Maybe they are waiting a year before the election or six months. Maybe they are waiting until - when is it? - 1988 or 1987 when the Premier will dissolve this House and go to the people of the Province and say, "Look, I have just dissolved the House. I want to have your mandate to go and negotiate with Quebec. We want to negotiate a better contract with Quebec. We want your approval to start the Lower Churchill. We want your approval to go and negotiate with Quebec." Maybe the Premier does not realize that the people of this Province want him to go now.

The Premier has seen the last of x's being marked for him, to give him approval to do anything in an election. He has got time now. The people are out there starving. The people are out there hungry. They want their electrical prices reduced. They want employment. This resolution will give it all, Mr. Speaker. The time for action is now! Let us hope that hon. members opposite will support this very important resolution, this resolution that the people of Newfoundland are today looking forward to. They are looking forward to its passage in this House. They are looking at members opposite hoping that they are going to support this resolution and to help them to be able to live a little more comfortably. I hope that members opposite, Mr. Speaker, will stand in their places today and give this resolution their

whole-hearted support.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member could have made some useful suggestions when he was on his feet there. He could have said, 'Why do we not channel a lot of hot air to Hydro and make electricity?' and he would be a very good source for it. Or conversely he could have said, 'How about giving Hydro a big gas bag?' - he could have been a source for that also. Or he could have said, 'I cannot generate much light but I can generate a lot of heat' and he could donate that to Hydro. He expounded at some length and with some vigor, but I am afraid he did not make any really good suggestions and I am very disappointed. Because he does have a very innovative frame of mind and I think if he puts his thoughts to the matter, he can really come up with something sensible, something much more sensible than this resolution.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

Would my hon. colleague permit a question?

DR. COLLINS:

Absolutely.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

As my hon. colleague is aware, among the announcements made by Mrs. Carney yesterday in the

Energy field was one for a wind farm. Does my colleague feel that the hon. member for Bonavista North has already plugged into that programme?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

Well, I am sure we have given the hon. member many things to think about and perhaps he will come back, if this debate goes on next Wednesday, and give us the benefit of his thoughts on those useful suggestions. So, that was hot air, gas bag, wind farm and heat without light. Could you write them down?

Now, Mr. Speaker, just before I comment on the resolution I would like to bring to the attention of members of the House the tactics that are being used by members opposite. The hon. member for Windsor - Buchans got up and he was very vigorous, he attacked and he slashed and he shouted and he roared and all the rest of it, and, you know, it was a good show. Then the hon. member for Naskaupi got up and he was the different approach, he was the soft, gentle, quiet approach, you know, the bad cop good cop type of thing, and that was to sort of suck us in on this side to try to get us to say, 'Well, we all may be against him, but he is a nice fellow, so we will agree with him, we would like for him to win the debate.' Then the member for Bonavista North got up and he again was the hard guy, making accusations and wild statements and all the rest of it. So it will be very interesting to see who is going to get up next to see if they are going to continue - Oh, we are going to have the hon. member for Gander getting up. He

is going to be a nice guy, too, so we will have this hard cop/soft cop routine.

Unfortunately, we will not be taken in by that, not even by the soft approach, because you have to read this resolution. You know, this is not really a sensible resolution, this is a political statement and all you have to do is read it to find that out. "WHEREAS the cost of electricity has more than doubled in the last ten years." Now, that is a bit of a misstatement there, because I think that it was supposed to be the price of electricity has doubled in the last ten years. Yes, the cost of generating electricity has indeed doubled in the last ten years and, of course, this has to be taken into consideration, but I think what the hon. member meant when he wrote the resolution was the price to the consumer has doubled in the last ten years.

"AND WHEREAS this increase is exclusive of the utility company's fuel adjustment charge." I have no particular objection with that one. "AND WHEREAS the fuel adjustment charge is simply a convenient method of increasing electricity costs to consumers while appearing not to." Now, 'simply a convenient method' that is obviously twisting an intent to say it is a convenient method. The implication is that Hydro is doing this for their own good, to make life easy for themselves. Obviously, if Hydro put on a fuel escalation charge they have to pay for fuel. They have to do it for some good purpose, although you may not agree with the way they are going to do it.

As you know, this government was instrumental in getting

Newfoundland Hydro to change the way they built into their charges the escalating price of fuel and it is done in a much more equitable and much more sensible way now than it was previously. But to suggest that Hydro just did it out of convenience is clearly a political statement, it is not really meant to be taken seriously.

"WHEREAS repeated government promises to effect measures to reduce the crushing burden of high electricity rates on consumers have not been kept." Again those words 'promises' and 'crushing burden' these are terms that are argumentative by their very nature. You know, 'crushing' makes it sound as though this is done in a malicious way. We want to crush the people of this Province by putting charges on them. That is just the whole, sort of, tenor of the clause here. Well, that is ridiculous, of course. The first thing one would want to do, if it was possible to do it, would be to relieve the burdens.

"WHEREAS the Peckford Administration and not the Public Utilities Board decides whether there will be electricity increases or not." Now, that is a rather serious charge there because the implication is that sometimes PUB comes in with either no recommendation for an increase or they come in with a small recommendation for an increase and the Peckford Administration, in the first instance, says, 'If you are not recommending an increase we are going to put in an increase, or if you are recommending a small increase we are going to put in a larger increase.' Well, now, to my knowledge there has never been an instance where the administration

increased a rate that was recommended by the PUB or put on an increase where the PUB did not recommend it. So that is a serious charge there, it is suggesting in a roundabout way, not straightforward, that the Peckford Administration is overruling the PUB in terms of adding to the burden of electricity costs when it is clearly not so. In most instances the administration accepts the recommendation of the PUB, because the PUB does very extensive studies, carries out investigations and comes up with a very sensible recommendation. If they did not do that, I am sure they would not be there very long. I can remember at least one occasion when the recommendation of the PUB was not implemented in the full measure, because it was felt that the people needed a bit of relief at that particular time.

"WHEREAS government incompetence has brought to a standstill any worthwhile re-negotiations with Quebec of the Upper Churchill contract." Now, that, of course, is just being naive. That is being absolutely naive. Quebec Hydro is getting tremendous benefits from the Upper Churchill. I am not going to go over the old argument of who is responsible for that. I think it is quite clear to all the people in the Province who goofed, who was asleep at the switch when the power contract was put in place. Of course, it is no defence to say that the lease sort of gave us some protection and then say, 'Well, I did not know anything about the power contract.' That is the old argument put out by the Liberal Party. You know, it is not my fault. I did not know anything about it, as though they were not supposed to know anything

about it. I mean, that is why they were the administration at the time. But everyone in the Province knows who goofed and who did this terrible thing to the Province over the Upper Churchill. But I am not going to get into that in any great way.

I am going to just point out that the Province of Quebec, through Quebec Hydro, is getting a tremendous windfall and to think that they are readily going to give that up, to think that they are going to surrender that enormous benefit easily is just naive, if nothing else. You might say, 'Well, it would not cost the Province of Quebec very much, it is all out of Hydro and they can decrease their profits and all that sort of thing.' That, of course, is not so, because in recent years the Quebec Government, which is under tremendous financial pressure itself, has insisted that Quebec Hydro return dividends to the province. They take the profits that Hydro Quebec accumulate in the run of the year and they put it into the public treasury there, so that if Hydro Quebec surrendered some of its profits it would immediately impact upon the people of Quebec and on the government of Quebec and they are not going to allow that to happen very readily. So to think that it is a simple thing to get the return from Quebec, and that is not being done because this government is not taking a competent approach, just flies in the face of anything sensible. The province of Quebec has an enormous annual deficit in its budgetary accounts and it is struggling to maintain its credit ratings and all the rest of it, so they are going to resist to the last ounce of their strength

giving up anything in terms of revenues that Hydro Quebec is getting, which goes back to the government, from the Upper Churchill contract. It is going to require every bit of ingenuity and every bit of will and every bit of persistent effort that we can mount in this Province to get the government of Quebec to make any change whatever.

In the first instance, I am quite sure, and the record shows that this is the way they do it, if they are forced into a position, they will make a change which is really just a superficial change just to try to get away from a hot situation - it will not be a meaningful change - but that is not what we want. We do not want another \$1 million on to the measly few that we get out of the Upper Churchill, we want to get our just returns. But to get the province of Quebec and the government of Quebec to do that is not an easy job, it is not the fact that this government is incompetent that that cannot be achieved. We have not, up to this point in time, found the exact way of doing it, although we have tried every possible way up to this stage that we can think of. We are not at the end of our rope by any means, but the fact that we have not achieved it yet is not an index of incompetence on our part, it is an index of the difficulty of the situation. The province of Quebec has been put in the driver's seat on this one, it has so many things going for it, it has so many cards in its hand and we have such a weak hand that it is a very difficult game to play. Unfortunately, we have not, up to now, been able to, say, take the strength out of their hands but we will do so, that day will come, so I would ignore that phrase.

The final one, "WHEREAS government appears to have abandoned its intentions to develop the Lower Churchill." Now, the wish has followed the thought there. The hon. member opposite, when he composed this resolution, wished that we would announce we were abandoning the Lower Churchill so that then he could go out and announce it and get public opinion on his side, that these people have given up, they are quitters, they are not going to deliver and we had better get rid of them. We have not abandoned the Lower Churchill. There is a time in the affairs of men that have to be taken at the flood and this is not the time to achieve that very desirable objective. It is not that we are not carrying on the preparation, the intention and the planning for the Lower Churchill, but it is not the time, at this moment, to do it. To suggest that we are abandoning it just follows the wish to the thought.

Finally, the resolution itself, I think, says an awful lot about the whole approach of the Liberal Party to the running of the affairs in this Province. The resolution says it wants to instruct the administration to immediately eliminate the fuel adjustment charge. You know, just say there is a cost there, eliminate it. It is like saying food is too expensive so do not pay for the food. You know, you have to have an appreciation that when you require something other things happen, and you just cannot baldly and boldly and naively state, 'instruct it to eliminate the fuel charge.' Fuel has to be purchased. Someone has to pay for it. Now, you might question the method of paying for it, but to say that it has not got to be paid for is just too foolish to even

think about. I do not think that these foolish remarks should be brought up in this House. You know, we have better things to do than arguing down foolish remarks. It is a silly thing to say, that government can just go to Hydro and say, 'drop your fuel escalation charge' without putting something in its place. Hydro would only throw up its hands and say, 'Well, what am I going to do? Am I not going to purchase any fuel? If I do not purchase any fuel, am I not going to generate any electricity? So that is a very simplistic remark.

I think the important part of the resolution follows and it says, "And place a freeze on electricity rates in this Province until a study of the method of power generation and distribution is carried out." Now, as though we do not now have in place a very efficient organization for the generation and distribution of electricity in this Province. We have in place, Newfoundland Hydro. We have to give the previous Liberal Administration the credit that it started the germ of a thought that grew into Newfoundland Hydro, I think it was called the Power Authority or some name like that. That, I think, was a good initiative. We have now developed that into one of the larger utilities in the country, I think it is in the first fifty corporations in North America, that size of an operation. It is a very effective and efficient organization. It is well regarded in the financial markets. It carries out its mandate with efficiency and with progress in mind. So to suggest that we now need to study how to generate and distribute electricity in this Province, certainly on the face of it anyway, is not to be taken

seriously.

But I would just like to go on to "Be It Further Resolved that the administration again approached the Province of Quebec with the aim of re-negotiating the Upper Churchill agreement so that fruitful development of other hydro resources in that area of the Province can also be pursued." Now, there is the whole Liberal approach to life. That is what they intend to do in most instances. They will say, 'We have something. We will give it away if you give us something back.' That is, I would say, the Liberal philosophy. It has gotten us into any amount of problem in the way the affairs of this Province have been organized, certainly in the first twenty-five years that we were in Confederation.

It is not a case of sitting down on an equal basis with people we have to negotiate with and trying to come to some understanding of how matters should progress, it is a feeling that we always have to give, we always have to be the beggar, we always have to have our cap in hand when we sit down with someone to reach an agreement. And, of course, as soon as you take that approach the fellow on the other side of the table knows he is away to the races. As soon as he feels that some on the other side know that they have to give something up, he is going to stand back, take as hard a position as he possibly can and have you keep coming to him.

Now, that was the Liberal way of doing things, which ended up with our having no fisheries under our control, which ended up with our Labrador resources, our electricity resources in another

province, which ended up with any number of carpetbaggers that came in here after Confederation and took over large stretches of areas of this Province and took out the resources or, at least, if they did not take out the resources themselves, they got a ransom payment for them. It is the same philosophy that gave long-term contracts to the paper companies without any obligation to put back what they were taking out. That is the whole Liberal approach. They always feel in a sort of inferior position, or they believe Newfoundland is so downtrodden, it is so incapable itself that the only way to get anything is if it gives, it has to give continuously. Well, this is not the philosophy on this side. The philosophy on this side is that we have legitimate requirements, we have legitimate positions to take and we will always do it. With that I adjourn the debate.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

The hon. minister's time had just elapsed.

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Speaker, I adjourn the debate.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

The House stands adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, at 3:00 p.m.

Index

Answers to Questions

tabled

February 12, 1986



*Tabled by ...
Minister of Consumer
Affairs & Communications
12 Feb. 1986*

**GOVERNMENT OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

P. O. BOX 4750
ST. JOHN'S, NFLD.
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February 12, 1986

THE HONOURABLE M. JAMES RUSSELL

Subject: Furnace Oil Prices in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island

The Consumer Affairs Division of the Department, in co-operation with the Consumer Affairs Divisions in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, undertook an independent survey of the price of furnace oil in Halifax, Charlottetown and St. John's concurrently, on Thursday, January 30, 1986, the results of which are tabulated below:

PRICE PER LITRE

<u>COMPANY</u>	<u>CHARLOTTETOWN</u> ¢	<u>HALIFAX</u> ¢	<u>ST. JOHN'S</u> ¢	<u>MAXIMUM VARIANCE</u> ¢
Esso	37.7	38.2	41.9	4.2
Texaco	39.0	38.2	42.1	3.9
Irving	37.7	38.2	41.9	4.2
Gulf	40.1	38.2	41.9	3.7
Petrocan	39.0	37.2	43.1*	5.9
Ultramar	39.0	-	43.1*	4.1
Shell	39.0	-	-	-

*Price includes burner service

There are no provincial taxes on home furnace oil in any of the three Provinces. The federal tax is obviously identical.

It can be seen that there is a variance in price, being higher in St. John's by 3.7¢ per litre to a maximum of 4.2¢ per litre (16.65¢ per gallon to 18.9¢ per gallon).