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Speaker: Honourable P.J. McNicholas

Wednesday

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The House met at 3:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):
Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for Fortune -
Hermitage.

For the record, I will just take a moment to draw the House's attention to an error in today's newspaper; one of the two great newspapers in this city has grievously misquoted me, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, in the response to the statement by the gentleman for Lewisporte, the Minister of Environment and Lands (Mr. Russell), I indicated, as Hansard will show on Page 323, that the increase to \$625, in my words - these were not the words in the Minister's statement, and that is not the point of my rising - would be become operative after October. These are the words in Hansard, but today's Telegram, on page 20, quotes me as saying that it would become operative on 31 May, and that is incorrect. I said October, and that is when it will become operative.

Statements by Ministers

MR. BARRETT:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of
Development and Tourism.

MR. BARRETT:
Mr. Speaker, Tourism is rapidly becoming recognized as a major employer and generator of wealth

in our Province. And this is the case, even though the benefits derived from Tourism have to date been limited to our relatively short Summer season.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform the House today that the development of Winter Tourism in Newfoundland and Labrador is not only a distinct possibility, but it has become a definitive reality, given the tremendous growth and interest at facilities like Marble Mountain in the Humber Valley.

I was recently presented with a series of statistics developed by the Corner Brook Ski Club which evaluate the season to date at Marble Mountain and indicate that the downhill ski facility is enjoying a record year for revenues and visits by tourists, and I would like to pass that information along to the House today.

To date, revenues at Marble Mountain have already increased by over 25 per cent over last year's record figures, and this is with roughly about three-quarters of the normal ski season now complete.

Of particular interest to the local tourism industry is the fact that skier-visits from the mainland have increased significantly, and the ski club is actually estimating that the level of visitation from Maritime tourists will increase by well over 400 per cent before the end of this Winter season.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. BARRETT:
There are several reasons for the increase in interest and

visitation at Marble Mountain. Certainly, the excellent ski packages put together by the regional airlines, by travel agencies and hotels, with the assistance of government has played a major role in the phenomenal growth in Winter tourism activity in the region, as has the first-class experience and hospitality provided by our people to these visitors, who are coming in equally large numbers from around the mainland and from areas of our own Province.

In fact, Winter tourism, centered around the Ski Marble Experience, is creating an economic and job creation success story in the Humber Valley region of our Province.

Tourists coming into Corner Brook from the surrounding area, from Nova Scotia, P.E.I., New Brunswick, Ontario and Quebec mean new money to the economy of the area, and new money means jobs.

Marble Mountain directly employs fifty-five people on a full and part-time basis with a payroll of some \$15,000 per week. Information from the ski club indicates that, over the four-month ski season, the Marble Mountain operation will directly inject approximately \$700,000 into the local economy. In addition to this, retail sales of ski related goods in the area have already totalled in excess of \$1 million in this season alone.

In addition to these direct benefits, other establishments catering to the tourist trade, such as hotels and restaurants in Corner Brook and the surrounding area, are all enjoying increased business from the tourist trade.

This again directly translates into jobs! These establishments are maintaining a full complement of staff, and in many cases have had to hire additional staff to meet the growing tourist demand.

The truly encouraging element of this success story is the fact that we have only started to scratch the surface of the potential to develop Winter tourism experiences at Marble Mountain, in particular, but, indeed, throughout all the Province in general.

All signals indicate that this success will continue. The construction of a new motel in Corner Brook to serve the increasing tourist trade, the formation of the Marble Mountain Development Corporation, and a ever increasing private sector interest in developing business opportunities centered around the ski experience, should all be seen as examples of the desire of the people of the region to derive the maximum benefit from the growth in Winter tourism.

The resources are there and are being used wisely in the Humber Valley to create a viable and prosperous economic sector based on tourism. When you add this tourism potential to the other successful elements of the Corner Brook economy, notably the Kruger Pulp and Paper operation, then you are looking at one of the most prosperous regions in the entire Province. Certainly, the provincial government, in close co-operation with our federal counterparts, will continue our commitment to ensure that any and all economic development potential is realized in this particular region of our Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. WELLS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, I stand to welcome the comments made by the hon. minister and to say to him that nobody in this House could be more pleased with this development than I am, personally. Because as the hon. minister knows, and as other members of the House probably know, I have been involved in the promotion of Marble Mountain for more than twenty years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. WELLS:

The only direct comment I want to make is what effort is being made to really achieve something? The first study was done on this in 1966. A committee of three people, of which I was one as it turned out, made a recommendation for a year-around park development, at that stage, for purposes of attracting tourists along the lines that the hon. minister has just now talked about, and the people responsible for parks in the Province at the time could not see it happen because there was not a sandy beach in the area. That just tells you the way we thought and have been thinking for a long time.

The time has come to take advantage, as the minister has said, of that tremendous facility and really develop in Newfoundland the potential that it has. It is, as the minister said, employing

fifty-five people pretty well on a full-time basis now and that, Mr. Speaker, has been largely as a result of the effort of a tremendous group of volunteers in Corner Brook, with help over the years from former governments, and this present government has provided certain financial help over the years, as well, to obtain first the big T-bar, as it was called. In 1967, the first payment of \$20,000 was advanced by government to assist in the purchase and installation of that facility, and governments and others, including enterprises like the Bowater paper mill and the Lundrigan Organization, helped and contributed time and equipment and facilities and over the years that tremendous facility has been developed. We should also acknowledge some help from the Government of Canada in making available federal works projects, and that has helped.

Now, I will tell all hon. members something else they ought to know, and it may be a source of pride for all hon. members. Last Winter, I skied at Stowe, Vermont, to try it out. And to tell you the truth, I would sooner ski on the hills of Marble Mountain than I would ski at Stowe, Vermont.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. WELLS:

Stowe, Vermont, hon. members ought to know, is sort of the pride of Northeast North America for skiing. The Northeastern U.S. considers Stowe the classy ski place in Northeastern United States.

The ski slopes at Marble Mountain were better groomed and better presented than were those slopes

in Stowe, Vermont. We have the opportunity, with the right investment and the right help for the people concerned, of developing a tremendous facility at Marble Mountain and, Mr. Speaker, we do not have to stop there; there are a great many other hills that we can expand beyond that. The opportunity is great!

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. WELLS:
The minister is quite right, I welcome his announcement, and I thank him for it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. FENWICK:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. FENWICK:
I want to thank the minister for providing a copy of his statement well in advance, as we certainly appreciated having a chance to look at it.

I must say that the development of a tourism industry in this Province seems to have been going in fits and starts in the past but, it seems to me, it is one of the industries that has the greatest potential for the future. Of course, we know Summer tourism on the West Coast of Newfoundland is probably one of its brightest industries in terms of what we will see in the future.

In Winter tourism, I am pleased to see that Marble Mountain is doing so well. We feel, in Labrador West, that we have the kinds of

facilities that are a good adjunct to development of this kind of a Winter tourist potential in a place like Corner Brook.

We have, as members of the House know, an extension on the season in Marble Mountain; when you start skiing down the slopes and end up with no snow in Marble Mountain, you still have four to six weeks of skiing left in Labrador City. And you have, of course, a month to six weeks skiing ahead of the season start in Corner Brook as well. So, on that basis, I am pleased to endorse the promotion of Winter tourism. I look with approval on the assignment of a development officer to Labrador West, I think three or four years ago now. I know he has done an excellent job of developing Summer tourism and Winter tourism and we are hoping that eventually this kind of diversification may also occur in Labrador West.

So, on that basis, packages and tours and so on, are now being prepared for our area and we are hoping to be able to develop that into a first-class Winter ski resort, which it already is, but now we have to tell the rest of the world that it already is.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BUTT:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth.

MR. BUTT:
Mr. Speaker, I wish to inform hon. members that government, after careful consideration, has decided to permit a limited hunt in the Mealy Mountain caribou herd in Labrador this year.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BUTT:

Before elaborating, I wish to emphasize that this hunt will be conducted on a trial basis for one season, with a full assessment of scientific data and information following the conclusion of the hunt.

Several Labrador communities will receive a proportionate allotment of a total of 175 either sex licences for a hunt to be conducted over a three week period, from April 4 to April 25. Happy Valley - Goose Bay will be allotted 50 licences, Sheshatshit 40, Cartwright 30, North West River 25, Rigolet 16, Paradise River 7, and Mud Lake 7. In Rigolet and Sheshatshit, licences will be issued to town elders and community leaders who, in turn, will allocate them accordingly. In the remaining communities, an open draw will be conducted by the department and will be the means of allocating those licences.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BUTT:

To qualify for a licence to hunt caribou in the Mealy Mountain area, a person must meet residential requirements as defined under the act; in other words, applicants must be residents of one of the seven communities. However, regardless of the place of residence, any person who held a moose or caribou licence in the province in 1987 - 1988 is ineligible. For those who qualify, preference will be given to party licence applicants over individual applicants. I believe these prequalifications to be the most equitable method of issuing

licences for this limited hunt of the Mealy Mountain caribou herd.

The hunt will be supervised by the Wildlife Division of my Department, and will take place in a specified area. The boundary is as follows: It begins at Mud Lake, follows the South Shore of Lake Melville, Groswater Bay and the Labrador Coast South to the the Town of Paradise River, then proceeds in a due South direction to the Labrador - Quebec border, follows the border West until due South of Mud Lake and returns to the Town of Mud Lake.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, I remind hon. members that this is a pilot project, and will be carefully assessed upon the expiration of the three week hunt.

Mr. Speaker, I also wish to announce at this time that government has decided to allow a limited polar bear hunt this year in Northern Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BUTT:

The hunt will begin on April 4, and conclude eight weeks later, on May 31. Four party licences to parties of four will be permitted, and the allocation will be determined by the Nain town council and other community groups, such as the LIA. The fee attached to these licences is \$100 each. The location of the hunt is defined as Nain and North of Nain, which is consistent with requests from area residents.

Mr. Speaker, I want to emphasize that this is a pilot project for one season only. Further direction regarding the hunting programmes depends on the analysis

and assessment of scientific data and information gathered.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I wish to stress that these measures reflect a realization of the special needs of Labrador. I am certain most residents of Labrador will be happy when they hear this announcement, which is being made simultaneously in Labrador today by my colleague, the Minister Responsible for Northern Development.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. KELLAND:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Naskaupi.

MR. KELLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the minister for the advance copy. It is an interesting thing to see the minister making a statement about opening the Mealy Mountain herd for a trial hunt for one year, and it reflects somewhat of a different view, I think, than was expressed by government and a lot of others last year when there was an illegal hunt of the same caribou herd. This was done for a couple of different reasons by the Innu people involved, and the predecessor of the minister is pretty well aware of it all, we discussed it many times.

For those people who wish this to take place, it will be good news for them, no doubt. But there are others, other groups and other individuals, who have expressed some concern. For example, the

government itself, I believe, last year said they were concerned, when the Innu people from Sheshashit went in to hunt the Mealy Mountain herd illegally, that the Mealy Mountain caribou herd could not sustain any sort of a hunt that would take fifty or sixty or seventy or eighty or ninety animals, or perhaps a hundred animals.

I would like to know from the minister, at whatever opportunity presents itself, what changes have taken place to now give the minister the belief that the herd can sustain, even though it is a one-year trial, a hunt of 175 animals, saying there will be 100 per cent success, of course? I find that interesting. The Innu, when they did their hunt they were making not just a statement that they needed Winter meat but a political statement, and we all know that, to express their concerns about what they believe has been the deterioration and the diminishing of their aboriginal rights of hunting and so on.

So I have some questions about that. Perhaps the minister, at some time, will tell me what has transpired to now make a hunt that was not possible last year in the eyes of government for probably only half the number of animals, now possible. I would like to have that particular information.

It seems to me, too, that there is a bit of a political overtone. I hate to say this or even suggest it, but within the whole context of the statement, Mr. Speaker, there seems to be the feeling that if we give the Innu the legal right to hunt caribou in Mealy Mountain - I am speaking of the Innu only from Sheshatshit, not the other people involved - then

they will no longer be able to mount a protest to government, and get the media attention of government's inadequate treatment of them, by doing an illegal hunt again this year.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

MR. KELLAND:

By leave?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

No leave.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please?

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

MR. KELLAND:

Thank you very much, hon. members.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker, I guess the fact that I can look on this much more positively than the member for Naskaupi (Mr. Kelland) is the proof of the old adage that two people look at a half empty glass and some call it half empty and some call it half full.

I am very pleased to see this initiative by government. If you look at it, I think the member for Naskaupi is correct in assuming that there is a departure here from our normal style. To give you an example, fifty licences for Happy Valley - Goose Bay with a population of 6,000 to 8,000 people, and forty licences for Sheshatshit with only 650 people.

There is obviously a different emphasis there, which we applaud, we think it is appropriate. The other thing which I think is very important, is it for the first time, and I can be corrected if I am wrong, that licences will be given to the elders and the town leaders to distribute among their own population rather than to individuals in a totally random draw? If that is the case, Mr. Speaker, it shows a remarkable sensitivity to the way in which the hunt would normally be organized in a community like Sheshatshit. Again, I applaud that initiative, because I think it does show a difference in sensitivity.

Similarly, the four group polar bear licences being given to the Main community, again to be allocated through the town council and the community groups, also shows, I think, that sensitivity. I think, that having done this, the government is now setting in place - I am not sure if this is true or not - perhaps, some legal grounds for the land claims and aboriginal hunting right claims of the Native peoples, the Innu and Inuit in Labrador. On that basis, I think that is a laudable objective and a worthwhile thing to do, and we applaud it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

Oral Questions

MR. KELLAND:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Naskaupi.

MR. KELLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Development and Tourism (Mr. Barrett).

MR. BUTT:

So the Labrador hunt is not important to you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. KELLAND:

When they are ready, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. KELLAND:

To the Minister of Development: Employees of Newfoundland Hardwoods Limited, who have been laid off since February 8 of this year, which was supposed to have been a temporary lay-off, have come concerns that the plant may permanently close. To allay those concerns, I wonder would the minister clarify the situation and state whether or not there is any intention on the part of government to close the plant permanently?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Development and Tourism.

MR. BARRETT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The lay-off in February really was the direct result of a fire which occurred at the Hardwood premises on Topsail Road at that time. It might be of interest for the member to be aware that the activities of that branch of Newfoundland Hardwoods has been undergoing some evaluation now for a period of time. I guess the loss of a significant amount of

the stock which was on hand and the damages which were incurred to the buildings have caused an acceleration of the review process as to whether or not it is necessary to maintain that particular division of Newfoundland Hardwoods. The original reasons that that facility was established was to bring a form of technology to the Province which did not already exist here.

We now find that, through the past numbers of years, the private sector independently has obtained and acquired various elements of technology and construction techniques and manufacturing elements that basically displaces all of the initiatives that had been undertaken by the government of the day when that division of Hardwoods was established. So, I think there is probably a very real consideration and possibility that there might be a disposition by government of that particular division.

MR. KELLAND:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Naskaupi.

MR. KELLAND:

I should inform the minister, first off, that the lay-off that occurred starting February 8 was for a two or three week period and had nothing to do with the fire which occurred after the lay-off had taken place, just for his information.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. KELLAND:

I had a look at the financial

report of Newfoundland Hardwoods. I was curious to see from a net profit of about \$1 million in 1986 that it had slipped to something like \$385,000 in 1987.

MR. BARRETT:

Is it debt or net profit you are talking about?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. KELLAND:

Net profit. That is not fish net, it is net profit.

From about \$1 million in 1986 to something under \$400,000 in 1987, and a possible negative position at the end of this fiscal year, the end of this month. The minister was obviously aware of that, so what initiatives did he take to prevent that sort of thing? And what does he intend to do with the seventy or so employees who will be affected by a permanent closure of the plant?

MR. BARRETT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Development and Tourism.

MR. BARRETT:

Well, I think that the hon. member is jumping rather significantly to some conclusion which has not as yet been reached. The decision has not as yet been taken. I said there is an evaluation process ongoing to give consideration to that option.

To reflect on the reasons as to the deterioration of the net profit of the operations of the plant, if one were to look at it in some informed detail, you would find that most of that erosion of

profitability is directly attributed to that particular division of the company. As members should know, Newfoundland Hardwoods operates out of two major facilities, one in Clarenville and the other in Mount Pearl, in St. John's. And the two divisions basically operate rather independently, because their whole product line and their whole emphasis are in fact totally different. But accountability as it relates to profit centres is still maintained, so therefore an evaluation of the cost out of the operations of both are indeed possible.

So the deterioration that has occurred has been attributed to that division on Topsail Road. But it is not necessarily a question of upgrading of capability or capacity or introduction of new techniques. Basically it is for the reason which I have just explained to the hon. member, and that is that other elements of the private sector have over a period of time introduced into their independent manufacturing, distributor organizations that which was at one time solely within the field of that division of Newfoundland Hardwoods. So the erosion from the business initiative has taken place in the private sector, which is really where it should be. So I do not know if the member is comforted by that information, but I think that should probably answer the question that he posed.

MR. KELLAND:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. the member for Naskaupi.

MR. KELLAND:

It is interesting to note just on your response, Mr. Minister, that there is not a whole lot of difference on the gross sales from 1986 to 1987, so it would indicate some sort of inefficiency, perhaps, that the net profit has dropped so considerably in that period of time, by almost two-thirds.

The big question, though, I think that I am asking in the final supplementary is when will these seventy-plus people know what their fate will be? When will they know if they will have jobs or not have jobs? I think it is a burning question for them and a burning question for the House of Assembly.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Development.

MR. BARRETT:

Mr. Speaker, there are two elements to the hon. member's question. I think probably if he reflected on his own experience in the private sector or in business at all, he would realize that if sales remain at a constant level there is going to be an erosion in profit, mainly because of the fact that your fixed costs are increasing every year. The cost of salaries is going up, the cost of basic services is increasing, and the cost of acquiring the basic materials and items that you are selling or processing through your plant is increasing. If you do not have a similar increase in your sales element, then obviously you cannot maintain the same profit factor.

With respect to the other issue,

the employees certainly indeed have a right to know, and they will be informed as soon as a decision is taken, when the evaluation process has been completed.

MR. WELLS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, before addressing this question to the Premier, I want to express to him my appreciation and the appreciation of the members, at least in this caucus, who visited the Sprung facility last night, for his arranging it. I think I would be remiss, Mr. Speaker, if I did not express publicly our appreciation for the kind of reception we received from Mr. Sprung and from his daughter, Dawn Sprung, and his wife also, who was there toward the later stages.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. WELLS:

Frankly, we were very courteously and pleasantly treated by them. They carried on the discussions in a very pleasant manner, and I publicly express appreciation to them for it, and to the Premier for arranging it.

There are a couple of questions that I want to ask arising out of it. Would the Premier arrange a tour for the remaining members of the House who have not visited it? I understand most members on the opposite side have visited it, but I do not know that that is so. I am told it is so. Would the Premier arrange for the

remaining members on this side of the House, who have not visited that facility, to have an opportunity to visit it? Because it is enlightening. Anybody who goes out there can learn something from seeing that. Would he arrange for that? And would he arrange for a similar briefing for the members of the House that he arranged for the media with respect to the negotiations and the arrangement for financing and so on?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that the Leader of the Opposition, and the members for Menihek (Mr. Fenwick) and St. John's East (Mr. Long) agreed to the invitation that I offered them last week and that they visited the facility and that they were duly impressed with it.

We will arrange it. It will take some time because there are so many people who want to get in to see this disaster that Peckford got involved in. But I am very pleased to see that other members of the Opposition also want to see this disaster, this white elephant on the political career of the Premier of this Province. In that light, I will attempt to arrange for other members of the House who have not already seen the facility to see it. I have no problems either in arranging a briefing on the details and technicalities of the financial arrangements, and the various contracts and so on that had been entered into, for a representative number of the members of the Opposition.

I would be extremely remiss, after saying yes to both of the hon.

member's questions, if I did not take the hon. Leader of the Opposition to task. Because it bothers me no end, it is more bothersome than anything else - nothing to do with Sprung in particular - that the Leader of the Opposition is awfully worried about the fact that somebody might establish a similar facility in Kingston, Ontario. As a Newfoundlander - not as a leader of a party, not as a member of the House of Assembly - I find it revolting that any Newfoundlander or Labradorian worth his salt would ever say that we have got to wait until Ontario gets ahead of us before we can decide whether we can do anything here in this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. WELLS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. WELLS:

Just so that the Premier is not misled and he will fully understand the situation, the purpose of the comment is to talk in terms of our ability to compete with Ontario, where we propose to market. That is what we are talking about.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

In that case we should close down the paper mills in our Province now because there are some in Ontario. Shame!.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Shame! Shame!

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Down with Newfoundland! Up

Ontario!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. WELLS:

It has nothing to do with it. It is a matter, Mr. Speaker, of making a judgement. Now, Mr. Speaker, in order to enable us to judge properly whether or not what is going to be asked of this Hon. House, in terms of approving those expenditures made by the government and approving of the guarantees given by the government, would the hon. the Premier provide the five year projections table for Newfoundland Enviroponics?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

I do not know if we can provide the five year projections because we do not know how many Sprung facilities will be on the go in the next two or three years in Newfoundland.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD:

I guess we will provide the five year projections for Baie Verte and their asbestos, and for the Marystown Shipyard outlook, for St. Lawrence mines and for Hope Brook, because we got more money into all of those than we have into Sprung either directly or indirectly, Mr. Speaker. So I do not know if we can provide five year projections for the hon. the Leader of the Opposition. I can say to him, as we have said in the House many times before -

MR. WINDSOR:

Is he going to be around here in five years?

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Yes, who is going to be around here in five years? I will, Mr. Speaker, right here where I am sitting.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD:

I will be here perhaps five or eight or ten years from now, primarily because of the Leader of the Opposition and some of the views that I hear him expressing, that it was justifiable for the federal government not to get between the hydro contract on the Upper Churchill sell-off years ago because Quebec would be mad; therefore, Newfoundland must suffer. I will be here because the Leader of the Opposition, five years from now, is agreeable for us not having more legislative jurisdiction over the fishery, Mr. Speaker. And I will be here because the Leader of the Opposition believes that until something happens in Ontario it cannot happen here.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. WELLS:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. WELLS:

My question is still the same, Mr. Speaker. Would the hon. the Premier table the five year projections for Newfoundland Enviroponics?

MR. SIMMS:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. the President of the Council.

MR. SIMMS:

Beauchesne, Fifth Edition - the hon. the Leader of the Opposition might want to read it tonight to just to practice up on it - Paragraph 357, Section 171, subsection (c) and subsection (d) say: In putting a question you must confine yourself to the narrowest of limits. The purpose of the question is to obtain information, but the question must not 'multiply, with slight variations, a similar question on the same point.' Or 'repeat in substance a question already answered, or to which an answer has been refused.' By the Leader of the Opposition's own admission, Mr. Speaker, this is clearly repeating the same question. Therefore, it is out of order.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:

If he wants to rephrase it, let him rephrase it.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, it is extremely difficult for the Chair to decide at times whether a question is exactly the same as a previous one.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Tell him to sit down!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

Any minister does not have to answer any question he does not like to answer.

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, any minister does not have to answer, but there still have to be rules which govern the House which Your Honour must adjudicate over. I have no problem in answering the Leader of the Opposition, as I did in the previous question.

The projections for viability for the project that we are now involved in are 7 million pounds a year. If anybody wants to do a little bit of basic Grade V or Grade VI arithmetic, based upon less than one-half of one facility producing at the present moment, we are going to reach far more than 7 million pounds. It is highly likely, if you extrapolate, and there is no reason why in the other zones the same thing will not happen that is now happening in the one zone that is producing, that that being so - and obviously it looks like it will be so, because there is no reason to determine that the other zone will be different; they are going to be the same - that we are going to be at 8 or 10 or 12 million pounds a year, and 7 million pounds is viability. So any elementary student can do that kind of mathematics.

So our projections, looking at this one particular facility, and we hope we have many more, is to produce well in excess of 7 million pounds of produce a year. Our economic analysis shows that 7 million pounds is viability, and that the project will start making money.

We have a clause in the agreement whereby we can be bought out, and then it can be completely in the private sector. Hopefully we

will, Mr. Speaker, as the viability of this project becomes more imminent and occurs, get into other projects around the Province like this one.

In the area of markets, there are unlimited markets for this produce, because there are 200 million pounds imported into Canada every year of this produce, and we are talking about somewhere around 10 million pounds, which is 3 million over viability.

There have already been talks held, with people in Montreal and Toronto, brokers and wholesalers, in the same way as there have been in Newfoundland, with the New England States on this, so our projections over the next five years, conservatively speaking - with a small 'c' - would be 10 times 5. Therefore we are talking about 10 million times 5, which is 50 million pounds of produce over the five-year period. By the end of the five years, as I have already said, there may be other projects, so that, therefore, we could be looking at 70 million to 100 million pounds as we get into other projects around the Province. So that is on the production side. That would be our five-year forecast.

On the marketing side, as I have already indicated, there is an importation into Canada from the Canary Islands, Mexico, Israel, and other places far more afield than Newfoundland for transportation costs.

By the way, we have a provision in the agreement that no other facility of this type can be constructed by the Sprung Group anywhere if it would interfere with the viability of this project, so we are covered there

also. There is a condition as everybody knows, a provision in the agreement which means that no other projects can be built anywhere else if they impact upon the viability of this project, so we are protected under the agreement in any case.

So on the marketing side, without even talking about the United States and New England, who are already calling looking for some of this produce, we feel that to get ten per cent would be 20 million, we only have 10 million to sell, so we would only have to get 5 per cent of the whole Canadian market. So a five year projection, Mr. Speaker, would be fifty million-

MR. TULK:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

On a point of order, the hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

The question was very simple, Mr. Speaker -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

MR. TULK:

- will the Premier table the five year cash projections for the Sprung project? Yes or no, Mr. Speaker, not fifteen minutes of an harangue from the hon. gentleman. He knows as well as we know that questions should be short, answers should be short and to the point.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

There is no point of order.

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

So, on the production side, Mr. Speaker, and on the marketing side, that is where we stand. Now as it relates to the cost side, that will vary each year, because as most hon. people sitting in this House know, and I am sure that a lot of the people in the galleries understand, that the price of produce varies during the year. When the supply is low and the demand still high in the Winter time, the prices will be very high. In the Summertime, when you have your normal produce coming on from normal growing techniques, and the demand is still high, the price will go down.

So the projections over the next five years will vary in each one of those years. But it is anticipated by the government, by our best estimates, that we will produce more than seven million pounds of produce, which will, therefore, get us into viability. We have built into our projections the variation in price from Summer to Winter to reflect that. So, it is our view that the five year forecasts on the business of production will be about seven million pounds, that we will be into viability and, therefore, be able to proceed on to provide other parts of the Province with research and development opportunities, hundreds of jobs, Mr. Speaker, and be on the ongoing leading edge of a very, very important technology.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Minister of Justice (Ms. Verge). My question concerns statements that the Minister of Justice made in this House last year when questioned about The Elections Act and the enforceability of certain aspects of it. The Minister indicated at that time that this government would be bringing in revisions to The Elections Act this year in order to make sure that the disclosure provisions were beefed up to force disclosure. The minister also indicated that some other revisions might come down at the same time. My question to the minister is: Given that we have had two byelections in recent time and that the time for disclosure is fast approaching, is the government, the other side, ready to bring in these amendments to The Elections Act to enforce disclosure?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, the government is still considering various options for amending the provincial elections legislation.

MR. FENWICK:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary.

MR. FENWICK:

Considering that we are almost in the fourth year of this government's mandate and they will have to seek another mandate, and considering, Mr. Speaker, that the members opposite have had a barrage of questions about the

Leader of the Official Opposition's salary supplements, and considering that a proper Elections Act would disclose this money, my question for the minister is this: Does she not believe that it is long past time to bring in disclosure legislation so we will know who are the five or six backers that the member the member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan) says are the backers of the Leader of the Official Opposition?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, as I said, the government is considering possibilities for amending our Elections Act and there seems to be quite a bit of enthusiasm to get on with it.

MR. FENWICK:

A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A final supplementary.

MR. FENWICK:

If that is the case, Mr. Speaker, can I then take that to be a commitment that we will have an Elections Act in this session of the Legislature so that we will know not only who are the backers for the Leader of the Official Opposition are but also who the donors are to the PC Party, to our party, and indeed to all politicians active in this Province today?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, this is something for the government as a whole that we are looking at, and when a decision is made it will be announced to all hon. members.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. PATTERSON:

Give 'Roger' a chance.

MR. SIMMONS:

Hear, hear! Spoken by a true bumper.

MR. PATTERSON:

I have bumped you more than once.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:

I have a question for the hon. the Premier. The gentleman from Green Bay will be, in five years, here. No question about it, he will be here in five years!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:

The Premier will be aware of Clause 3.3 in the Sprung facilities construction contract, which clause provides that sub-contract prices are to be deleted from the information supplied to the government. I ask the Premier, keeping in mind that the general contractor, the Sprung Group, is also the government's

partner in the joint undertaking, and keeping in mind that it is the government which is putting up the actual cash, will the Premier agree to require from the general contractor a detailed accounting including dollar amounts, of the subcontract costs?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
Mr. Speaker, I answered that question yesterday in detail three or four times.

MR. SIMMONS:
A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
A supplementary, the hon. the member for Fortune-Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:
Mr. Speaker, can the Premier divulge to the House and to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador his reasons for persisting in this highly irregular arrangement with the general contractor? Is there, I ask the Premier, any justifiable reason why the government should not be party to the detail of the subcontracts cost?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:
I answered that question in detail three or four times yesterday.

MR. SIMMS:
A good answer!

MR. DECKER:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. DECKER:
Mr. Speaker, my question is for the hon. the Minister of Education (Mr. Hearn).

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. DECKER:
It is a well known fact that there is a disparity between funding for rural schools boards and urban school boards as it relates to educational instruction, and I make that clear for the hon. Minister.

Will this disparity be eliminated in the upcoming budget? I ask the hon. Minister.

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

MR. HEARN:
Mr. Speaker, first let me thank the hon. member for the question, the first on such an important issue this session, and I believe the third from the Opposition since I became Minister of Education three years ago.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. HEARN:
There is nothing like jumping on a hot issue, and the hot issue these days in education is the inequality of opportunities in Newfoundland because we have a Province made up of rural and urban areas, some of which are more economically feasible than others, consequently, giving school boards the opportunities in the larger areas to raise more money, and put it into the schools, than they can do in the rural areas, thus creating discrepancies not due to government funding but due to

taxes raised locally. I appreciate what he is saying. The concern is there. The concern, however, was pointed out by us three years ago when we attacked the problem. and set up the Small School Study to identify ways of addressing inequalities. We brought in, over two years ago, a tax equalization grant which hit the problem dead on.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. HEARN:
And just to make sure that all the other bases were covered, the Throne Speech this year highlighted education, and especially educational funding. We have agreed and are already setting up the terms of reference for a study to look at the total educational finance problem in this Province.

To answer the member's question directly, Tuesday will tell the story.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
There is just time for a brief final supplementary.

The hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. DECKER:
Obviously, Mr. Speaker, the hon. the minister is saying no.

My question was specific and clear: Will it be eliminated? I take his answer to be no.

Now, my supplementary, Mr. Speaker, is this: Will the minister explain why his department is allowing this

disparity in educational funding to continue? Do not give me poppycock, give me the truth. Why are you allowing it?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

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

MR. HEARN:
Mr. Speaker, we have, in this Province, in the present department inherited a situation that had gone on for a number of years. Since 1971, when a certain administration came into power, the changes in educational funding and improvements in education generally have skyrocketed. From 1979 when the present administration came in, until today, the figures are unbelievable compared to the past. The inequalities that were there were unbelievable. We have attempted to address them, and in recent years, including this present year, with every means possible we have attempted to address the inequalities.

The member knows so little about it and is jumping on one issue that is being highlighted out there. There is more than one way to address the inequalities that exist. That is exactly what we are looking for in our total study of educational finance, and we will, with the other agencies with whom we are working hand in hand and have been for the past number of years, identify ways of solving the inequalities, and then we will do it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The time for Oral Questions has elapsed.

Orders of the Day

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, before you call Orders of the Day.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, I rise under Standing Order 23 in order to ask that the regular order of business be set aside today to debate a matter of urgent public business. I have a copy here for Your Honour. The Leader of the Opposition stated publicly yesterday that, and I quote "It would be madness if Newfoundland had more legislative jurisdiction over our fishery."

AN HON. MEMBER:

Shame, shame!

MR. SIMMS:

The same hon. gentleman said in this House on Opening Day -

MR. BAIRD:

Sit down, sit down!

MR. DAWE:

He is on a point of privilege.

MR. DINN:

Learn the rules of the House, he is on a point of privilege.

MR. SIMMS:

Pardon?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMS:

What do you think I am on? I am rising under Standing Order 23,

Mr. Speaker.

MR. WINDSOR:

This is a point of privilege, you cannot (inaudible).

AN HON. MEMBER:

Sit down!

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker -

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member has risen under Standing Order 23.

MR. SIMMS:

So I can state -

MR. SPEAKER:

'Leave to make a motion for the adjournment of the House -

MR. SIMMS:

Right.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

'must be asked after the ordinary daily routine of business has been concluded and -

MR. SIMMS:

You have not heard what I had to say yet.

MR. SPEAKER:

- 'before the orders of the day are presented upon.' That Standing Order is perfectly in order and the hon. member is also.

MR. SIMMS:

I will just be brief, Mr. Speaker, and then the hon. member can speak to it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMS:

His Honour has just ruled.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. TULK:

Are we not entitled to make a point of order?

MR. SIMMS:

Yes.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. the President of Council is in order to put this motion.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Of course he is.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, I will be very brief, then the hon. Opposition House Leader can speak to the issue that I am raising.

Mr. Speaker, that same hon. gentleman said in this House on Opening Day -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMS:

That the federal government was justified that -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMS:

I am sorry, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! As the hon. President of the Council at the

present time has risen on Standing Order 23, he is asking leave to make a motion and the hon. the member for Fogo (Mr. Tulk) is rising on a point of order. I am prepared to listen to the hon. member's point of order.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. TULK:

Thank you very much. I refer Your Honour in our Standing Orders, I do not remember the number right off, but it is here. It says that at 4:00 o'clock, today being Private Member's Day, the Speaker is to call the order of business for the day which is Private Member's Day. I would say to Your Honour that that being the time, he should now call the motion that was put by the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Gilbert), rather than allow any other business of this House to go on.

MR. SIMMS:

To the point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To the point of order.

MR. SIMMS:

I can make just as strong an argument by quoting another section of the Standing Orders, 23 (a), which says "Leave to make a motion for the adjournment of the House (when made for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance) must be asked after the ordinary daily routine of business and before the orders of the day are entered upon." That is what I have done, Mr. Speaker, before the orders of the day were entered upon and I am perfectly in my right to do this.

The hon. member has not even given me a chance to ask leave to

present the motion yet. So I mean if the hon. member can hold on to his socks over there, I only have one more paragraph and then he can speak to it if he wishes.

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

MR. SIMMS:
The hon. member is trying to - I still have the floor, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TULK:
Yes, on the point of order, you have the floor.

MR. SIMMS:
I am responding to your point of order. Do not get excited.

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

MR. SIMMS:
Just do not get excited now, you will get a chance.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows full well what he is now asking Your Honour to do is rule that this particular Standing Order 23 cannot apply on Private Member's Day.

MR. TULK:
No.

MR. SIMMS:
Well that is what the hon. member is suggesting in his argument. But clearly, Mr. Speaker, I have the right to do this before the orders are called and I did so, Mr. Speaker, you were listening. You were hearing me. Obviously I have the right to do it, and the hon. the members opposite were just too ignorant and wanted to interrupt me before I could even finish what I was trying to say. He does not even know what I am

going to say. So that is all there is to the point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TULK:
Further to the point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
To the point of order, the hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:
Mr. Speaker, I would refer the hon. gentleman to something that he just read, 'before the orders of the day are entered upon.' I would make the point to Your Honour that at four o'clock and it is now five minutes after four, and it was one minute after four before the hon. gentleman rose in his place, I would make the point to Your Honour that at that point at four o'clock Your Honour should have called the orders of the day, which was the motion put by the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir.

MR. SIMMONS:
And he did.

MR. TULK:
And you did.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. TULK:
And that being the order, and that being the point, at four o'clock we are automatically, according to our Standing Orders, into Private Member's Day.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. TULK:
It is now five minutes after four. The hon. gentleman is out of order to go to Standing Order 23.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:

I have just a brief comment to what the hon. member is saying. Does the hon. member for Menihek wish to speak to it? If I have the right to respond?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. SIMMS:

Okay, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

I recognize the hon. the President of the Council.

MR. SIMMS:

Yes, I just wanted to say, Mr. Speaker, that what the hon. member is trying to do now is take over the Speaker's Chair as well as being Opposition House Leader. It is not Opposition Leader who will make these decisions, it is the Speaker. The Speaker has already accepted my right to move this motion under Standing Order 23 by recognizing me, and he did not interrupt me, he did not call me to order. I have about one paragraph remaining, Mr. Speaker, and then the hon. member can argue whether or not it is in order or whether he does not want to go for it.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

On a point of order. It is my understanding that moving Order 23 is not necessarily on the importance of the motion itself, or the subject matter, which may

be quite important, but whether or not there is an opportunity to debate it.

MR. LONG:

Of course.

MR. FENWICK:

I refer you to the Order Paper in which we have Address in Reply, Committee of Supply and, I believe, a Fisheries Loan Bill in No. 8 of the motions. On that basis, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me, over the next couple of days there will be plenty of opportunity for members opposite and for the Leader of the Official Opposition to address that particular issue.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, to the point of order, if I may respond to that comment.

MR. SPEAKER:

I will recognize the hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, I suggest, Sir, that the Standing Order that we ought also to look at is Standing Order No. 53 (4). It says, and I quote, Sir: "On Wednesdays the question period shall commence not later than 3:30 p.m. and the ordinary daily routine of business shall end not later than 4:00 p.m., and at that time the private member's motion shall be called by the Speaker."

Mr. Speaker, in that sentence, there is a key phrase: 'the ordinary daily routine of business'. Mr. Speaker, the ordinary daily routine of business, I submit to you, includes everything other than the Orders of the Day. Everything that precedes Orders of the Day is characterized as the ordinary daily routine of business, which includes Standing Order No. 23, Question Period, Statements by Ministers, Petitions, etc. It embraces everything except Orders of the Day. That 53 (4) very clearly states that the ordinary daily routine of business shall end not later than 4:00 p.m. Mr. Speaker, thanks to your proper exercise of the Chair, that is exactly what happened. At 4:00 p.m. or within a few seconds, Mr. Speaker went directly to call Orders of the Day. Indeed, he took me so by surprise that I turned to my colleague to my left to ask what happened on Petitions, and I realized it was Wednesday and Mr. Speaker was doing what he is required to do under the Standing Order which I have just quoted, to go directly to Orders of the Day.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is an open and shut case. I can understand the gentleman from Grand Falls getting up. They may want to delay the vote on the railway resolution with so many people looking on, but that is a side issue and they will not get away with trying to delay the vote.

MR. SIMMS:

A final submission, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A final submission.

MR. SIMMS:

I will see if I can do something

to help Your Honour out of this dilemma. It is a dilemma, of course, and unfortunately, the hon. members opposite are getting all hot and bothered over nothing. The member for Menihek said there is lots of time to debate it, but he did not even hear what the motion was or what I wanted to debate, and he did not even give me the courtesy of allowing that. In view of the fact, Mr. Speaker, that during the entire thirty-minute Oral Question period, there was not one question to the minister on this side about the railway, not one question and, in view of the fact that Your Honour would obviously have to perhaps recess for a few minutes to consider the matter - because it is the first time raised, perhaps, on Private Members' Day - I will withdraw my intent today, Mr. Speaker, and serve notice that I will do it again tomorrow.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

It is Private Member's Day.

The hon. the member for Menihek adjourned the debate.

The hon. the member for Menihek.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker, the resolution, as put forward by the Liberal critic for Transportation, is badly flawed. It is so badly flawed, Mr. Speaker, that it is frightening to think that this House of Assembly is being asked to pass a motion to discontinue the railway. I do not believe, Mr. Speaker, in the 156 year history of this hon. House that we

have even gone on record to discontinue a right that we had under the Terms of Union and have done it voluntarily.

Mr. Speaker, when I finish my contribution to this debate I will be tabling three or four amendments to this particular resolution. I have copies of the resolution for the proposed amendments to it and how it would look after it is amended. If one of the pages wish to come over, I would be glad to circulate them on both sides so that they can see them.

Mr. Speaker, the Transportation critic for the Liberal Party and the Leader of the Official Opposition have both said that we have a right to a transportation system and that the transportation system means that we can parlay that right to a transportation system into a series of demands on the federal government, part of which would include things such as twinning the Trans-Canada Highway, others of which would be addressing the workers who would be involved if the railway were discontinued, and others of which would be a constitutional guarantee for the return of the railway in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is appropriate to read the actual wording of the Terms of Union. I think both the Leader of the Official Opposition and other members, who are legally inclined, will realize that Term 31 says,

"Canada will take over the following services, and will, as from the date of union, relieve the province of Newfoundland of the public cost incurred in respect of each service taken over, namely" - (a) is the first

one listed - "the Newfoundland Railway including steamship and other marine services."

Mr. Speaker, it says nothing, absolutely nothing about maintaining a transportation system and, I think, it is extremely important that we realize that there is no Term of Union that says they have to keep up any transportation system in this Province. All it says is that while the Newfoundland railway and the steamships associated with it are on the go, it will pick up the deficit of it.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, I think, the Liberal resolution is so utterly dangerous, because in the poker game that will ensue, if the railway does eventually become discontinued, it will mean that we have taken our Ace, our Joker, our wild card, and thrown it in the discard deck even before we start negotiating with the federal government.

On that basis, Mr. Speaker, I think that the resolution absolutely has to be amended to say that this House is in favour of the continuation of the Newfoundland railway. There is no other way that we can constitutionally expect the federal government to live up to their obligations and there is no other way we can possibly negotiate with the government if we do not maintain the one sound legal defence that we have for this whole situation.

Mr. Speaker, it is, I think, a very important thing to also recognize that in the speech made by the member for Humber Valley (Mr. Woodford) that certain truths were spoken, that the businessmen

in our Province have, over the last number of years, not used the Newfoundland railway to the extent they have before. That is a fact. There are a tremendous number of people in this Province who believe that the downgrading of the railway by raising rates, arbitrarily restricting the amount of service that can be given, have led to this also occurring.

On this basis, all we can say is that if the usage in the railway discontinues, or drops even further, then even maintaining that statutory right to the railway, although a victory of sorts, will be somewhat of an empty victory if we do not have that much usage on it. Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely critical for us to maintain that that contractual obligation has to continue.

So, when we approach this debate, we approach it by looking at the rest of the resolution being put forward by the Liberal Opposition which says that there are certain things which should necessarily occur if it transpires that there is no more substantial use of the railway and if, under those circumstances, the federal government is not actually supporting anything. I think we should address those particular considerations carefully.

One of the important considerations is the treatment of the individuals concern. Those 700-odd people who now work for the railway clearly have spent, in some cases, twenty years or thirty years working for it and are not in a great position to look for alternative employment, are not in a great position to have a good retirement package given to them, and are not in a great position to

get up and move to some other part of the country, if indeed, that is the option being put to them.

On that basis, Mr. Speaker, I think one of the first priorities will have to be the preservation of the financial integrity of those people who work in the railway. When I say this, Mr. Speaker, I do not talk about miniscule separation packages, I do not talk about MILAP programmes that have been in existence in the past, in which the unemployment insurance is used to patch up a miserable existence for three or four years.

What we need, Mr. Speaker, is a comprehensive policy that finds work for every single railway worker who wants to continue on working and is in a position to have that as an option available to them. For those people who are close to retirement age and wish to exercise an option of retiring, that too, is an important consideration. Mr. Speaker, that must be our first priority.

However, I do say at this time that in the Liberal resolution there is a major group that is missing. That was pointed out by the Minister of Transportation and also by the member for Humber Valley and, of course, it has to do with the individuals who live in the communities that depend on the employment of the railway. Those are predominantly places such as Port aux Basques, Bishop's Falls, Whitbourne, parts of St. John's and Clarendville, I understand as well.

Mr. Speaker, when you take several hundred jobs out of a community like that, you do not only have a problem with the individuals who lose their jobs, you have a

problem with the entire community. If you want a classic example of that, I will ask you to look at Labrador West, my own district, where, between 1982 and 1984, we lost a thousand paying jobs in one of the mines alone.

Mr. Speaker, a number of things occurred at that time that I do not want to see repeated in any of these railway communities and I think it is important that we understand that we have no systems in place that really provides an adequate safety net for these communities themselves. To give you an example, in Labrador West in 1981 an average house would cost from \$50,000 - \$55,000. These were very good houses, provided by the company, bought by the individuals over those previous years. Two years later, after a thousand people have been laid off, the average value of those houses dropped to about \$15,000 each. Individuals who had \$50,000 worth of equity had three-quarters of it wiped out within a year, primarily because there was nobody there to go and buy the houses. The market kept on declining and individuals who were counting on using their homes as an equity in order to provide for their retirement had nothing at all when it came time to retire.

Mr. Speaker, if we do not look at the communities like Port aux Basques, like Whitbourne, like Bishop's Falls, if we do not look at the communities and decide that we have to support the communities themselves, then we have been terribly negligent. I have heard from some of the Liberal speakers say that they meant to address that but, Mr. Speaker, it is not in the resolution itself and, not being there, I would suggest that it is extremely important to make

sure that it is and it is one of the amendments that we propose.

Mr. Speaker, there is also another problem. In communities like Port aux Basques, it is my opinion that if the railway were discontinued, it would not only be the jobs in a place like Port aux Basques that would be gone, but we would see a change in the transportation pattern in this province.

Right now we have Port aux Basques as the main gateway for much of our freight and much of our passenger traffic. If you discontinue the railway and we do not see as much freight coming through there, then I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that a lot of the tractor trailer traffic that currently goes through Port aux Basques will be re-routed through sea routes to Corner Brook, St. John's and other centers. That, Mr. Speaker, I think, is a very important thing to remember. It is not just the jobs that will be lost, but it will be a basic change in the transportation pattern in this province. The basic change will mean an accumulative effect on communities such as Port aux Basques to the extent that it is my opinion that they would lose tremendously by any attempt to do this.

So, Mr. Speaker, not only do we need protection for the workers there, but we also need an industrial strategy for communities like Port aux Basques. We have to look at putting in new industries in an area like that that may use some of the resources that were available to the railways, some of the shops and some of the rail yards, as is being done in Buchans, not very successfully, but it is being started in

Buchans. Mr. Speaker, that is an absolutely critical situation to look at.

Another aspect of it, Mr. Speaker, is the question of compensation. It is being put forward that a twinned highway all the way across the Island part of Newfoundland would be adequate compensation, provided it were maintained for a significant period of time, or provided it was maintained in perpetuity by the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, I question this on two grounds. The first is, I am not entirely sure that a twinned highway from Port aux Basques to St. John's is entirely necessary. Clearly it is necessary from places like Whitbourne to St. John's, clearly it is necessary between Gander and Grand Falls, and clearly it is necessary in that death trap that the member for Humber Valley talks about between Deer Lake and Corner Brook where clearly a double, four-lane highway, with a separated median, is necessary.

I question seriously whether the stretch of road between Grand Falls and Springdale needs a four-lane highway. Having travelled it many times myself, I am not entirely convinced that a good two-lane highway with passing lanes would not be entirely adequate to the situation.

Since we are in a negotiating position, I would suggest that it would be more appropriate that we design the kind of highway that would be appropriate for the Island part of the Province, which leads me to the other major lack, in terms of the concept of this resolution, and that is the Island part of the Province is not all

the Province.

As a matter of fact, the largest, geographical chunk of it is the Continental part that abutts onto Quebec and the Ungava Peninsula. It is called Labrador. That area, when it comes to transportation problems, is so far behind the rest of the Province that it is laughable.

I would suggest strongly, Mr. Speaker, that the other amendment that we have is that resources must be directed to completing the Trans-Labrador Highway. A highway completed from Labrador West, which is also, as everybody knows, now connected up to the mainland highway system, going all the way through Churchill Falls, through Happy Valley - Goose Bay, and then to the Coast of Labrador would do more for the development of Labrador than any other single initiative that I can think of, including other initiatives that we have talked about in this House in the past.

Mr. Speaker, it is extremely important to the people of Labrador that they feel that there is a commitment by this government and by the official Opposition and by any other parliamentary group in this Province to completing that road system. If it is part of a revolution in the way in which we organize transportation in this Province, then clearly it is appropriate that the Labrador part be included as well.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important in this debate that the government come clean with where it's position is. We have been getting a lot of criticism of the Liberal position from the Minister of Transportation, and I think a lot of that criticism was

deserved, quite frankly, because it was an inadequate resolution.

But we have not been getting from the minister a clear-cut statement of what the policy of this government is towards the railway. What we have been getting is mixed signals. Back in 1979 and 1980 the Premier said we have a constitutional guarantee to the railway in perpetuity. A year or two ago what we got from the Premier -

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. FENWICK:
Just a minute, Mr. Speaker, and I will be finished - what we got a year ago was an assertion that we did not have a constitutional right.

So finally, Mr. Speaker, what I would ask is, as this debate continues, would the Premier come in, stand up in his place and say to everybody concerned what government is doing about the railway. Is it on the table? Are you negotiating about it? Please, Mr. Premier, tell us what is going on.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. MITCHELL:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Member from LaPoile.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. MITCHELL:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In an effort to put forth a resolution in this House that can be more acceptable to all members of the House, in order to be able to support -

MR. FENWICK:
Mr. Speaker, just as a courtesy.

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

MR. FENWICK:
I indicated through the speech that there were a number of amendments that I wished to move and I distributed them to everyone. Is it possible for me to just move that before the next speaker starts?

If we do not, we can get the other member to speak and to move it, but I think it is appropriate that it at least be put on the table.

MR. LONG:
He said he was moving it but did not actually make the motion. He said they were being moved, but he did not make a motion.

MR. FENWICK:
I would make the motion that these amendments as listed on the paper be moved, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LONG:
They were circulated and tabled.

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

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker, I do not think it is in order for a member to rise on a point of order, which the hon. member had to, to move amendments to a resolution. I do not think

there is anywhere that you will find that that is permissible.

I saw a copy of the hon. member's amendments, but I understood he had moved them during his debate.

MR. FENWICK:
I indicated I would.

MR. SIMMS:
But you neglected to do so.

MR. LONG:
He said he would move the motion at the end, but he was cut off at time.

MR. SIMMS:
I see, I see. Well, perhaps the amendment about to be presented by my colleague from LaPoile might suffice. Perhaps you can have a look at it. If not, later on your other colleague can attempt to get up. That would be our position, Mr. Speaker. I do not think that can be done under a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:
If that is agreeable, the hon. the member for LaPoile, please continue.

MR. MITCHELL:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As I was saying, in an effort to put forward a resolution in this House that can be more acceptable and offer more opportunities for all members of the House to support it, I would like to move the following amendment to the amendment by deleting, after the first WHEREAS -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. MITCHELL:
- to move the following amendment to the amendment -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
No!

MR. MITCHELL:
Sorry, Mr. Speaker, I did not get your ruling. I understood that you accepted the amendment that was put forward.

MR. SPEAKER:
No.

MR. MITCHELL:
O.K. I understand now, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

I would like to propose the following amendment by deleting, after the first WHEREAS and substituting thereafter:

"WHEREAS this government has consistently supported the continuance of the Newfoundland Railway as an integral component of the overall transportation system; then

"BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that government continue to carry on discussions and programs in co-operation with the federal government that will result in an inter-modal transportation system that meets the transportation requirements of Newfoundland and Labrador now and in the future;

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that government continue to recognize the economic importance of the transportation to employees and communities that might be negatively effected by changes in the existing transportation system;

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that should discussions lead to an agreement that the present railway employees be provided with alternative job opportunities, early pension, or alternate financial arrangements in direct

consultation with both national and local union heads;

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that communities affected be provided with adequate alternate development opportunities;

"AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the rates for through traffic between North Sydney and Port aux Basques continue to be set in accordance with the Terms of Union;

"BE IT ALSO FURTHER RESOLVED that any changes in the Newfoundland transportation system be in the best interests of Newfoundland and Labrador."

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

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

MR. SPEAKER:
On point of order, the hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:
I have to say to the hon. gentleman that I do not have the complete text of his amendment, but just from sitting in this seat and listening to it, it seems to me that the amendment is completely out of order because, what it would do is completely negate the present resolution. I refer your Honor to Beauchesne, Section 431: "An amendment to alter the main question, by substituting a proposition with the opposite conclusion," which I would say that this one does "is not an expanded negative and may be moved".

Mr. Speaker, I would say to you that what the hon. gentlemen did was move an amendment which destroys the resolution that was

put forward by the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir in that it tries completely to do away with the intent, with the spirit, and, indeed, with the letter of what the hon. gentleman from Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir has put forward. I would ask Your Honour to rule the amendment out of order.

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's arguments are kind of strange in view of the fact that he prefaced his disagreement with the amendment by saying that he had not even seen it yet. Now, that, in itself, sounds a little bit unusual. Your Honour may wish to take a few minutes to recess to have a look at this. I do not know. That is up to Your Honour.

The point of matter is that it is perfectly acceptable, and may I read a quotation or citation for Your Honour from Beauchesne's Fifth Edition, Paragraph 425, which says, "The object of an amendment may be either to modify a question in such a way as to increase its acceptability or to present to the House a different proposition as an alternative to the original which must, however, be relevant to the subject of the questions."

Mr. Speaker, I think if Your Honour has a look at this he will see clearly it is very, very relevant. It encompasses some amendments that the representatives of some of the unions talked to the Minister of Transportation about. That encompasses that. In fact, if I

remember, and I do not have a copy of it in front of me either, the last "THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED" makes a reference to the fact that any changes be in the best interest of Newfoundland and Labrador. To me, Mr. Speaker, that encompasses just about everything.

So I cannot see how the hon. member can argue that it is out of order, especially considering the citation I just repeated for Your Honour. Paragraph 425, I think, makes it fairly clear.

MR. SPEAKER (Parsons):
I have heard enough, I think, to make a ruling. I think that it is of very, very grave importance to the House to have perhaps five minutes to make an assessment, and I will come back with a ruling within five minutes.

MR. SIMMONS:
Will you hear argument before the recess?

MR. SPEAKER:
The Chair feels that it has heard enough argument and a decision will be made within five minutes.

Recess

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

After due deliberation, we find the amendment is in order.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
I will give the reason. Because it deals with the same subject matter, perhaps with more general terms. I quote from Beauchesne,

Paragraph 425, "The object of an amendment may be either to modify a question in such a way as to increase its acceptability or to present to the House a different proposition as an alternative to the original which must, however, be relevant to the subject of the questions."

The hon. the member for LaPoile.

MR. FENWICK:
On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. FENWICK:
Mr. Speaker, my question of privilege is this: In the previous debate, you cut me off after speaking for fifteen minutes. Clearly, in the rules of order, in rule 53.1 (2), "Notwithstanding the provisions of Standing Order 49, no member may speak for more than twenty minutes in the debate." I checked with the Table officers and they informed me that they had assessed me five minutes for being recognized last Wednesday when I started the debate and adjourned it.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, if you look at the Hansard for March 16, last Wednesday, on Page 154, you will see that I said all of two words, "Mr. Speaker". Then, at that point the Government House Leader said that we had to vote on something else.

Mr. Speaker, I do not speak that quickly, but surely "Mr. Speaker" takes a little bit less than five minutes to speak.

I now move, on my question of privilege, that I be given back

the five minutes I was denied in order to complete it.

MR. SIMMS:

He has to rule on the Question of Privilege first.

MR. FENWICK:

Yes, I know, but my motion at the end of it would be that I get my five minutes back in order to complete my speech, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, I do acknowledge what the hon. member for Menihek has said. If hon. members will recall, last Wednesday we had a tri-party resolution on the seal fishery. When the member for Menihek was recognized at that time, I interrupted him and said that we had agreed in advance to, at a quarter to six, discuss and put the resolution on the seal fishery. It would seem to me, Mr. Speaker, that perhaps the hon. member does have a legitimate point.

In that particular case, of course, if you thus rule that way - I do not know how Your Honour will rule - then the hon. member would have the opportunity to move his amendments, in which case, then, I would argue the hon. member for LaPoile would still have the right to move his amendment, only it would be an amendment to the amendment, if Your Honour thus rules. We have no real problem with that and it would seem justifiable.

MR. SPEAKER:

To the hon. member for Menihek, on

his point of privilege, the Chair does not feel that it is a point of privilege, but rather a point of order.

In what he is saying, I find justification. The hon. member will be allowed the extra five minutes.

AN HON. MEMBER:

By leave?

MR. SPEAKER:

By leave.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker, I will not take the five minutes, since I am close to the end of it, but I do wish to move the amendments that we have proposed, which we have provided copies of for both sides of the House.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, a point of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:

I rose at the same time as my friend from Menihek, and it being a matter of privilege, I have to raise it at the first opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, I want to go back to the question of the amendment from the gentleman from LaPoile which you found to be in order. As I said, for the information of the gentlemen opposite, I am going to raise the matter of privilege, and I need just a sentence of two to flesh it out before I come to my matter of privilege.

Mr. Speaker, earlier today the Government House Leader attempted to switch the subject from the railway to the fisheries. That

did not succeed, and now we have another series of their game playing.

Mr. Speaker, we understand that the government wants to destroy the resolution. Suddenly the government, which as the government could have brought in a resolution on the railway from the first day this House opened two weeks ago, but did not do it, are all interested in the railway. Where have they been for two weeks?

My point of privilege, Mr. Speaker, is the following: As a private member in this Chamber I have a right under the Standing Orders, as does the gentleman from Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir, who has put down the resolution that we are presently debating, and it ought to be an unfettered right, to put down a resolution, as a private member, and to give the House an opportunity to vote on it.

What is happening here today, and what has consistently happened, Mr. Speaker, is that the government uses its majority to effectively wipe out Private Member's Day. That, Mr. Speaker, is a breach of my privileges. It limits my capacity to put down resolutions, whether it be about the railway or whatever.

I submit, Mr. Speaker, in making the ruling that you have made, you have, maybe unwittingly, breached the privileges of the gentleman for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir and, in the process, you have breached the privileges of every member in this House because, in making your ruling, you have, in effect, severely limited the right of the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir to get the House's decision on what he believes ought to be done in respect to transportation in

this Province. That is the issue, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:

Either we are going to have Private Member's Day, Mr. Speaker, or we are going to have that circus we saw this afternoon where the gentleman -

MR. SPEAKER (Parsons):

Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:

- under the guise of a motion.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:

Thank you, Sir.

MR. BAIRD:

Name him, Mr. Speaker, name him.

MR. SPEAKER:

Look, the Chair finds it almost impossible to ascertain what the point of privilege is.

MR. SIMMONS:

I will make it very quickly, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of privilege, has it got to go on for an indefinite period? I would like for you, Sir, to make the point of privilege.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, as I said around two minutes ago and not wanting to take undue time, I want to hear what the gentleman for LaPoile (Mr. Mitchell) has to say on the subject. Mr. Speaker, my point of privilege, which I began to state, is that my privileges as a member of this Chamber are being breached

as a result of the ruling made by Mr. Speaker. I wanted to make the point before recess because I was going to put this argument as a consideration for Mr. Speaker in making his ruling. I have no choice but to make it after the fact, and so I am appealing to Mr. Speaker to reconsider the ruling.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS:

There are very serious ramifications for my privileges, the privileges of the gentleman for Burgeo - bay d'Espoir and of every private member in this House. That is my point of privilege. If Mr. Speaker finds I have established a prima facie case, I am prepared to put down the appropriate motion.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. SIMMS:

To that point of privilege, so-called point of privilege, I have never heard any thing of the like in my life. It is absolutely ludicrous what the hon. member for Fortune - Hermitage (Mr. Simmons) is trying to do. When you consider the fact that the hon. member is suppose to be a veteran of this parliament and the House of Commons in Ottawa, he should know better.

What he is doing is questioning Mr. Speaker's ruling which has already been made, already been ruled on. He is implying that a member should be able to put forth a resolution on Private Member's Day that cannot be amended, which

is absolutely ludicrous because they, and I would not be surprised if the hon. member himself in the past has amended resolutions on Private Member's Day, but more importantly than any of that, more importantly -

MR. SIMMONS:

With the consent of the House.

MR. SIMMS:

- with the consent of the House, nonsense, with the ruling of the Chair, as always - but more important than any of those legalistic types of debates or parliamentary reference type of debate, most important is the fact, Mr. Speaker, that we have put forth a resolution here that can be acceptable to all members of this hon. House and that is the reason it was framed in the way it was. Do not forget that the amendments we proposed, most of the amendments, at least some of the amendments that we proposed were amendments requested by representation from the unions involved in this situation to the Minister of Transportation, and he carried out his responsibility by ensuring those amendments were put forth.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, before everybody in the Gallery and everybody in this Province start to indicate to the Liberal Party opposite the kind of contempt in which they are held for trying to stall the debate on such an important resolution when there are people here waiting to hear some debate on the resolution, rather than this kind of legalistic argument, I suggest the hon. member for Fortune - Hermitage go back, study

Beauchesne a bit more, show some references, because he did not cite one as support for his point of privilege, and hang his head in shame at the same time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, there arises a new matter that I want to give notice of once we have seen the Hansard for today. I believe the gentleman for Grand Falls (Mr. Simms) said that the amendment moved by the gentleman for LaPoile (Mr. Mitchell) was generated by the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Doyle).

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

No, no!

MR. SIMMONS:

If so, Mr. Speaker, he has admitted that it is a government amendment on Private Member's Day.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

Speaking to the point of privilege, I do not believe that anyone's privileges in this House have been taken away from them because of the ruling made by the Chair.

I ask the member for Menihek if he would continue.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker, I will just read in the amendments. Moved by the member for Menihek (Mr. Fenwick)

and seconded by the member for St. John's East (Mr. Long) that the resolution be amended as follows.

Mr. Speaker, I have given three pages and the amended resolution is there, plus the motion:

"That the eighth WHEREAS be amended to delete the words 'inefficient and unacceptable,' and replace the words with the words 'underutilized.'

"That the section, BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, be amended to read that 'that this House of Assembly supports the continuance of the railway in Newfoundland, but in the event the railway is discontinued it only be under the following conditions:

"Be it further amended that Section (g) be added to the previous section, BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, saying, 'that a special comprehensive program be instituted so that the communities in which the major layoffs would occur so that the tax base would be protected, new industries established to provide continuing employment at the same level in the community itself.

"That the BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED be amended in (d) to add the Section iii) construct the Trans Labrador Highway through to the coast of Labrador from Labrador West, and pay the annual maintenance costs."

So moved and seconded, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

Order, please!

As I understand it, there was a resolution that has been amended and now there is a subamendment proposed.

MR. SIMMS:

Maybe I can assist in the clarification.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. SIMMS:

This was agreed to before Your Honour came back in the Chair. The hon. member's time had been somehow fouled up the last day and we agreed to let him put his amendment, but then it would be understood that the amendment put by the member for LaPoile was actually the amendment to the amendment. The member for LaPoile is actually the one who has the floor.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman, for the first time since this Legislature has opened, is right on this point. He did give leave to do exactly what he said.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The Chair is a little bit confused now. Just exactly what are we debating? Are we debating the amendment?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

The amendment to the amendment.

The hon. the member for LaPoile.

MR. MITCHELL:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I appreciate the ruling from the

Chair. I also am very proud of the opportunity to eventually be able to speak in this House on the amended resolution. I feel for the first time since this issue entered the House of Assembly, that now we have a resolution that has some teeth in it, a resolution that we can debate, and hopefully, a resolution that all members of this hon. House can accept.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to see members of the Canadian National Railway in the galleries today. I am sure that they are very anxious to hear what is going to be debated in this hon. House.

I understand from the newspaper reports when they left the other day they were a little bit disillusioned with what they had heard, they were a little bit disillusioned with the resolution that was put forward by the Liberal Party, and I can say to this hon. House, Mr. Speaker, that the resolution that is put forth today is a resolution that is coming from the hon. member for LaPoile. It is a good reason for that, Mr. Speaker, because CN is so important to my district and it is so important to the many constituents that live in my district.

Mr. Speaker, we can go back some hundred years ago when the railway was first instituted and established in this Province. We see that Port aux Basques was established as a transportation town. The railway started from Port aux Basques and came to St. John's. People in my riding and in the town of Port aux Basques depended on the railway for their livelihood.

Mr. Speaker, this is why I am very proud today to be able to stand in

this House and present this resolution that I feel is going to deal with a lot of the issues that surround all of the controversy in connection with the railway today.

Mr. Speaker, let me, first of all, say that the resolution that was put forward by the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir was a hypothetical one. What the resolution talked about was whether or not we were going to do away with the railway. Let me say, Mr. Speaker, at this particular time in history the railway is still a viable industry in this Province.

I want to deal with some of the aspects of the resolution that I put forward here today, because if there are negotiations, and I know that there are negotiations because it is public knowledge. The newspapers have said that there are negotiations between this Province and the federal government in relation to the railway. My major concern is that in these negotiations there will be certain aspects that will be taken care of.

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, I was very disillusioned with that resolution which was put forward by the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir. No mention whatsoever about any compensation packages for communities that would be affected if the railway, for instance, was to be replaced by another transportation system in the Province. There was no mention whatsoever, Mr. Speaker.

I had in the galleries the Mayor from Port aux Basques who went away from here very disillusioned. I have just been informed, Mr. Speaker, that I only have two minutes in this debate.

I am very sorry -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

By leave!

MR. MITCHELL:

- that the time has been taken up on such trivial matters in relation to getting this amendment by the Opposition on the floor of this Assembly. I am going to have to make my remarks very brief, Mr. Speaker.

So many people wanted to make sure that their interests in the railway were taken care of. We have people in the galleries today, I have constituents, Mr. Speaker, in my district, who have devoted their whole life to the railway. They have worked for the railway all their lives and we hear the Opposition, saying, 'If it is appropriate, Mr. Speaker, we will do something for them.' Now, what is appropriate? Is two years appropriate? Is six months appropriate? Or if you worked for the railway for ten years, yes, maybe we could take a look at your situation. But if you work fifteen or twenty years, we may consider a pension.

Mr. Speaker, we wanted to be definitive in what our policy was going to be in relation to what we, as a government, would put forward to the federal government. I think my resolution, Mr. Speaker, clearly outlines that, as it was put forward today.

I am very proud, Mr. Speaker, to be able to rise in this hon. House and to say that all aspects of the transportation system, as it relates to the employees, as it relates to the towns, will be a major consideration in any negotiations that take place on

the railway between this government and the Government of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I am also proud to be able to say that under the Terms of Union, back in 1949, when the railway was in difficulty, that the federal government came to the rescue of this Province and said, 'Yes, we will take over the transportation system and we will help with the cost of operating that system.'

I am very proud to be able to stand here today and say also that in any negotiations with the federal government I believe the assurance can be given that everybody involved in the railway will also be taken care of.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. MORGAN:
Not will be, they must be.

MR. MITCHELL:
Yes, they must be.

I also have another major concern, Mr. Speaker, and that is concerning the transportation needs of this Province. I believe that it is more than just the railway at stake here. I sincerely believe -

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. member's time has elapsed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
By leave!

MR. W. CARTER:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. the member for

Twillingate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. W. CARTER:
Mr. Speaker, I think there is a word for what we are seeing here this afternoon, but I am sure that is not parliamentary. If I were allowed to use it, Mr. Speaker, I think the word hypocrisy would be very well in place, because what we say today is the Government House Leader, in one breath getting up and contriving a means of killing this debate, deferring the vote on the regulations by introducing a motion under Standing Order 23, that we defer the discussion on this bill, set aside the business of the House, and that is what it said, and debate a remark that was made by the Leader of the Opposition three or four days ago on the fishery -

MR. MORGAN:
(Inaudible) sell out.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. W. CARTER:
- even though, Mr. Speaker, there are many occasions in the next few days, including the Throne Speech debate, the debate on the supplementary estimates and others, where that issue, if he wants to raise it, can be debated.

The House Leader chose to rise in his place and to ask that this motion go forward, knowing very well that the galleries are full of people, most of whom have a personal interest to be here today, to hear what is going on with respect to their future and the future of Canadian National in our Province. He was quite

willingly to have this debate set aside, to have the resolution literally killed, to debate an issue that can be debated at any time during the next few days.

Mr. Speaker, the Newfoundland rail passenger service in this province is, without a doubt, one of the most debated, I suppose, one of the most maligned and one of the most abused public transportation systems on the North American continent. Going back to the mid-sixties, the debate started. Yes, I suppose, going back before the mid-sixties the debate started as to the viability of the Canadian National and our rail passenger service.

In fact, there is a very strong suggestion that it was back in those days, back in the '60's that the decision was made to bring about the abolition of Newfoundland's rail passenger service and eventually, of course, the entire rail service in this province.

Mr. Speaker, despite all that is being said in this House and in the House of Commons in Ottawa, I am not sure that the Government of Canada has taken too seriously the importance of this issue. I recall when one of our local radio stations here, back in the late '60's or early '70's, at considerable expense to their company and effort, initiated a province-wide petition calling for the retention of the rail passenger service in this province. I do not know the exact wording of the petition, but what it said in effect was that the rail passenger service should be allowed to continue and that any attempt or any plan on the part of the federal authorities to abolish that service should be set aside.

I recall very vividly the effort made and the time taken and the money spent by that radio station to have that petition circulated and to ensure that it was a success. There were school children, for example, canvassing the various communities, getting people to sign that petition. The radio station in question, their talk show host spent hours over probably a two or three month period soliciting signatures for that very important petition.

Finally, when the last signature was affixed to that petition, they put all of the letters and all of the names in a barrel and they painted the barrel - I believe it was yellow - and on it they marked the words, "Save the Bullet, The VOCM Petition." VOCM was the news media that initiated the petition. That barrel of petitions, containing the names of, I believe, something like 300,000 Newfoundlanders, was dispatched to Ottawa to be presented to the House of Commons. I was one of the four people who, on a hot day in July, rolled that barrel up Parliament Hill -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. W. CARTER:

- up the walk, up to the Centre Block in front of the cameras and the national press. We were trying to make a point, the point, of course, being that Newfoundlanders did not want to see their rail passenger service abolished. We presented that petition in the House of Commons, with a great deal of fanfare, thinking that we were making an

impression.

Mr. Speaker, the following morning I had occasion to be walking down the corridors of the basement of the Centre Block going from one building to another. In the course of my travels through the basement corridor, I passed the garbage room of the House of Commons where waste paper is stored pending it being carted off to the dump or whatever they do with it, and lo and behold! Sitting in there, in all of its glory, was this barrel of petitions that was presented the day before coming from Newfoundland.

Now that, Mr. Speaker, told me something. It told me that maybe the powers that be then, as now, are not taking their responsibilities or their constitutional obligations too seriously.

Nothing came of that petition and I suspect there were other petitions and other attempts made by elected people down here and by others to focus attention -

MR. MORGAN:
(Inaudible) petition in the garbage.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. W. CARTER:
Mr. Speaker, it is all very well for members opposite, realizing there are people in the gallery, men who have a large stake in what is happening and what is being said here today and what actions will be taken by the federal government over the next few months, -

MR. MORGAN:

(Inaudible) Ottawa, sure.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. W. CARTER:
Mr. Speaker, it is all very well to stand here, as the member for LaPoile (Mr. Mitchell) did and to some extent the gentleman from Menihek (Mr. Fenwick), and posture and try to be all things to all people.

I would suggest to you that while these amendments are being read, while they are being prepared, while the members who make them attempt to grandstand and to impress their viewers and try to impress upon them, of course, now they are fighting for the working class -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

There is persistent interruption from one member on my left and I would ask him to please keep quiet. He has ample opportunity when his turn comes to speak.

The hon. the member for Twillingate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. W. CARTER:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER:
Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. W. CARTER:
Mr. Speaker, while the hon. member

was up presenting his amendment to the resolution, he admitted, and I think I can quote him pretty well, that it is pretty well public knowledge, he said, that negotiations are taking place with respect to the abolition of the rail passenger service. These are his words. So why this charade, Mr. Speaker?

I do not get any kick out of seeing any rail passenger service being abolished. I think most Newfoundlanders in their heart would like to see that service continued. Of course, we would. It is part of Newfoundland's heritage. There is no member on this side who gets any real kick out of talking or listening to comments that would have the effect maybe of downgrading the service and eventually abolishing it. Of course, we would like to see the rail passenger service continued.

In fact, a lot of us, and I suspect most Newfoundlanders yet are not fully reconciled to the proposition that Newfoundland cannot, as other provinces, have a rail passenger service and a good Trans-Canada. Mr. Speaker, there are certain realities in life that we must accept and face up to.

I think most railroaders, those that I have talked to, have pretty well come to grips now with that problem. The rail passenger service in this Province has been downgraded, downgraded to the point where it is now uneconomic, in fact, it is loading up very substantial losses every year.

MR. DAWE:

Not the rail passenger service, that has been gone for some years.

MR. W. CARTER:

The rail service itself, I apologize, yes, the Canadian National rail service. Mr. Speaker, that is a fact of life, Sir, and no amount of posturing or politicking or anything else will change that very fundamental, basic fact of life.

What we are saying on this side is, in very simple terms, my colleague's resolution, while it is being criticized by the gentlemen opposite, trying to pick holes in it, to say it is flawed, and it does not make provision for this, that, or something else, the resolution very simply sums up, Mr. Speaker, I believe, what most Newfoundlanders feel.

If in fact it comes to pass that we must lose the railway, then let us take whatever steps we have to take now to protect our rights as enshrined in the Terms of Union between Canada and Newfoundland to guarantee Newfoundlanders, not only this generation but future generations, that we will have a decent mode of transportation across this Province.

If we cannot have a rail service, then we want this government in its negotiations with Ottawa, not to settle for thirty pieces of silver, for \$800 million. That might sound like a lot of money but most experts will tell you, Mr. Speaker, it is only a mere drop in the bucket when it comes to replacing the rail service and protecting Newfoundland's Constitutional rights in the Terms of Union.

What we are saying is do not, for maybe political reasons, and some of suspect that is maybe the overriding motive for talking now in terms of a large cash settlement. You can buy a lot of

votes with \$1 billion or \$800 million. That is not acceptable to us, for the government to sell part of our birthright and to maybe jeopardize the future transportation system in this Province for a cash settlement.

We are saying, also, Mr. Speaker, in my colleague's resolution that if in fact it comes to pass that Canadian National and the governments of Newfoundland and Canada see fit, in their wisdom or otherwise, to discontinue to rail service, we are saying that the present railway employees be provided with alternative job opportunities or early pensions where appropriate.

MR. MORGAN:

What do you mean 'where appropriate,' it is all appropriate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. DOYLE:

You can not say 'where appropriate.' There are too many loop holes.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, this resolution, presented by my colleague, protects the rights of the workers. We are not insensitive to the fact that most railway men have given their lives, pretty well, to the railway here in this Province. They worked long and hard. We do not, I certainly do not, a man who raised a family and had all the problems that go with it, I do not know how people can function as they have functioned for almost two decades now, not knowing if they are going to have

a job six months from now or in six months time.

There has been a cloud of uncertainty hovering over railway workers in this Province now for the past twenty years.

MR. DOYLE:

You are not lifting it now with that (inaudible).

MR. W. CARTER:

The hon. Minister of Transportation knows very well, and I do not want to be interrupted by him while I am speaking, but he knows very well that his friends in Ottawa are already making plans for the discontinuation of rail service in this Province. He knows very well that a sum of money is being talked about. That is the issue, Mr. Speaker, and we are saying do not do it.

Do not be tempted, as attractive as it might be to suddenly find yourselves with \$800 million or maybe \$1 billion in your back pocket so you can put on a massive campaign in your desperation to win the next election, do not sell the rights of Newfoundland, do not sell the rights of Newfoundlanders, not only this generation, but future generations as well.

Mr. Speaker, these are some of the things that we are supporting on this side. I would like to again make reference to the attempts on the part of the House Leader to side track the issue, to do what he has to do to kill the resolution to make sure that it never comes to a head, or that members opposite will not be put in the spot of having to vote for a certain resolution or amendments to it.

Mr. Speaker, I again say that I would plead with all members to support my colleague's resolution. What he is saying, in effect, is that if the railway is to go, then let us make sure that our constitutional rights are protected and that we do not sell out for a sum of money that in future years will prove to be very inadequate.

My leader makes a very good point when he says that any agreement now, for example, to discontinue the rail service in the Province must carry with it an understanding on the part of the federal government that if and when the need arises, whether it is next year or fifty years down the road, we will have not waived our right to a rail passenger service, or a train service, in this Province. That, too, must be part of any agreement entered into between the Province and the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, again I get back to the matter of the employees of Canadian National. I can only say that I think they deserve better. I think that any working man, any person, any group of people who have given their working lives, as is the case in many cases, deserve to know where they stand and where they are going. I would ask the Minister of Transportation and the Premier, and I would ask the federal Minister of Transportation (Mr. Crosbie), to come clean with the railway people and to come clean with the Province. Let the people know where they stand!

There have been all kinds of rumors circulating and headlines in the papers saying that negotiations are ongoing and then, of course, somebody comes out and denies it. There has been nothing

but confusion. I think the federal Minister of Transportation, who represents, by the way, a riding in this Province that is the home riding of a lot of railway workers, owes it to them to make his government's position abundantly clear, as does the Minister of Transportation for this Province. Remove the doubt and the uncertainty. Let the workers know where they stand, and also let Newfoundlanders know where they stand in terms of the rail service.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. DAWE:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs.

MR. DAWE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DAWE:

Mr. Speaker, I stand to support the amendment to the amendment to the original resolution as put forward by my colleague, the member for LaPoile. As members will realize, the member for LaPoile and myself share adjoining constituencies and, although to a lesser degree, certainly the constituents in my district are very much, and have been very much involved with the railway for a long period of time.

Everybody has taken the opportunity to relate a little bit of history, I guess, about their own individual contact with the railway, the importance of the railway, and, I suppose to emphasize the important role the

railway has played in this Province. I had the privilege, in the Summers of 1960 and 1961, to work in the dining cars with CN, going back and forth across the Province. Some of the employees I see in the galleries today were obviously members of unions and staff of CN at that point in time. Some of the people I worked with, who have passed on, they will well remember. It was an experience, Mr. Speaker, that I would have liked each and every Newfoundlander to have had sometime in their careers, have the opportunity to see what a valuable contribution the railway and its employees made, and the kind of economic benefit that the railway meant to communities around the Province. It is an opportunity that I only wish each and every resident of Newfoundland could have experienced.

Coming into the portfolio of Transportation, back in March, 1981, one of the first things I was confronted with was a proposal from the federal government that would have resulted in the closure of the railway, back in 1981.

I think, of any member of this legislature right now who was around at that time, with the exception of the Premier who has been consistently supportive of the continuance of the railway, on a number of occasions I highlighted a number of specific issues that resulted in a continuance and somewhat of an upgrading, as well as could be done at that particular time with the railway. But the Premier has consistently supported the continuance of the railway, and this administration has consistently supported it. If I may, Mr. Speaker, I might indicate, perhaps, that second

only to the Premier's has been my support for the continuance of the railway, in the face of a lot of opposition.

The member from Twillingate indicated that perhaps the writing is on the wall and that people not only within but without the railway have seen that it is on a decline and that perhaps we should deal with that reality. But we have consistently tried to make sure that the role of the railway was enhanced as much as it could be in the total transportation picture of the Province. We also have to remember, and I would like to remind the Opposition, that the decline of the railway is certainly not a new phenomenon. From 1949, the total employment with the railway, combined with the marine sector at that point in time, was in excess of 3,600 or 3,700 people.

By 1968, albeit the barrel rolled up Parliament Hill, that had declined to just in excess of 1,500; there was about a 50 per cent decline in employment in that period of time.

A number of things have happened, of course. If we want to look at the behind-the-scenes deals that were done, I am sure my colleague from Placentia, if time permits, would like to relate some stories about what happened with regard to the Argentia Branch Line and the Argentia Road, and other arrangements that were made which saw a continual decline of the railway over that period of time.

One of the things about the resolution brought in by the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir which I guess the Minister of Transportation and others who spoke indicated, is the

inadequacy, first of all, and the hypothetical nature of the resolution. But even if you went on to discuss the resolution, there is the complete inadequacy and the shortsightedness. You talk about the member from Twillingate saying, oh! don not take your thirty pieces of silver. Do not sell out the railway for the short-term. What a shortsighted approach members opposite have taken. You cannot pull out the railway when you talk about transportation in Newfoundland, and say we will deal with the railway. You cannot pull out CN Marine's activities or Marine Atlantic's activities, or our own intraprovincial ferry service activities and say we will just talk about that. You cannot pull out the improvements that we have had in our air services in this Province, both in Labrador and within the Island, and say, well, we will just talk about air transportation. You cannot pull out the dramatic improvements that have been made in road transportation in this Province and talk about just that. You pull out the inadequacies in our road transportation and just talk about that. It has to be looked at in its totality. and to do anything less is really trying to create a smoke screen for purely political purposes, which is what the member has done with this resolution, instead of dealing with the issue.

If you wanted to take your hypothetical resolution and deal with the problems, even with the railway, there is nothing but a vague recognition of the employees rights in the resolution put forward - where appropriate, or if it is appropriate.

Mr. Speaker, over the past three

or four years I have had literally dozen of meetings with either groups of employees of the railway or individuals with the railway, to talk about the ongoing concerns that they have had. The Premier and I met with them, I think it was a year and a half or two years ago, collectively with all the representatives from the various unions with the railway, and if I could sort of capsulize what they asked us to do, recognizing where the jurisdictional responsibilities are, as a group of employees they asked the province, asked the Premier, asked me and asked government if we would do whatever we could to make sure that in the ongoing discussions relative to the railway, whether it continued, whether there were reductions, or whether there improvements, that we would do what we could as a government to make sure that their position was protected, that their rights were recognized, and that they would have a fair opportunity - a fair opportunity - to seek either alternative employment, or to make sure that compensation packages to them were put in place. And we have endeavoured right through this whole process to do that. That was a commitment that the Premier and myself and government made to these people, and we will continue to do that in any way we can as a government, to make sure that the employees of Terra Transport, of the Canadian National subsidiary in this province, are well protected and well recognized, and that their contribution to the lifestyle of Newfoundland over the past ninety years plus is recognized in whatever happens in the future with regard to the railway.

Also, Mr. Speaker, and my colleagues have pointed this out

before, the economic impact of the transportation business in the various communities has a rise and fall to it. For instance, Corner Brook is a prime example, where they have had marine freight services for a number of years, and it was discontinued. It is now coming back again. There is that ebb and flow to transportation. As different methods are put in place for moving goods, as different demands from the consumer are put forward, transportation fluctuates. But there are a number of communities where transportation is and has been the most important aspect of those communities, and Port aux Basques is one of them, as well as others, such as Bishop's Falls. And certainly, lest we forget, to a great extent the city of St. John's has a very large and important railway aspect to it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. DAWE:
Sometimes, in our discussions, we tend to forget that there is a fairly significant employment factor and contribution that Terra Transport and the railway is making to the city of St. John's. So all those things have to be taken into consideration.

The Opposition in their resolution made no reference to that. What we have tried to do to the resolution put forward by the member from LaPoile is address the issue of transportation in its totality, recognizing that there is a responsibility for all of us as legislators, as government, to make sure that the interests of the employees of Terra Transport and Canadian National in this province are recognized, and that we have a responsibility to

recognize their contribution and to do whatever we can, in whatever capacity we can, to make sure that it is recognized in any agreement, or lack of, that is put forward in the future.

Secondly, we have an obligation to make sure that communities which have a large economic dependence on transportation have an opportunity to develop either other opportunities in transportation, or to develop other initiatives and developments within those communities to try and put forward their aspirations as viable Newfoundland communities.

The other thing about the resolution is the whole lack of a total picture put forward by the initial resolution by the member from Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir.

And I guess it was partly brought forward, as well, in the first amendment, by the member from Menehik, as it related to the Labrador transportation infrastructure.

MR. SIMMS:
What was that again, now? He was questioning whether or not if we defeated the amendment it would mean we were against the Labrador highway being completed.

MR. DAWE:
Well, I just wanted to make the point, and I used the example of Labrador, that when we look at transportation we try to look at it in its totality. Members Opposite have talked about twinning the Trans-Canada Highway. The member from Menehik is right in his comments: You have to be realistic and look at whether or not there is a requirement to twin the Trans-Canada Highway across the

Island of Newfoundland.

I would just like to point out that less than 20 per cent of the Trans-Canada Highway, from St. John's to Victoria, is four-lane, or is a divided highway system. Many provinces have divided highways that are provincial highways. The Trans-Canada Highway is somewhere in the 20 per cent range, as a divided highway across the country. You have to look at what the requirements and the needs of the province are.

I would differ with the areas of the province that perhaps need to be four-lane. Certainly, there is a requirement to do the kind of ongoing improvements that are being done now under the largest cost-shared roads program that we ever had with the federal government, some \$180 million. That is being done now in most cases. In the majority of places around the province you will see that the road is essentially at least three if not four lanes, albeit not divided, but it is quite an adequate system for most parts of the province.

What about the people in Roddickton, in Englee, in Bide Arm and Main Brook? Do you not think that if we are talking about funding for transportation infrastructure that we should, perhaps, include them in that kind of a discussion? Do you not think that the people on the coast of Labrador should be included in any kind of an overall total road transportation picture?

Do you not think, Mr. Speaker, that the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir might have somehow said in the resolution 'I would like to bring the people of Burgeo and Ramea into the mainstream of

highway transportation, and want to make sure that in any kind of a compensation package we deal with major trunk roads, such as the one on the end of which my constituents live?' Do you not think that people in all parts of the province would like to have an opportunity to improve their transportation system?

Mr. Speaker, the members of the Opposition were only concerned about putting in what most statisticians, what most people who are involved in transportation around the province would indicate is not needed, and that is a four-lane divided highway across the province of Newfoundland. It probably will not be required until our population gets up around 3 million or 4 million.

Mr. Speaker, there is no requirement for that, yet the Opposition that in and ignored all the other things. What about the port improvements around the province? What about the changes and the necessary infrastructure needed for the future development of air services in the province? The member for Gander should be interested in that. But, no, they were so narrow-minded and shortsighted that they would put in a requirement only as it relates to capital, only as it relates to four-laning or twinning the Trans-Canada Highway, with a divided highway. How shortsighted!

MR. SIMMS:

The member for Gander is against the resolution.

MR. DAWE:

He must be.

MR. SIMMS:

Yes, of course he is.

MR. DAWE:

He has got to be in order to support his constituents. Even the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir, who put it forward, must be against his own resolution. Surely, goodness, he is not talking about looking at transportation in that light. The member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir, perhaps has a side interest in making sure that the Trans-Canada Highway is four-lane. It would be close to business opportunities, I guess, a lot of cars going by and people having an opportunity to purchase vehicles and stuff. I guess there could be another interest in that occurring.

Mr. Speaker, the end of the amended resolution put forward by my colleague for LaPoile says, 'BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any changes in the Newfoundland transportation system be in the best interest of Newfoundland and Labrador.'

Mr. Speaker, we have seen in the initial resolution put forward by the Opposition that they have no interest in that aspect. They are only interested in putting forward what they thought was an opportunity to try and embarrass this administration. Well, I can assure members opposite that this administration has nothing to be ashamed of as it relates to our support for, and our continued support of, the railway in this Province. When there was deafening silence on the other side as various issues came forward - I remember on one occasion the former member for LaPoile, the former member for Bell Island, the former candidate in St. John's East, and the former Leader (Mr. Neary), one of the many that have been on the other side, said, 'Let us all get

together and support the railway.' Well, it was a little comment that he made from his seat, in the back there, and in the nine years that I have been in the Legislature, that was the only comment that has shown any support for the Newfoundland railway. All of a sudden, because of news reports - do you see how they function on the other side? Do you see how they function? All published reports. Question Period: 'I saw in The Globe and Mail yesterday.' 'The Sunday Express had a comment.' What do you think of that? If it was not for newspapers and publications, the Opposition would not have a question to ask.

MR. SIMMS:

Do they quote CBC?

MR. DAWE:

No, never CBC.

Mr. Speaker, we have a number of people in the galleries today, as I indicated earlier and others have alluded to, who have a particular and ongoing interest in this whole debate. The Opposition will try to say, 'oh, one minister or the Premier will say yes, there are discussions going on and someone else will say there are not.' I do not think that is true, Mr. Speaker. I have always said, everyone has always said, that every time there is a discussion, every time there are meetings between federal/provincial officials in a joint committee that we have structured which makes recommendations to the Minister of Transportation provincially, and the Minister of Transport nationally, that joint committee deals with a whole range of issues. As I indicated, it is impossible to talk about

transportation in this Province. With the interaction, the inter-modal relationship between the railway, between Marine, between air and between road, it is impossible to talk about that without talking about the railway. So, yes, there have been discussions. There have always been discussions and most of them have resulted in the Province rejecting outright and doing everything that we could to negate some decisions that had been made by various federal administrations as it relates to the railway. We have no protection for the continuance of the railway in the Terms of Union, and that is unfortunate, according to every bit of legal advice that we have had. We have no protection for the continuance. The only protection we had as it relates to the railway was that there would be no cost to the Province.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

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

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

MR. FENWICK:
My point of order, Mr. Speaker, which I tried to hold until now because I did not want to interfere with the debate, is that we are now discussing an amendment to an amendment, in other words, a subamendment, and that the subamendment is clearly out of order and should not be entertained by this House, since

it does not amend the amendment but, indeed, amends the main motion.

MR. LONG:
Hear, hear!

MR. FENWICK:
I would ask the Speaker to rule that the subamendment is clearly out of order and should not be entertained.

MR. DINN:
It has been ruled in order.

MR. FENWICK:
Mr. Speaker, my reference is to Section 438 of Beauséjour, on subamendments, where it says 'The purpose of a subamendment (an amendment to an amendment) is to alter the amendment; it should not enlarge upon the scope of the amendment but it should deal with the matters that are not covered by the amendment.' In other words, Mr. Speaker, you cannot have a subamendment which alters the main motion without directly affecting the amendment itself.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SIMMS:
It is almost unbelievable! The hon. the member for Menihek wants to be House Leader, or Opposition House Leader or something, really bad.

MR. LONG:
Read the section.

MR. SIMMS:

Yes, read the section. The point of the matter is - the hon. member is a Johnny-come-lately - this whole thing was debated an hour ago. Where was he then?

Mr. Speaker, I do not know what the hon. member is up to but trying to kill the time of the hon. the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir, which I do not want to do. He has twenty minutes or so left, and he should have the right to conclude the debate on this resolution. We have already been through all that. The amendment to the amendment has been ruled in order, as has the amendment, with agreement of the hon. member included, as a matter of fact.

AN HON. MEMBER:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

I am prepared to rule on that matter of order now. I have heard the hon. member. To that point of order there is no point of order.

The hon. the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir has the floor.

MR. GILBERT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I have seen some strange things go on here this afternoon. We have seen a motion put forward to protect Newfoundland. The main thing was to protect first of all the workers, the people who were employed with the railway, but the other thing was to protect Newfoundlanders because we were saying we wanted to ensure that the rights that were given to Newfoundland in the Constitution were going to be guaranteed in any agreement.

Now, we have finally heard members over there admit, yes, there are negotiations going on, even though the Minister of Transportation said publicly, two or three weeks ago, that there was no such negotiations.

We heard members to my physical right and political left stand up and take all sides of the House, which they normally do. But there is one interesting thing. They put forward a resolution that the railway workers wanted. Section (c) of this says, 'The present railway employees be provided with alternate job opportunities for early pension where appropriate.' They thought the words 'where appropriate' were in order and reasonable. What it really means, Mr. Speaker, is again another smoke screen for members opposite. They are grasping at anything they can to try and discredit the resolution. What that means is that employees of CN be given job opportunities, pensions, or whatever was necessary to make sure they were looked after.

I have talked to the members of the railway union, Mr. Speaker, and I know their concerns. With that in mind, I think maybe we should, possibly to ensure that the worker's position is protected here, because there has been a lot of posturing this evening because the railway workers are in the galleries and things like that -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. GILBERT:

What we really have seen here is a fait au accompli; the railway is going to be sold down the river for a massive amount of money that is going to be enough to put

Newfoundland into bankruptcy in ten years time. I mean, it is going to be good for election purposes. The former Minister of Transportation used to say at one time he would look after his friends. Maybe, if they got a lump sum payment, he would have a lot of money to look after his friends, and maybe we would even get some more of Round Pond Road paved.

I have talked to the railway workers and they are concerned as to what is to be the future of the railway employees if the railway is closed down. For the sake of public record, I would just like to table what their concerns are and have it on the table of the House of Assembly so that in case worse comes to worst - members over there are now admitting, yes, negotiations are going on - and the railway is going to go, the concerns of the railway workers, the people of Newfoundland who are most directly concerned, will be a matter of public record in this House of Assembly.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. GILBERT:
Now, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to get to the Minister of Transportation from last week, but a few little things happened here this evening that I think I should talk about.

First of all, we heard the member for LaPoile get up and in a fine way express his concern about the railway. It is interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that all the members over there now have a very serious concern about the railway. Yet, when I look through the Private Members' resolutions, there is not one Private Member's resolution from that side of the

House concerning the railway, even though they are now admitting there are negotiations ongoing into the discontinuance of that railway.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. GILBERT:
You know, the member for LaPoile, who is so concerned about the railway, he went and put through a resolution congratulating his colleagues over there for a fisheries agreement that was already signed, \$60 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. GILBERT:
Now, there is a man who is concerned with looking after his district. He wants to put through a motion congratulating someone on his side of the House for an agreement that is already concluded just to take up the time of the House, to waste the time of the House debating something that is already done.

Now, the other thing is, when we see the resolution put forward by the member for LaPoile, which is an interesting one, too, we will see that it says in the first "WHEREAS", "This government has consistently supported the continuance of the Newfoundland railway as an integral component of the overall transportation system." Then a little bit further down it says, "BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that should discussions lead to an agreement, that the present railway employees be provided..." So they are saying, on one hand, that they want the railway to continue, and one the other hand they are saying, no, we want the railway to

go, we are negotiating it away. So they are going to meet somewhere in the middle.

Now, this, to me, seems to be a sort of a contradiction somewhere along the way, and I would say that the amendment is, somehow or another, out of order.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. GILBERT:

I was interested when the former Minister of Transportation was up and he made a point that was sort of interesting to all of us who grew up and went to school in Newfoundland during the 1950s and 1960s; he made the point that he worked with the railway in the Summertime. Mr. Minister, there were a lot of us who worked with the railway, who went to university during that time. Unfortunately, there are not many students now work with the railway.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. GILBERT:

In 1949, 3,700 people used to work with the railway, Mr. Speaker. Right now there are 700, and they are decreasing.

So what we are saying, Mr. Speaker

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. TOBIN:

Do you support the railway when bringing in your cars?

MR. GILBERT:

That is a good question, Mr. Speaker. I am glad the peanut gallery asked that question. It is good! Because I was one of the businessmen in Newfoundland who really did support the railway. The railway tried to take the cars off the railway ten years ago now, they were bringing them in through Argentia by car ferry and trucking them out. I happened to be on National Dealer Council with Ford Motor Company at the time. I went up and said we were not getting good service, and I was instrumental in getting them put back through Port aux Basques, where we got them until last year. That is public record, too.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. PATTERSON:

There is a letter, when your leader was a member of the Smallwood Government, when they sold out the railway, signed by the Minister of Transport, Jack Pickersgill. There it is. If you want it, you can have it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. member has ten minutes left by right to state his case and I would ask the hon. members to give him that opportunity.

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

MR. GILBERT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

To get back to last week, we heard the Minister of Transportation say something, and I regret to say that I am a little bit ill at ease for what he did not say. He made a personal attack on me, but that is the type of nonsense we sort of expect on this side of the House. It is what you get from over there. If the government cannot come up with an argument, they raise their voice; if you cannot reinforce your argument, you raise your voice.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. GILBERT:

The Minister pointed out that there were no mention of such towns as Clarendville and Bishop Falls and Port aux Basques which would be effected if the railway closed out. That was axiomatic to us. We figured that if we were going to look after the employees that were there, we were certainly going to look after the towns.

There is an interesting point there. I would say that maybe the only town that are going to be most adversely effected by the closure of the railway is Port aux Basques. In regard to Bishop's Falls, I am sure the member for Grand Falls remembers and I remember when I was on the Grand Falls council. We presented him with briefs talking about the decrease in the number of employees that were gone out of Bishop's Falls because the railway closed down.

The interesting thing that nobody mentioned is that the last transportation study that was done, Mr. Speaker, showed that

thirty percent of the freight coming through to Newfoundland, no matter what sort of mode you used, thirty percent would come through Port aux Basques because of the fact that produce and things are coming in from the Maritimes. It would come in through Port aux Basques. So, Port aux Basques is still going to be an integral part of any transportation system that we have here.

Not only that, if, as the members are trying to do now, the railway closes, Terra Transport is still going to operate and still have a system. Now I am sure that if the Mayor of Port aux Basques took any solace from the fact that he was here last week, it was not for what the Minister of Transportation said.

I understand, there has been negotiations ongoing with the towns that are going to be effected and rumor, rumor again says that there is sums of money being paid to those towns, and stuff like that, in view of the fact if the railway does close down because there is an open secret now that the railway is going to close down.

There is an interesting thing here. The Minister, last week, when he is talking about the freight rates and crossing the Gulf, he was talking about Term 32 (2). It says: "For the purpose of railway rate regulation, the Island of Newfoundland will be included in the Maritime Region."

I know that if the hon. gentleman realizes what he is saying, there is a very, very serious matter indeed. I do not know if the hon. gentleman is aware that he had said in this resolution, "through traffic between North Sydney and

Port aux Basques be treated as all highway traffic for freight rate purposes." What do the Terms of Union say? We know what it says because I just read it.

But, the interesting thing is that the Minister of Transportation, in a press release on January 15, 1988, said that recommendation 170 of the Royal Commission Report on Unemployment and Unemployment said a strong case should be made to the Government of Canada that the Gulf Ferry Service continue to operate as part of the Trans-Canada Highway system with its cost borne mainly by the public purse, and the cost should be users pay. He says, the Department says, that they think that this should carry on. The Department concurs with the Royal Commission and that the Gulf Ferry should indeed be operated as 100 miles of water. That is what he says, it should be.

So what the Minister is saying is that he concurs that it should be considered as a part of a highway rate. He is saying that it should be as a highway rate. That is interesting that the rate should be considered as a highway rate. The thing about it now is, under Term 32, there are many methods here. He is taking the recommendation of the Royal Commission and then he is turning it around and saying, 'No, I want to go back to the old way.' This is what the Minister is saying. This is what the minister is saying now, and it is an interesting sort of a statement that he is making. I would say, again, that it is a case of smoke screens. Right now it has been proven that the railway is not the most effective mode of transportation for freight. It has been downgraded and now it is

going to be sold, we understand, and we are asking right now, what is it going to be replaced with? What is this going to be?

The study by Trip Canada says that the highways in Newfoundland are 80 per cent defective and if you are going to build a new highway or parts of a new highway even, we are talking right now - you do not have to go very far to find out. Just go out and drive in the Foxtrap access road and you will see the sign out there that says it costs \$2.95 million for 4.6 kilometers. Then there is the cost of the interchanges, which means you are talking about \$858,000 a kilometer. So if you are going to put in a road across the Island, or upgrade the road across the Island and you are talking about a settlement of \$875 million, by the time you put in the upgrading of the highway you would have your settlement used.

The point of our resolution is, do not take a lump sum settlement, because the \$800 million that you are talking about is not enough to build a first-rate highway in Newfoundland.

MR. DOYLE:

Do not get off the subject now.

MR. GILBERT:

The subject, Mr. Speaker, is very simple.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. GILBERT:

We are saying, do not take a lump sum payment because you are going -

AN HON. MEMBER:

You are missing the point.
Totally missing the point.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

MR. GILBERT:

What I am saying, Mr. Speaker, is that we have seen an attempt here this evening to cloud an issue. The resolution we put forward here this evening is to make sure that if there are negotiations going on, and we now know there are, that Newfoundlanders will be protected.

In conclusion, I ask you as fellow Newfoundlanders and Labradorians not to rush through those negotiations. Section 31 of the Terms of Union protected the provincial transportation system, you make sure that the end result of those negotiations protects us all. It is great that we are politicians, but let us be ones with principle, who protect the rights of present day Newfoundlanders and generations yet unborn. I move the resolution.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

There is a subamendment to be dealt with now. All those in favour of the subamendment please say, Aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Aye.

MR. SPEAKER:

Those against 'Nay'.

The Ayes have it.

We will now deal with the amendment as amended. All those

in favour 'Aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Aye.

MR. SPEAKER:

Those against?

Carried.

I will now deal with the main motion as amended. All those -

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, is this the question?

Can Mr. Speaker read to me what the main motion is now?

MR. SPEAKER:

The main motion was amended by an amendment and a subamendment. We are now dealing with the main motion as amended.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, would you read it?

MR. MATTHEWS:

All you have to do is read our amendment.

MR. DINN:

Give him a copy.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. SIMMS:

My understanding of the vote that just took place was that the vote was taken on the subamendment and was carried. There were no votes against it that I heard, as a matter of fact.

AN HON. MEMBER:

He did not call it.

MR. SIMMS:

He did not call the vote against the subamendment? I believe he did. In any event, perhaps hon. members opposite did not hear it, but that is fine. That is my understanding.

Then, I understood, the question on the amendment was put.

MR. SPEAKER:

Yes, on the amendment.

MR. SIMMS:

Which was, I understand, defeated.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

No, no!

MR. SIMMS:

Yes, it was. My understanding is that the amendment was defeated. That is my understanding.

MR. SPEAKER:

The amendment as amended was carried.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:

The hon. members get very excited over nothing. Do not get excited! The subamendment was carried, and the amendment was defeated because it was amended by the subamendment. That is what the Speaker is saying. Maybe the Speaker can clarify it.

MR. SPEAKER:

As I understand it, I put the subamendment which was carried. Then I put the amendment as amended by the subamendment and that was carried. Now, I propose to put the main question that was amended and then subamended. That is the question that we have now.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fogo, on a point of order.

MR. TULK:

I believe I asked the Speaker to read the main motion as amended. I want to know what we are voting on in this Legislature.

MR. SPEAKER:

It is clear to me - I do not know if it is clear to all hon. members - that we had a motion to which there was an amendment made, and there was a subamendment made to that amendment. We have dealt with the subamendment, which was carried. I then put the amendment as it was amended. That was carried. Now, I propose to put the main motion and that main motion is put as it was amended and then subamended.

MR. SIMMONS:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:

I might be able to save, Mr. Speaker, from having to read the amendment, because I believe what my friend from Fogo is getting at needs to be pointed out to the House so that we all know exactly what we are voting for.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, I want to be clear on what I am voting for or against. If I may, I am on a point of order which I think will be helpful to the House. We had a motion in this order put down by the gentleman from Bay d'Espoir.

MR. MORGAN:

We know all that.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, may I?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:

We had a motion put down by the gentleman from Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir. We then had an amendment put down by the gentleman from Menihek. We then had an amendment to the amendment put down by the gentleman from LaPoile.

Now, Mr. Speaker, here is what transpired.

MR. MORGAN:

We know all that.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, I am not sure the gentleman does know, and if he would listen for a moment, here is what has transpired so far.

MR. J. CARTER:

A point of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of privilege, the hon. the member for St. John's North.

MR. J. CARTER:

There is a procedural wrangle going ahead, and I suspect the motives of the hon. gentlemen. But we have a vote which we are right in the middle of, so, for heaven's sake, if the Opposition do not know what we are voting for, let them keep quiet. They can leave the Chamber. I would invite them all to leave the Chamber, but let us get on with the vote.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of privilege, I do not think the hon. member's privileges are affected in any way. We are trying to sort out a possible problem that we have in the voting procedure. As far as I am concerned, it is clear, but I am quite prepared to hear the hon. member.

The hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:

Briefly, if the members will allow, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of the voting, here is what has happened.

AN HON. MEMBER:

We know what has happened. Why do you not know?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, I am not sure the gentleman does know what happened.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of the voting here is what happened, I submit, Sir. There was a vote on the amendment to the amendment which carried. That was to strike out everything after "WHEREAS". So the resolution after the first vote had "WHEREAS" plus the wording from the gentleman from LaPoile.

Then, Mr. Speaker, we carried the subamendment which incorporated the wording of the gentleman from Menihek.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS:

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is the

government which does not know what it voted for. It voted for the gentleman from Menihek's amendment.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

We did not vote for the amendment as presented by the hon. member for Menihek, we voted for the amendment presented by him as amended by the subamendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The position now is that the main resolution as it was amended and then subamended is the resolution we are voting on now, and I am calling for all those in favour to please say, 'Aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Aye.

MR. SPEAKER:

Those against please say, 'Nay'.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER:

The resolution is carried as amended and subamended.

MR. TULK:

What was it?

MR. SIMMONS:

Shame! What was it?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

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