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NEWFOUNDLAND

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**VERBATIM REPORT**  
*(Hansard)*

*Speaker: Honourable Thomas Lush*

Friday

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The House met at 9:00 a.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Lush):

Order, please!

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As the House is aware this is the eve of the commemoration and celebration and remembrance of those who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the First and Second World War and the Korean Conflict. It has not been practiced in the past, Mr. Speaker, to make special mention of this in the House, primarily because, ordinarily the House would not be sitting at this time of the year. However, I feel that we should not let the occasion pass without reference to it in this House. I would like to suggest that Your Honour indicate that we would observe the sacrifice made by these gallant men in the usual way of the 'One Minute Silence' in the House.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition Leader.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, tomorrow all of us in this Chamber will join with the millions of others in the western world in observing Armistice Day. I think it is right and proper that this Legislature, as suggested by the Government House Leader, be part of that process.

After all, Mr. Speaker, it is because thousands and thousands of our fellow human beings in the First World War, the Second World War, and the Korean Conflict in

particular, were prepared and did in fact pay the ultimate sacrifice so that we can have this democracy that we are participating in here today. I think we should never forget that, and it is right and proper that this House join, on the eve of Armistice, in remembering those who paid the sacrifice so that we might have the freedom to govern ourselves, to live our lives, and do the things that we want to do in the way that we want to do them without having them imposed by anybody else.

MR. SPEAKER:

The appropriate method, I expect, ought to be the way it is observed in all institutions and organizations that I have seen in that all of us stand, in the galleries and Chamber as well and I will indicate when the minute has elapsed for the 'Minute of Silence'.

#### Statements by Ministers

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Work, Services and Transportation.

MR. GILBERT:

Thank you Mr. Speaker. I wish at this time to inform this hon. House of my Department's plan to call tenders over the next several weeks for highway improvement and construction projects contained in the Canada/Newfoundland subsidiary agreement on highway transportation development and for projects contained in the Trans Canada highway portion of the Newfoundland transportation initiative. The Canada/Newfoundland subsidiary agreement ERDA, is cost shared 62.5 per cent and 37.5 per cent

with the Government of Canada. The first 127.5 million under this agreement was approved and spent for the fiscal year 1985 to 1986, and to 1988 - 1989, 68 million is being spent during the current fiscal year, a further 73 million will be spent in the 1990 - 1991 fiscal year, with the remainder to be spent in the 1991 - 1992 fiscal year. Included in the 73 million is ten million to be spent in 1990 to complete projects tendered in 1989 which required two construction seasons to complete. The Trans Canada Highway agreement provides for 405 million to be spent between 1990 and 2003. Eleven million dollars will be spent in the fiscal year 1990 - 1991. This agreement which is 100 per cent Federally funded will go towards improvement on the Trans Canada Highway and the Argentia Access Road. Improvements to these highways are of utmost importance. The Trans Canada Highways alone carries eighty per cent of the annual ten million tons of intra-provincial freight. Travellers will already notice vast improvements to the Trans Canada Highway which have been made under the ERDA Agreement. This has taken the form of resurfacing, four-laning, addition of passing lanes and wide paved shoulders. The total value of work constructed for the 1990 season under the two agreements and the carry-over commitment will be 74 million. The practice of early tendering has been in use by my Department for several years. It gives successful contractors ample opportunity to upgrade their equipment during the winter months and to be ready to start work in the spring as soon as weather permits. Given the length of our construction season, early tendering has proven to be an excellent way to get the maximum

amount of work done during a brief season. Projects that are going to be included under the agreement: Upgrading and resurfacing of approximately twelve kilometers of Route 100 in the Argentia Access Road. Application of a levelling course asphalt to approximately forty kilometers of the Trans Canada Highway from one kilometer west of Holyrood Access Road to Route 80 intersection at Whitbourne. Upgrading of approximately four kilometers of the Trans Canada Highway to four lane divided standard from Witless Bay to one kilometer west of Holyrood Access. Construction of the overpass at the intersection of the Trans Canada Highway and the Holyrood access. Begin upgrading the Trans Canada Highway to four lane divided standard between Steady Brook and Corner Brook.

And under the Canadian and Newfoundland Subsidiary Agreement; Construction of a bridge on the Ossokmanuan River on Trans Labrador Highway; Application of granular material to approximately 200 km of Trans Labrador Highway from Wabush to Churchill Falls; Paving the Trans Canada Highway from Butterpot Park to Witless Bay Line including placing surface cover asphalt from Foxtrap Weigh Scales to Butterpot Park; Paving approximately 22 km of Trans Canada Highway from Gambo towards Gander; Upgrading approximately 10 km of Trans Canada Highway from Gambo towards Gander; Paving of ramps on interchange at intersection of Trans Canada Highway and Bishop's Falls West Access Road; Paving of ramps on interchange at intersection of Trans Canada Highway and new Grand Falls Industrial Access Road; Upgrading and paving approximately 20 km of Trans Canada Highway from

Red Cliff Overpass near Grand Falls to Badger; Upgrading and paving of approximately 36 km of Trans Canada Highway from Deer Lake to Howley; Paving of New Access to the the Marine Atlantic Ferry Terminal at Port aux Basques; Various bridge repairs on Trans Canada Highway; Hydroseeding Trans Canada Highway from Foxtrap to Butterpot Park; Paving approximately 12.5 km of road from Colinet to North Harbour; Paving approximately 13 km of Point Lance Road; Construction of the overpass at the intersection of the Trans Canada Highway Access to the Bonavista Peninsula - nothing will please the hon. Member. Paving of new access road to Bonavista Peninsula from route 230 from Trans Canada Highway approximately 12 km; Upgrading approximately 11 km of route 362 from end of last years upgrading project to Belleoram Intersection; Paving approximately 20 km of Burgeo Road from Peter Strides Lake to Buck Lake.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. GILBERT:  
I am sure the Members over there are aware of that one.

Upgrading approximately 10 km of Burgeo Road from end of pavement near Burgeo towards Trans Canada Highway.

What a great Member they have.

Paving route 205 from end of pavement near Hillview to end of road at St. Jones Within; Paving route 233 from Port Blandford to Bunyans Cove including resurfacing through Bunyans Cove; Construction of Mouse Island to Grand Bay East access road; Construction of an additional 10 km of new access

road to Petit Forte; Construction of the Trans Canada Highway; Construction of the Trans Labrador Highway, Wabush towards Churchill Falls, 162-181; Construction of a new bridge at Rocky River on the Colinet to North Harbour Road; Upgrading Route 362 from its intersection with Route 360 towards Coombs Cove, 0-15; Construction of a road to Petit Forte, 0-7; Construction of a bridge on the Mouse Island to Grand Bay Access Road.

There, Mr. Speaker, is a good project for next year.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

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

MR. RIDEOUT:  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Government must be pretty desperate for news this morning for the weekend fillers, because all is happening here is the Government is announcing that they are calling tenders. The Government is announcing that they are calling tenders for projects which the former Government approved and which were already announced. That is all that is happening here this morning.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:  
Mr. Speaker, there is nothing new in the list. The Minister took fifteen minutes to read down a list of projects that were, in some cases I believe, been announced two or three times.

The other thing I want to say to

the Minister is this, as I was following carefully the Ministerial Statement as being read by the Minister, I noticed that he was reading from a different text than he sent to the Opposition. There were certain paragraphs, sentences, parts of the reading text that the Minister was using, that was not in. Now, there was nothing earth-shattering or anything missing from the text that the Minister sent over, but I just want to make the point that if there is going to be two texts we would like to have the text that the Minister is reading from so that we can respond to the proper one. I do not need one at all but it has become a courtesy in this House that the Opposition will get a Ministerial Statement before it is read in the House. The Minister cannot do anything right. The Government cannot do anything right. They botched this like they are botching all other things. The final thing I want to say to the Minister is this; how any Minister representing that Government has the political gall and the brass face to get up in this House and announce projects under the railway initiative I will never know. I will never know how that Government can, with a straight face, announce projects under the Newfoundland Transportation Initiative, which was the Roads for Rails Agreement that that party cried and moaned and groaned about so much when they were over here, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

### Oral Questions

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, the Premier shocked the Nation when he arrived in Ottawa on Wednesday, on the eve of the First Ministers' Conference, and announced to the country through the national media as soon as he got off the airplane that no matter what happened at this First Ministers' Conference, Newfoundland would proceed to rescind its approval for the Meech Lake Accord. Now that statement shocked not only opponents of the Accord and supporters of the Accord, it shocked all of us, including those of us in this House.

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Government House Leader (Mr. Baker), in view of the fact that the Premier told this House on the eve of the First Ministers' Conference, the day before it began, that he intended to go to the First Ministers' Conference with an open mind and was prepared to compromise, how does the Government House Leader square that with the Premier's first words when he arrived in Ottawa, that no matter what happens at this First Ministers' Conference Newfoundland will proceed to rescind the Meech Lake Accord?

And let me ask the Government House Leader whether or not the Premier had prior Cabinet approval for that position before he left Newfoundland. If he did, was he not in fact misleading this House when he told us that he was willing to go to Ottawa to listen, to be open-minded, and be prepared to compromise?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. BAKER:  
The answer to all these questions is very simple, Mr. Speaker. If the Leader of the Opposition would only use what brains he has he would realize that the statement was stating the obvious, and the obvious is this: Our position is that if there is no movement, there is no indication of movement, we would immediately move to rescind the Meech Lake Accord.

MR. RIDEOUT:  
It was not your position.

MR. BAKER:  
I ask you to listen with this.

MR. SIMMS:  
He said it did not matter what happened.

MR. TOBIN:  
That was not your position last year, when Leo Barry was Leader.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
Give it up! Give it up! You fellows still cannot be defending (inaudible).

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Oh, no.

MR. BAKER:  
I am trying to explain something that is a very serious matter to the whole of the Country.

MR. WALSH:  
He is replying to the question. Be quiet!

MR. BAKER:  
I would ask that Members opposite listen and try to understand what is going on. I will start again, Mr. Speaker. Our position is that if there is no indication of movement, this Government will take steps leading to the rescinding of the Meech Lake Accord. If in fact there is movement, then the other step is obvious, that all provinces will have to rescind the approval of what they have already approved and come back and approve a new one.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER:  
I will say to Members opposite again, in either case the Meech Lake Accord as approved by this House has to be rescinded. Whether it is immediately or later on is a matter of timing. But it has to be rescinded under one or the other of these scenarios, and there are no other alternatives.

MR. SIMMS:  
Yes, there are.

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

MR. RIDEOUT:  
Mr. Speaker, I know that it is early in the morning and I will not try to insult the Government House Leader about his brainpower or the lack thereof, but that is certainly some constitutional logic. If Meech Lake dies it dies, you do not have to rescind anything.

The Premier, on a number of occasions, and again in his presentation to the First Ministers yesterday, said it is

wrong for one Province to put the Country in a constitutional straitjacket and hang up constitutional amendment forever and a day. The Premier made that statement on several occasions, and he made it again to the First Ministers yesterday. Mr. Speaker, if that is so, and if in the final analysis Newfoundland is the only hold-out on the Meech Lake Accord, is it not equally as wrong for this Province to put Canada in the straitjacket the Premier talks about?

MR. SIMMS:

It is the same boat. The very same boat.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

What David Peterson -

MR. BAKER:

Again, Mr. Speaker, the answer is obvious.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Yes, it is.

MR. BAKER:

One province is saying to the rest of the Country we must have a special position in this Confederation.

AN HON. MEMBER:

No, that is wrong.

AN HON. MEMBER:

It is right.

MR. BAKER:

One province is saying that to the rest of the Country. One province is holding the rest of the Country up for ransom.

AN HON. MEMBER:

And you fellows over there are (inaudible).

MR. BAKER:

If, in fact -

AN HON. MEMBER:

You (inaudible) Rideout. Shut up!

MR. BAKER:

- in the final analysis Newfoundland becomes the only Province -

MR. RIDEOUT:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition, on a point of order.

MR. RIDEOUT:

We are always reluctant to interfere with a point of order in Question Period, but what I am not prepared to do is stand in this House and be insulted by ignoramuses from the other side.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the hon. the Minister for Works, Services and Transportation (Mr. Gilbert) -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

No, no.

MR. SIMMS:

No, it was the other one.

MR. RIDEOUT:

The Minister of Environment and Lands (Mr. Kelland). Excuse me. I apologize. The hon. gentleman clearly and audibly, for anybody in this House to hear, said 'Shut-up Rideout'. Mr. Speaker, I am not prepared as one Member trying to do a job in this House to put up with that being slung across the floor of this House, I do not care what time of the day it is.

AN HON. MEMBER:

He said, 'Shut up, Rideout, you sold out the Province.'

MR. RIDEOUT:

He said, 'Shut-up! You sold out the Province.'

MR. BAKER:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

There are an awful lot of thin skins this morning, is all I have to say.

MR. MURPHY:

You started it with your insults about the Premier.

MR. RIDEOUT:

You set the tone.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The Chair has for some time been reminding people about the banter back and forth, and invariably when that is allowed to continue that is the kind of incident that will develop. The Chair, unfortunately, did not hear the remark.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The Chair is trying to make a decision. The Chair did not hear the remark, which is unusual. As I have said, the Chair has bionic ears but the Chair did not hear that particular remark. If the Member made the remark, then the

Member ought to withdraw the remark. If not, then the Chair will listen to the tapes to determine if the remark was made.

MR. KELLAND:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Environment and Lands.

MR. KELLAND:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

As the hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Rideout) was unsure of the origin of the remark he claimed was made -

MR. GILBERT:

I wish I had said it.

MR. SIMMS:

Did you say it, or did you not?

MR. KELLAND:

If I did utter something that was unparliamentary, or if anything I may have said insulted the hon. the Leader of the Opposition, realizing he is thin-skinned and so on, I would be more than happy to withdraw it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In his question the Opposition Leader indicated that if Meech Lake is dead, then there would be no need to rescind, that in response to my answer to the



previous question. Mr. Speaker, I am not thinking in terms of Meech Lake being dead. I am thinking in terms of Meech Lake being adjusted, and that is what we have asked for.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER:  
We have presented a series of very positive proposals that will make Meech Lake workable, which would mean that all Houses would then have to go back and go through the process again in terms of rescinding the original agreement and passing the new one. So, I will say to the Membe, we see in this House either a resolution being brought in immediately to rescind the Meech Lake agreement, if there is no indication of movement. If there is indication of movement, then we envision having to rescind the agreement anyway in order to approve the new agreement. So these are the conditions.

Now, Mr. Speaker, he mentioned one other thing, that one province alone should not hold the rest of the Country up for ransom. If Meech Lake in its present form is passed, Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what will have happened.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER:  
I did not listen to very much of the proceedings yesterday on television, Mr. Speaker. However, I did catch one exchange, and to hear the superior, supercilious attitude, the condescending attitude of the Prime Minister of this Country pointing out the great favour they did Newfoundland by allowing us to join -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER:  
- Mr. Speaker, made my blood boil.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
Mine, too.

MR. BAKER:  
What we are saying is we have offered reasonable alternatives to our problems with the Meech Lake Accord, and what we are saying is let us talk about them. These suggestions we have made still have the indication that Quebec is a distinct society, but that should be stated in the preamble rather than in one of the clauses; and we can go through the things we suggested. We are not holding the rest of the Country up to ransom, we are saying let us talk further.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. RIDEOUT:  
Mr. Speaker, let me remind the Government House Leader and the Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, that the Government of Canada did not have to ask any other province that Newfoundland join Confederation, because the BNA Act, Section 146, allowed for us to come in. We were a participant in the Charlottetown Conference of 1864, so we were allowed to come in, as was PEI, when we were ready, so there was no need to ask anybody once the people of Newfoundland decided and the Government of Canada decided.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
Another lesson learned.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
(Inaudible) yourself.

MR. RIDEOUT:  
Go do a few political science courses, boy.

Mr. Speaker, constitutional change takes time. Let me ask this of the Government House Leader. Why did the Government of this Province, a day and a half before the First Minister's Meeting, choose to insult the other nine provincial governments of Canada and the Federal Government of Canada by putting on the table a document, although a flawed and very bad document, for constitutional change in this country a day and a half before the First Ministers met. Why was it not sent for consideration by other First Ministers five, six, seven, eight or ten weeks ago? It must have been ready. Why would the Government insult the other governments of this country by proceeding that way?

Finally, would the Minister tell us whether or not the Premier has Government approval to propose a referendum on Constitutional change as he proposed at the First Ministers' Conference yesterday?

MR. SIMMS:  
Another new position.

MR. RIDEOUT:  
Another new position.

MR. SIMMS:  
That is about three in the last few days.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the President of Treasury Board.

MR. BAKER:  
Mr. Speaker, it is very difficult to follow the member's questions. This is Question Period, and he can get up and ask the questions one at a time rather than four or five in one outburst.

Let me respond to him first of all, Mr. Speaker, by pointing out that it is rather fortunate that the Meech Lake Accord was not in effect in 1949, because we would have never been allowed to become a Province of Canada.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER:  
Under the Meech Lake Accord we would never have been allowed to. It would have required the agreement of the ten provinces.

MR. RIDEOUT:  
I wish it were. I wish it were. Actually we would be better off today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Oh, oh!

AN HON. MEMBER:  
Oh, you do not want to be in Canada? According to the Leader of the Opposition, Newfoundland is going to separate. Really speak up. Say it out loud so we can hear it.

MR. SIMMS:  
No problem!

AN HON. MEMBER:  
You want to separate.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
Oh! Now it is coming through. Now we see what he wants.

MR. TOBIN:  
Clyde is trying to destroy

Canada. That is what he is trying to do.

MR. BAKER:

Now, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me a question was asked about the referendum idea. The Premier, in response to a question from the media, indicated that his position is not totally inflexible in any regard and that if the Prime Minister had the confidence - because do not forget now that the Prime Minister and many of the other Premiers are saying that they have the widespread support of the people of Canada. The position of the Premier was, if that is so, then convince me. You have not convinced me so far in what you have said, let the Canadian people convince me. If, in fact, a referendum in this country shows that the majority of the people across this country want that Meech Lake Accord signed, then he is willing to go along with the will of the people across Canada.

MR. RIDEOUT:

When you are going to do the Fisheries deal in another month, will you put that to a referendum?

MR. HEARN:

What about amalgamation?

AN HON. MEMBER:

What about amalgamation? Is that going to a referendum?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Thank you, very much, Mr. Speaker.

I have a question for the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

AN HON. MEMBER:

About amalgamation?

MR. TOBIN:

Yes, it has to do with amalgamation, Mr. Speaker. Basically, what we are seeing happening here is something similar to what is happening with Meech Lake. The Premier of this Province wants to strip powers from the Provinces and put them in Central Canada. Now he wants to strip powers from the councils in rural Newfoundland and put them all in two or three super cities. The Minister of Municipal Affairs has stated categorically that he has warned councils that there will be amalgamation. If I might quote, Mr. Speaker: 'The Minister of Municipal Affairs warns municipalities that amalgamation will take place if it means, in some cases, forcing it.' The Premier of this Province has said, 'Amalgamation will not be forced.' Would the Minister of Municipal Affairs tell this House which one of you is telling the truth and which one of you is not telling the truth?

MR. MATTHEWS:

Neither one of them.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

I think this is the third time for this question, but I guess it bears repeating several times before it sinks in. We are dealing with proposed amalgamation of some 115 communities. It started out to be 112, by the way, but we had three communities come forward and ask to be included.

MS VERGE:

How many were dropped?

MR. GULLAGE:

Three were dropped.

MR. SIMMS:

How many asked to be dropped?

MR. GULLAGE:

None.

MS VERGE:

Oh! Not true!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. GULLAGE:

The process we are following is -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

Would the hon. Minister take his place? Question Period will be substantially reduced if hon. Members keep asking questions while the Minister is proceeding to answer the previous question. Could I ask hon. Members to please co-operate and allow the Minister to answer the question which was asked? Otherwise, it becomes very difficult for the Chair to decide when the answer is made, which question the hon. Minister is answering, whether it is the question that was asked previously, or whether it is a response to another question.

The hon. the Minister of Provincial and Municipal Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, we are dealing with proposed amalgamation of some 115 communities. If amalgamation was to proceed in all those circumstances, we would have a resulting 45 new communities, larger in size, of course, and larger in population.

The Government felt it wise to proceed with the amalgamation procedure, feasibility hearings and all of the other procedures as laid out in the Act, even though many councils said they did not want to be a part of the feasibility process. We felt it fair and right that the people in these communities be given the opportunity to speak at the hearings, to present briefs, that community groups, people, councilors, mayors, whatever, be allowed the opportunity to participate in a process as laid out in the Act. So we said to many of the councils, we will go forward with the feasibility hearings; we want to hear what you have to say, we want to hear what the people have to say.

If in the end we find that even though the commissioners are recommending that amalgamation take place in certain communities and we still find that the councils or a council in question is opposed, the Government has said that in a case where it is clear that for the benefit of the majority of the grouping that amalgamation should take place, and it is being recommended by the commissioners by the commissioners - then we would take it into the House here and we would debate it. That is the stand of the Government, and nothing has changed.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, I sort of take from the Minister then, that amalgamation will be forced. What he is saying is that if the councils do not want it, he is still going to force hearings on

them - if the citizens do not want it, but they want it and the commissioners want it. Let me ask the Minister if he will today, Mr. Speaker, hire independent commissioners to go out there rather than employees of your department who know your wishes and the wishes of the Premier? Will you change that bureaucracy today which you have set up, people who know what you want? Will you hire independent commissioners to go out and listen to the councils and bring you back independent advice? Now that you have told us, yes, what you said is true and what the Premier said is wrong, let me ask you, will you do that?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

We have two commissioners in place in every situation. I have said to the commissioners that they are to go through the process of having the hearings in every one of the 45 groupings, and take the time that is necessary to consult with the councils as well. Obviously, the councils would present briefs at these hearings. And if, in the end, the commissioner who is appointed - by the way, the second commissioner is appointed by the towns in question, not by the Government. We have asked them to submit a recommendation for a second commissioner to sit with the commissioner appointed by the Government. So, there are two commissioners in place. To go a further step, I have also said, if that second commissioner wishes to file a minority report in case the two commissioners cannot agree, I would ask them to do that.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Based on what the Minister has said here, in the name of common decency, in the name of stopping the destruction of people's lives, stopping destroying their heritage and their culture, will the Minister, Mr. Speaker, assure this House today that the town of Wedgewood Park - I will use that as an example - will not be forced to be amalgamated. The answer is a simple yes or no. The residents do not want it.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, I hope the hon. Member is not suggesting that amalgamation is not in the best interest of the people of the Province. I hope that is not what he is saying.

MR. TOBIN:

I asked you a question.

MR. GULLAGE:

To answer the question, I cannot assure the hon. Member of anything. First of all, I am not carrying out the feasibility hearings. The Act does not provide for the Minister to be the Commissioner. I am not doing the feasibility hearings, so to ask me to prejudge what these Commissioners are going to recommend is ludicrous. Obviously, I cannot prejudge.

MS VERGE:

You did that with Steady Brook.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Burin -

Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, who prejudged Steady Brook?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister.

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, several times now we have had raised the fact that three towns were dropped from the list. Labrador City and Wabush were taken off the list. I made it quite clear when I announced the fact that they were being removed -

MR. TOBIN:

Who prejudged Steady Brook?

MR. GULLAGE:

- from the list. It was because of the legal agreements between Labrador City and IOC and Wabush Mines and the Town of Wabush. Because of those legal agreements, they were taken off the list.

MR. TOBIN:

That was not the question!

MR. GULLAGE:

Steady Brook, at the time, was also taken off the list.

MR. TOBIN:

Why?

MR. GULLAGE:

Because the feeling on the part of the planners was, because it was included, that the distance away from the main community of Corner Brook-

AN HON. MEMBER:

What about Pilley's Island?

AN HON. MEMBER:

What about Pilley's Island, boy. That is just an island.

MR. GULLAGE:

May I finish?

MR. WARREN:

Sit down! You are making a fool of yourself.

MR. RIDEOUT:

(Inaudible) no sense or no logic to anything.

MR. GULLAGE:

Because of the distance away from Corner Brook, they were taken off the list at the time. Since then, the community of Steady Brook and the City of Corner Brook have both written to me asking that they be allowed to have input into the hearings. They did not need to ask, because they have input anyway.

MS VERGE:

Because of Marble Mountain.

MR. GULLAGE:

But they did ask, and they asked because of the proximity of Marble Mountain - that is quite correct - and I wrote both of them back and said, Yes, we would like you to participate in the hearings. And both of them are going to participate, make a brief to the Commissioners saying why they would like to have Marble Mountain included within their boundaries. So, in effect, without putting them back legally, if you like, and formally in the process, they have the opportunity to speak to the point that they are making about Marble Mountain and they are going to do so at the hearings.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Mount Pearl.

MR. WINDSOR:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

A question for the same Minister. Mr. Speaker, I would like to find out why the Minister is so intent on forcing amalgamation in the urban regions. Specifically, as the hon. Member who just asked questions mentioned, a number of municipalities in this area have very clearly stated that they do not wish to be part of a super city. Will the Minister confirm that his real objective, his ultimate goal here, is to create a super city which, in fact, would be larger in area than Montreal or Toronto?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

First of all, I never did say that I was proposing a super city. That was a press headline, if you like, that they used. That was not my statement at all. There is no intent on my part or the Government's part to create super cities here or anywhere else in the Province. Our intent is to enter into a feasibility hearings process, which we are doing, offering a set of situations and a set of recommendations where communities, towns and cities can be put together for the betterment of the people of those communities. And there is no question, Mr. Speaker, that amalgamation of a lot of the communities throughout this Province makes a lot of sense, from every point of view, and I can go into the reasons why if you wish me to. But certainly it makes a lot of sense.

We have said that we are going to go through with these hearings as laid out in the Act; we are going to listen to the councils and the mayors and the people, even though

some of them have said we do not want to make our points known in a hearing, we do not want to have the hearings process, we do not want any part of amalgamation. You are quite right. Many of them have said that. But our feeling is the people have a right to be heard, as well, and we are going to hear from the people in all the communities involved, and we are going to listen to briefs from the councils and from the mayors. We feel that is the right process to take, and that is what we are doing.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Mount Pearl.

MR. WINDSOR:

Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Minister it is appropriate that the people be heard. Too bad they are not heard on Meech Lake. I want to ask the Minister this question: In view of the fact that a number of municipalities have said that they do not wish to be forced to amalgamate, why is the Minister carrying on with feasibility studies in those areas? When the municipalities and the people themselves have said very clearly they do not wish to be part of a forced amalgamation, why is the Minister ignoring the wishes of those people? And specifically, why is the Minister ignoring the wishes of his own constituents in Mount Pearl who very clearly have spoken out and said they do not wish to be forced to amalgamate? Why is he ignoring his constituents, one-third of the city of Mount Pearl whom he is here to represent? Why is he ignoring those wishes?

MR. SPEAKER:

Excuse me! The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs. The Speaker was detained for a moment.

MR. GULLAGE:

I have not heard of any plebiscites in Mount Pearl. There may have been one, but I have not heard about it. All I have heard is some of the councilors saying I want no part of the amalgamation process. Since that time, by the way, many of them have said that they have made a mistake, they do want to be part of the amalgamation process. They do not agree necessarily with the grouping that we are proposing, but they do want to be part of the process; they see amalgamation taking place, Mount Pearl joining groups of business development, housing development and so on. So they do agree with the process of amalgamation, and they do want to be part of the process. I contend that the people of Mount Pearl also want to be part of the process.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl.

MR. WINDSOR:

I would be delighted to go in there with the hon. Minister and put that to the test, he against me in there, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. WINDSOR:

Mr. Speaker, people do not disagree with the process of amalgamation, it is the method the Minister is using of forcing amalgamation down people's throats. That is what people are objecting to. I agree with the

Minister when he says that amalgamation can be good when it is in the best interest of the communities, but let the communities decide what is in the best interest of the communities.

Will the Minister now confirm for us, Mr. Speaker, that the real purpose here is to save money for the Provincial Government, to shift the tax burden, the cost of servicing municipalities from the Province to the municipalities without any regard for the well-being of the municipalities or the people who live in them?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

It is hardly worthy of an answer, but I will give him one anyway.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh! oh!

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, the intent of this Government should be obvious. If we were doing a half dozen communities and two or three amalgamations, you could say that the undertaking is not that worthy. We are doing 115 communities. We started out with 170, as the hon. Member knows, 170 communities with adjoining boundaries that we could have done. The fact that we are doing so many speaks to the importance of it for these communities; planning, servicing, and the list goes on. And for the hon. Member to suggest that we are not doing this for the good of the people of the Province -



MS. VERGE:

Let them decide what is best for them.

MR. GULLAGE:

They will do it in the hearings process.

MR. PARSONS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for St. John's East Extern.

MR. PARSONS:

Mr. Speaker, my preamble is going to be very short because of time constraints. My question is to the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

The people of Wedgewood Park, Outer Cover, Middle Cove, Logy Bay, Torbay, Flat Rock, Pouch Cove and Bauline -

MR. GULLAGE:

Pouch Cove, Shoe Cove.

MR. PARSONS:

One second now, you do not have to tell me. It is not Pouch Cove, Shoe Cove. Get your facts straight. It is Pouch Cove. They have stated without reservation that they do not want any part of amalgamation. Will the Minister take these towns off his hit list, areas that he has stated will be amalgamated?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, I thought I said earlier that we as a Government have decided that in spite of protesting of some communities, very much the minority, by the way, of councils and mayors, we

would continue with the hearings process and leave all communities in the process, with the exception of the ones I mentioned. If these points are going to be made, they will be made in the hearings. Because some of the mayors and councilors have told me that they are going to present detailed briefs outlining their reasons for not wanting to be amalgamated with their neighbours, they will make those presentations and those briefs known to the commissioners and they will be heard. What else can I say?

AN HON. MEMBER:

Government by commission.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for St. John's East Extern.

MR. PARSONS:

That was the prime reason for my question. The councils who represent the people went to the people; they have had questionnaires out, and there is no doubt they have signatures. I can prove that. You are wasting the people's money by going in there and having those commissions. I say again to the minister because of the statements made by the Premier of this Province, since people do not want amalgamation, why is he forcing it down their throats? Take those people I mentioned off your list. Do it! Do it! Why not?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, we are not willing to take communities off the list, and

not willing to say to those communities and to the people in those communities, 'You do not have a right to be heard in the hearings process.' We feel they have a right to be heard. For us to react to any one community in which council decides to do a door-to-door campaign, or whatever they do, and come up with a list of people saying We do not want to be amalgamated with a nearby community - and a couple have done it, you are quite right - I think it would be wrong for lots of reasons, not the least of which is it takes away the opportunity of those people to participate in the hearings process, to hear what the other communities have to say, and certainly to hear what Government has to say in the hearings process.

MR. PARSONS:  
They have heard that.

MR. GULLAGE:  
Not having that opportunity we think is unfair. Even though many of them, at the urging of their councillors and their mayors have signed petitions saying 'Take us out of this amalgamation process. We do not want to be heard at the hearings,' we feel it is important they be given the democratic right, Mr. Speaker, to be heard, and to hear what their neighbours and others have to say, as well.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:  
Question Period has expired.

MR. SIMMS:  
Mr. Speaker, we have a minute, do we not?

MR. SPEAKER:  
Not according to my watch.

MR. SIMMS:  
The time has expired.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
(Inaudible) no questions for you today.

MR. RIDEOUT:  
Well, he did make a mistake yesterday, you know.

#### Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees

MR. GILBERT:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation.

MR. GILBERT:  
Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to present a report of Exceptions to The Public Tendering Act, since the House was last opened in May.

#### Notices of Motion

MR. W. CARTER:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. W. CARTER:  
Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce a Bill entitled, "An Act Respecting The Department of Fisheries".

MR. SPEAKER:  
Are there further Notices of Motion?

Petitions

MR. PARSONS:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Member for St. John's East Extern.

MR. PARSONS:  
Mr. Speaker, I am privileged and proud today to stand in my place and present a petition signed by approximately 1,400 people.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
One thousand four hundred.

MR. PARSONS:  
Besides the 1,400 that is on here, Mr. Speaker, 250 people sat down and wrote letters, and on some occasions as high as five to eight signatures as well.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. PARSONS:  
Mr. Speaker, with your concurrence I would like to read the prayer of that petition:

WHEREAS the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador has advised the Town of Wedgewood Park that your municipality is being considered for amalgamation with St. John's, Metropolitan area, St. John's, Portugal Cove, St. Phillips, Petty Harbour, and Maddock Cove; and

WHEREAS the residents of the Town of Wedgewood Park are desirous of having the town continue as a separate municipality. The residents hereby petition the Government of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador as follows: that the Town of Wedgewood Park continue as a

separate municipality.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. PARSONS:  
Mr. Speaker, what prompted the people to send in this petition? They felt that this amalgamation issue was being forced down their throats. The second thing is, Mr. Speaker, they wanted to get their petition to the House of Assembly and to say to the Members of the House of Assembly 98 per cent, the other 2 per cent were either on holidays or were not in the Province or were not in Wedgewood Park at the time. There is 98 per cent of the people of Wedgewood Park signed this petition, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. PARSONS:  
And again I emphasize that 250 letters have been written to the Minister.

Mr. Speaker, some eight to ten years ago the Town of Wedgewood Park sought to be part of St. John's. And because they were thought to be a liability at that time they were not wanted, but a group of citizens from Wedgewood Park decided that they would not have it that way, they formed a council and the council has proven without a doubt, Mr. Speaker, that Wedgewood Park is viable. It is prosperous and the citizens there do not want, now, to have any part of St. John's. Sure, St. John's will take them now and why should they not? Because, they have proven without any doubt that they can survive, that they can make it on their own, they can be a prosperous people. Mr. Speaker, in some of the dialogue as it

pertains to amalgamation we talk about sharing. Sharing is already going on in Wedgewood Park. Wedgewood Park shares its facilities with other areas in that given area. Wedgewood Park, Torbay, and other towns have an animal control system so it is not the matter. It is just that the Minister, who was on the City Council and who dreamed about this, now tries to realize his dream. Mr. Speaker, I mentioned that Wedgewood Park is viable and prosperous but beyond that, because of the signatures, because of the letters written, they are a happy people and why take that happiness away from them. The Minister realizes, he was a Commissioner that I spent many hours with in defining a boundry between Flatrock and Torbay, do not tell me this nonsense about they are in St. John's, they are already in St. John's. He knows as well as I do that there are places in Newfoundland with a longer fence rail, if you want to put it that way, that is all that divides a community. A bridge, a sign, has no bearing on it. I am sure the Minister, or the Premier, would not want to be called the scrooges of this Province where they are forcing unhappiness on people who are happy at this moment, and will remain happy if they are allowed to stay within their own confines.

Mr. Speaker, Wedgewood Park is happy. Number one, they are happy where they are. They are viable. They are not asking Government for anything. All they are saying is, just leave us alone. Leave us remain with the identity that we are now so proud of. The people of Wedgewood Park have made their decision. There is no need for any hearings. They have made their decision. Now, Mr.

Minister, I say to you, they have spoken and now the onus is on you, Mr. Minister, to deliver. Take Wedgewood Park off your list. They do not want any part of it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Firstly, Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the people of Wedgewood Park in taking the initiative in preparing a petition and having the hon. Member present it here in the House. I think any time an issue of this importance is with us it speaks well for the people that they would participate as they are. I know they have already written a considerable number of letters to me expressing concern about the amalgamation proposed. The fact that they are being proposed to become part of a larger city, including St. John's, Petty Harbour, Maddox' Cove, the Goulds, St Phillips and Portugal Cove. No intent, by the way, the Member mentioned Torbay, Flatrock, whatever, that is a separate grouping entirely from the one I just mentioned. But I would have to congratulate the people. It takes a lot of initiative and time to put together a petition and to express their concern. I will say though what I said earlier, and that is we decided to leave, irrespective of what might be happening now as we move into the hearings process, we did decide to leave all communities on the list within the amalgamated group to go forward and complete the hearings process and hear the Commissioner's report in the end,

and then decisions would have to be made. We are not going to delete Wedgewood Park from the list nor are we going to delete any others, because we are now into the hearings process. We have appointed commissioners and they are included in that particular list. I will say to the hon. Member that I will make sure that the petition is forwarded and is included in the hearings process when the particular set of hearings for this particular grouping takes place, and the views of the people will certainly be known.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to have the opportunity to stand in this House and say how honoured I am to support the petition of the people from Wedgewood Park. Let me say to the Minister of Municipal Affairs that while he congratulated the people of Wedgewood Park for taking up the petition, and he understands their concerns, I hope as well he is understanding the anxiety that these people are going through, realizing that they may be forced to give up their identity and become part of a larger city, which nobody in Wedgewood Park wants, including the 98 per cent on the petition presented by my hon. colleague.

The Minister also says, Mr. Speaker, that he has to leave Wedgewood Park in the process. Again, I say to the Minister, he did not have to leave Steady Brook in the process. Mr. Speaker, if the Minister does not think we do not know why Steady Brook was removed then he had better start

thinking again. I can tell him that the people of Wedgewood Park have the desire by this 98 per cent that signed the petition to see that their identity remains. It is incumbent upon the Government not to destroy, not to disrupt that way of life. Wedgewood Park is a very thriving community in this Province. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I have had the opportunity this summer to have my two children registered in the summer program in Wedgewood Park, for the month of June when I was in town.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:

What was that?

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I did, and Wedgewood Park has an excellent summer program. As a matter of fact, I would rate it up their with Marystown and Mount Pearl and other places in the Province.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Placentia.

MR. TOBIN:

Yes, Placentia has a good program too. I had my daughter in tennis in here this summer and the best instructors available in this Province to teach tennis were available in the Wedgewood Park Complex this summer. That is the type of leadership in this community that wants to stay together, that wants to maintain their identity, that is the type of leadership that they have shown. It is a very thriving community. They do have a tax base basically with residential homes, and I guess with the K-Mart which is in their boundaries. It is a place that 98 per cent of the population have said to this

Government today, leave us as we are. We do not want to be amalgamated.

Mr. Speaker, how clearly does that have to be said before it penetrates the Members of this Cabinet. I would suspect that Members of the Cabinet agree with Wedgewood Park, but the Premier, Mr. Speaker, Mr. My-Way or No-Way, the one man show, is the fellow who wants to keep the people of Wedgewood Park and the people of other communities in this Province wondering about their future.

It is the ambition, Mr. Speaker, of one man to build super cities. He was part of a Government in the 1960s that destroyed rural Newfoundland. That destroyed communities, that slaughtered a way of life that people were proud to know, that got people moved from Placentia Bay and Bonavista Bay and other Islands in this Province. I remember, Mr. Speaker, do I ever remember a speech that was given once by the now Minister of Fisheries. Do I ever remember a speech that was given once by the now Minister of Fisheries on resettlement in this Province. Do I ever remember hearing stories of how people were taken, literally, and chucked from their homes never to go back.

Who watched the gentleman on Land and Sea the other night where he had to leave his home and he refuses to go back there because it still hurts. The people in my District that stayed, thanks to the Progressive Conservative Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Progressive Conservative Government of Canada, that there is now a road going to Petit Forte, money well spent Mr. Speaker, to free these people from isolation. But one has only to

look back to when the Premier of this Province was part of another Government, and he put the gun to the heads of the people of Petit Forte to try and force them to move. But they resented that, Mr. Speaker, as the people of Wedgewood Park have resented the opportunities to become amalgamated. Let the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs (Mr. Gullage) listen to the people of Wedgewood Park. Let the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs not turn his back on the people of Wedgewood Park, as he has been doing, and those people who are supporting Wedgewood Park. Let Wedgewood Park maintain its identity. They have a right, Mr. Speaker, to that courtesy. They have a right to that type of life. They have a right to that type of culture.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:

I am not even related to the Minister of Health, Mr. Speaker.

But let me say, Mr. Speaker, that amalgamation in this Province is about what? It is about creating super cities, it is about creating one giant power. That is what it is about. It is about a scheme, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. TOBIN:

An amalgamation scheme will save the Province \$50 million. That is what amalgamation is about, Mr. Speaker. It is about \$50 million. Amalgamation, Mr. Speaker, is about 'Gullage urges towns to raise taxes.' That is what amalgamation is about. Sock it to the poor, Mr. Speaker, sock

it to the people who can least afford it in this Province and let us, Mr. Speaker, as Cabinet Ministers and as a Premier get on the high fling of life and who will benefit, Mr. Speaker, if they save \$50 million?

AN HON. MEMBER:

Yes, who?

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

MR. TOBIN:

Only for the anxiety of the people of Wedgewood Park.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

I was trying to interject myself at a pause, and it was difficult to get the Member in a pause, because he was in a flight of oratory. But I want to tell the Member that his time has elapsed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

AN HON. MEMBER:

By leave!

MR. TOBIN:

By leave, Mr. Speaker?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Yes, by leave!

MR. BAKER:

No leave.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:

A good speech! A good speech!

MR. DUMARESQUE:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Eagle River.

MR. DUMARESQUE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I want at this time to present to the House, as I have to you, a petition from some 545 residents.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

I have read the hon. Member's petition, and in the Chair's opinion, it does not meet with the requirements for a petition. And this is a good time to raise it. I would ask hon. Members if they agree to the petition at this time not being taken out.

But the Chair does want to make a couple of comments. We have been anticipating this because if there is one thing that always annoyed me it was the fact that the House of Assembly would not allow petitions when there was a great degree of effort that went into preparing them. We had that occasion several times last year where petitions were not permitted, and it always annoyed me as a Member. But I can understand the Chair has to make sure that petitions follow the proper rules, and even the one that we just heard was not right according to the letter of the law.

So I wonder if hon. Members, first of all, could go back to their samples that we sent them and if hon. Members do not have them, we will sent them other samples to make sure we do not run into this in the future. Because as I said before, there is nothing more exasperating and frustrating for a

Member then to have a petition, be it 100 names or 50 names, they are hard to get sometimes, that people went through a lot of work to get, and not to be allowed to present a petition, is very aggravating to say the least. But the House does have rules in that respect. Maybe we could let the hon. Member read the prayer and then hon. Members will decide, and the House will decide whether or not to accept the petition.

MR. SIMMS:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SIMMS:  
Mr. Speaker, that process always irritated me when I was on that side of the House as Government House Leader as well. We tried to keep emphasizing that to hon. Members. All they simply need to do, perhaps, is take a moment, pop up to speak to the clerk of the House, show the clerk the petition and she can tell them if there needs to be any adjustment or something done to make it proper. I guess this is one of the items that will be possibly looked at by this Committee - the all party Committee that we have talked about, to look at some of the rules of the House and that kind of thing. So, that is just a general comment, but in this specific incident, we would be quite prepared, despite the fact that it is not properly addressed or whatever the problem is, to allow the Member to present the petition on behalf of the constituency he represents in Eagle River, just to show that we are quite prepared to cooperate in that regard.

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

MR. BAKER:  
Thank you Mr. Speaker, I agree that we have to look at what is in our standing orders now with regards to the presenting of petitions. With all due respect, I would like to indicate to your honor that it is one thing for all Members of the House to be knowledgeable concerning the proper form for the presenting of petitions, but it is another thing for the people of Newfoundland to be aware, and many petitions do not originate with the Member, but originate out in the Districts with the people. And this is why I think it is very important that no matter what our rules and regulations, that we bear in mind the intent of a petition. And the intent is to bring something to the attention of this hon. House that should be brought to its attention. And if the proper form is not followed, and I think in many instances it is not going to be, because I mean it is cumbersome if an hon. Member receives a petition from - in this case - Labrador to have to go back to the people and redo the whole thing. It is an impossible task, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest.

So, we still have to have the understanding of this hon. House that we will cooperate and accept petitions in the spirit in which they are intended if not exactly the letter of the law.

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

MR. SIMMS:  
Mr. Speaker, I would agree whole heartedly with what the Government



House Leader has said with one possible exception. There is one exception that I do not think we should, as a House as a Legislature, accept or allow, and that is a petition that is not an original. A petition that is a copy that a Member might attempt to try to present, would be totally improper and would take away from the individual who has the original petition his right or her right to make that presentation. And that is the one exception, but everything else I totally agree with.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Chair agrees with what both Members have said. But still the Chair believes it is its obligation to point out to Members, since we do have orders to follow, to point out to Members when a petition is not in line with what our orders say.

The hon. the Member for Eagle River.

MR. DUMARESQUE:

Thank you Mr. Speaker, and certainly I concur with your remarks for procedure, but as the hon. House Leader pointed out, certainly, when a petition arises from a remote part of our Province, it is much more difficult to go back and get it done and still do it in the time they would like to have it addressed.

So, I would like to at this point address the prayer of the petition. It says we the under-signed residents of Cartwright Labrador in the Electoral District of Eagle River, do hereby petition the newly formed Liberal Government to make the promise of an enclosed arena to the residents of Cartwright by

Danny Dumaresque, a reality in the immediate future.

While I went through my election campaign last year, I made one promise to the people of Eagle River, and that was that I would do my utmost to make them proud. And what I would do, Mr. Speaker -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. DUMARESQUE:

- and what I would do, Mr. Speaker, is to come in here and work as hard and diligently as possible to forward their concerns, and certainly their concerns in recreation are as high on my list as any of the rest. And at this point I would like just to take minute, Mr. Speaker, to review the history of recreation in Eagle River, and talk about the uniqueness of our situation and why Labrador should be treated, I think, uniquely and I close with my remarks to the hon. Minister responsible.

Mr. Speaker, at this point in time there is no enclosed arena, no proper arena at all in the whole district of Eagle River. Certainly that is not different from some of the other public facilities that are necessary in the District but I think it is important that all members are conscious that at this point in time we still do not have an enclosed arena of any kind of a standard in the whole district. I believe that the history of the Labrador Winter Games has been very well known to a lot of our Members here, especially the Members for Labrador. The people in Labrador and the people on the Coast of Labrador, in particular, have competed in these Games over the years and they have done quite

well. As a matter of fact they have done remarkably well with the facilities and the training they have to bring them to their particular capacities. However, Mr. Speaker, I believe that if we were able to put the infrastructure that I am taking about, particularly the arena in Cartwright, and throughout the District, I think we would have a very, very high quality of athlete coming from the Coast of Labrador, who would go on to represent us in different national and provincial events.

I would also like to indicate the uniqueness of Coastal Labrador and particularly why there may be a real dire need for two or three arenas even, in my own District. What a lot of people do not realize, lots of times, is that the area we have to cover in Labrador and the distance between the different communities in the District make it totally unreasonable to believe that you could get the use of a regional facility. We have some 350 to 400 miles of Coast line and in particular Cartwright is separated from the next largest community by about 150 to 200 miles of Coast line, so there is no way that they could, on a daily basis, avail of a regional recreation facility. I realize that in saying that that it would be difficult to have an economic situation whereby the revenue created from an arena would be able to support the cost of operating that arena. I believe, Mr. Speaker, in light of our geography, in light of our lack of mobility, and in light of our expressed enthusiasm for sports and recreation in Cartwright, and in the District as a whole, I believe, that this Government should consider doing its utmost to see that an arena is

put in Cartwright.

I would like to again take this opportunity to express through this hon. House to the people of Cartwright that indeed I will do my utmost, I will work diligently with the Government, and particularly with the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs, to see that this particular facility is a reality and I look forward to playing my first hockey game in that arena in Cartwright.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

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

MR. WARREN:  
Thank you, very much, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in support of this petition. Again, I just want to re-echo comments that were made earlier. If we as legislators are going to be picky on the wording of a petition then we are not worthy to be here. I think if Mrs Dyson, Mr. Parby, Mr. Learning and so on have the intestinal fortitude to sign a petition of a concern in their community the least thing we can do as legislators is support their petition.

Mr. Speaker, I say this to the hon. Member in all fairness, make sure your Premier will do as well for the District of Eagle River as the former Premier did for the District of Torngat Mountains. And, Mr. Speaker, I say this, \$1.5 million for a sports complex in Nain may sound like a lot of money for 1000 people, but it is only a drop in the bucket considering the

royalties and everything else that Government is taking out of Labrador, and I say Mr. Speaker we should have at least ten more Sportsplexes as is in Nain along the Labrador Coast. Those people need recreation facilities as well as St. John's needs five stadiums. Just imagine if they had the opportunities to compete, there is no one else in the Province can take it away from them, because they are the most hard working, energetic athletic people anywhere in this Province. But they are curtailed because of the geographical location of the communities that they live in. I support the hon. Member's petition and I say to the Government of today, let us hope that the word immediate in this petition does not mean a year or three or four months before the next Provincial election. Let us hope that we will see when the new Budget comes down in the spring, that there will be money in there for the community of Cartwright for their request of 405 or 406 signatures to this particular petition. All they are asking is to be treated equally, to be treated on a reasonable and satisfactory basis. I think if the hon. Member would go back over some correspondence of a particular Cabinet Minister, he will see that the former Government had begun taking very positive initiatives to address the recreational facilities along the Labrador Coast. In closing, Mr. Speaker, I want to give just one word of advice, and my hon. colleague and I talked about this before. When Government plans for a new school what an opportunity to build the whole complex, the school and the recreational facility in one, because it would save the Government many, many dollars. Do something like the Church Hill or

the Fremont area, only on a smaller scale, but that is the way the Government will save many dollars. When they are considering building a new school like on the Labrador Coast there will be several new schools in the next several years, so place the recreational and the educational part of it into one area and call a tender for the whole thing, and I think Government will save a lot of money in the long run. I support the petition because I believe the people in Cartwright have spoken up. The hon. Member made a promise and, Mr. Speaker, as an Opposition Member in this House, I assure the hon. gentleman that he has my full support and assure the people of Cartwright, the people of Port Hope Simpson, the people of Charlottetown, the people of my District also, that what they are requesting is only just what they should expect. They are not asking for anything else and I will make sure the hon. Member will keep his promise because I have a feeling Mr. Speaker in closing, that I could see where the hon. gentleman is coming from, I think he is going to be in this House for a long time, I really think that. I think the hon. gentleman is going to be in this house for a long time. I say to the hon. gentleman that although he was a bit excited when he had his main speech about the Labrador Flag, let me say to the hon. gentleman, the people in Cartwright are just as concerned about a place they can play hockey or broom ball or anything like that as anyone else. So I say to the hon. gentleman, put your priorities first, and the people in Cartwright will put you back in the House again after the next election. I say to the hon. gentleman, all the best, keep your promise and make sure immediate is

immediate and not four or five years down the road.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Placentia.

MR. HOGAN:

Thank you Mr. Speaker, thank you other Members of the House of Assembly. I would like to rise in support of the petition presented by my hon. colleague. I would like to draw the attention of the Members of the House to my own participation in recreation and development of recreation in a number of areas in the Province, and in saying that Mr. Speaker my colleagues on both sides of the House will recognize that when I speak, I speak of which I know. Not like some Members of the House of Assembly on the other side, they address a lot of subjects, some they know something about and some they do not know anything about. I will also point out, Mr. Speaker, that I recognize where the hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren), heart is in supporting the petition, but he should leave his rhetoric out of it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. HOGAN:

The presence of recreation facilities in the smaller communities of this Province, not only on the coast of Labrador, but the smaller communities of this Province need recreation facilities. They need recreation facilities just as the people in the urban centres of the Province need recreation facilities. And it is incumbent on the present Government and on any Government to see that such facilities are provided. Again going along with the thought expressed by my hon.

friend from Torngat Mountains, education is a big part of recreation facilities and it is not a bad idea, I have to concur with him. It is not a bad idea to consider a method by which these facilities can be incorporated into the education facilities that are being built.

Imagination has to be used, Mr. Speaker, when addressing these needs in the smaller communities around the Province. We cannot leave it to engineers. We cannot leave it to those who think that the facilities should be of a particular design, just because that is the way they are built in St. John's or Toronto or Montreal or any of the other larger urban areas. There are particular needs in a community and facilities can be provided, Mr. Speaker. Facilities can be provided that can deliver the services, deliver the needs of these small communities without any grandiose plans that come out of the minds of those who do not know what these needs are or can identify with these needs. Mr. Speaker, many of our small communities come forward seeking such facilities and no imagination, no heart, no great thrust is put into the needs of those facilities and designed to meet the needs of the smaller communities.

A facility such as being prayed for by my hon. friend can be identified by the local people. It can be designed by the local people, at least the ideas can be, and then someone put them to paper. And I support the prayer of this petition and I think we should all endeavour to see that the smaller communities needs in recreation and other programs are fulfilled.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

Orders of the Day

MR. BAKER:

Order 13.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order 13, that is a continuation of the second reading of a Bill to Amend The St. John's Municipal Elections Act, and the Member for St. John's East Extern adjourned the debate and it appears that he wants to carry on this morning.

The Member for St. John's East Extern.

MR. PARSONS:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. PARSONS:

I think I would be lax in my obligations towards the people in my District, if I did not continue this morning. Mr. Speaker, when I was speaking on the petition that I presented to the hon. the House this morning it was mentioned that the petition came from Wedgewood Park, but I did mention something about Torbay and Outer Cove and Middle Cove and Logy Bay. For people who do not know, and I do not think there are very many who would not know, those are areas in my District and that is why the mention was made.

Mr. Speaker, we are here today again on Bill No. 22. The essence of Bill No. 22 centres around amalgamation. Mr. Speaker, I think the Bill was certainly late

in coming in, because I think that every hon. Member in the House should have had a right to express himself as it pertained to this particular Bill. Because again The Bill is about The City of St. John's Elections Act. But in essence, Mr. Speaker, it is centred around the question of amalgamation.

Mr. Speaker, I find it hard, and I will have to be truthful, to know why this Bill is here on the table today. I find it real hard. The St. John's Municipal Act needs an amendment. We all know that now, because the day is Friday and the election is set for Tuesday, and for those people not to have the frustration of the age, something has to be done about it. But, Mr. Speaker, it has to be known in this House, I think everyone in the House would realize, that every other area that is supposedly going to join up with St. John's, if the Minister has his way, all their elections are being held on Tuesday. St. John's, I think, is the only exception. Portugal Cove, Wedgewood Park, St. Phillips, Hogans Pond, Goulds, Petty Harbour, Maddox Cove, Mr. Speaker, are all going ahead with their elections. And, you know, I cannot see why the difference. I do not really see why the St. John's election was not held on the same date. That is my own personal feeling. I have spoken with a great number of people and a lot of people out there feel the same way I do.

Mr. Speaker, after having said that, I know now that this Legislature has an obligation, I am not foolhardy enough to say otherwise. But, the point remains, I think this Bill was brought in in the wrong way. It

was belated, to say the least, and I think more emphasis should be placed on it, because the Bill, dealing primarily with St. John's, deals in-depth with amalgamation.

Mr. Speaker, in my own District, what will amalgamation prove? What will it do to help the people of Pouch Cove? On the Bauline road, residents are coming in to the office crying that sewage is coming up through their lawns. Water is of the poorest quality. This has been going on for years.

There is Flat Rock with a quarter of a mile of pipe in the ground, a quarter of a mile, Mr. Speaker, of pipe in the pond now. They had no money last year. The monetary situation was such that the Government did not see fit to give them any money. Pouch Cove did not receive any money.

Mr. Speaker, the Town of Torbay is a town that has grown by 100 per cent in the last ten years. Now, the people were allowed to build, whether right or wrong, on a given size lot. Now all they are asking for is the basic services. Will amalgamation change that? No, Mr. Speaker, it will not. Those services have to come and they have to come soon. The needs of every council in that area are great, we agree, but what will amalgamation do to define the problem or to make things better for the people in those areas?

Mr. Speaker, in the other large area in my district, made up of Outer Cove, Middle Cove and Logy Bay, they are not seeking any services. What the council has done, and I think, rightly so, is they have made the citizens aware of the fact they are going to ask for larger lots, hoping that will relieve the situation - not

eliminate it - because somewhere down the road they are going to need services - at this moment they do not. But when services do come, they are quite prepared to pay for them. There is no doubt about that.

Mr. Speaker, I want to get on to the savings attributed to amalgamation.

Whether we like it or not, Mr. Speaker, the area I represent, which is a rural and an urban area, is subject to the City of St. John's because it is where 85 per cent of the people in my District work. Now, at one time, a member on the council here called us a bunch of brownbaggers. Thank God, he is not on the council today. The fact remains, we do come to St. John's to work but, at the same time, 85 per cent of the money made in St. John's stays in St. John's, because that is where the people spend their money for cars, groceries, clothes, you name it. The economy of St. John's is based, not alone on the people living in St. John's but on the whole surrounding area.

Mr. Speaker, if snow clearing is a contentious issue in amalgamation, let me say to you what I said previously about towns being subordinate to St. John's with respect to the workplace. Say, Torbay were to become the main centre. Right now, Flat Rock has a contractor who services the town for snow clearing. I think, in Torbay, alone, there are forty-five kilometers of secondary roads, some of them, a mile long, or 5 kilometers or six kilometers long. So it is essential to these people, the snow has been cleared from the secondary roads to get to the highway in time for the people

to get to work. So what they are saying is, okay we could use Torbay as a center. So, Mr. Speaker, do the people of Bauline have to get out. So do the people of Pouch Cove have to get out. Again, you are talking about secondary roads now, miles and miles of secondary roads. Pouch Cove has their own equipment, so when the plough comes through and the snow is cleared off the the main highway, so are the other secondary roads ready to let the people go to work.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we know what Newfoundland winters are. We know that seven o'clock in the morning we are in the midst of a storm, but those ploughs are on the road. Those ploughs are sufficient so everyone can get to work. What would the people in Torbay do if Torbay became the center? What would they do? How would they draw who is going to work this morning? At the present moment, every town has their own equipment, be it hired or owned, but the point remains that it is a good system. So there is no savings there, Mr. Speaker, there is nothing can be gained by that area as it pertains to snow clearing.

The other one is solid waste. Mr. Speaker, we pay our share on a per capita basis to the City of St. John's for the use of their dump. It is done on a household basis, so no money would be saved in that area. We have a good garbage collection. It is done, again, by contractors and at the present moment there are no appreciable savings. There is no saving, Mr. Speaker, in the solid waste issue.

Mr. Speaker, by the way, Robin Hood Bay is in the District that I serve, and sometime at a later

date I am going to address that situation as well. I mean, no one wants that type of facility in their District and Outer Cove, Middle Cove, and Logy Bay are no exception. I hope I will get the opportunity to do so.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing that is prominent in the amalgamation issue is services, sharing of services. We have sharing of services now, animal control, recreation, fire services, for the Town of Torbay services the Town of Flat Rock at a cost, where the Town of Pouch Cove services the Town of Bauline, at a cost, Mr. Speaker.

I can see that the Minister of Education is in his seat and I have spoken to him privately and I know that he did receive a letter from the Mayor of the Town of Flat Rock in regard to sharing, the two largest School Boards in this Province, the Amalgamated School Board and the Roman Catholic School Board are prepared to advance to the Minister, recommendations. I think that the recommendations have already come forward to the Minister. Certainly, I know he will study them because I know the Minister. I know where he is coming from and I am sure that he will study those propositions.

Mr. Speaker, to start this process going Flat Rock offered land free of charge, four acres, to the joint Boards to come up with a school. Not to take anything away from the denominational educational system but to share what is necessary so that our children can get a good education. Mr. Speaker, that is what I am saying about sharing. The sharing is there. The sharing is in place. I know the Minister,

and like I said I spoke to him in private about it, and I told him this morning that I was going to mention it in my speech. I know that the Minister is looking into it, and sometime later when the Minister perhaps is presenting a bill or debating, I perhaps could offer more of what this is all about.

But, Mr. Speaker, it is there. We do not need amalgamation to do that. The incentive is there, the people have already said that we are prepared to share in anything. There is no one saying that Flat Rock should be part of Torbay. Outer Cover, Middle Cove and Logy Bay should be part of any area. The Member for Mount Scio - Bell Island, he can understand what I am talking about. It is an identity situation. People identify themselves with their own local community. And I cannot understand for a minute why the Minister cannot identify himself as well. I said this morning that the Minister was a one man royal commission that dealt with the boundaries of Flat Rock and Torbay, and I must say he did a yeoman's type job of it. I cannot see why today that he does not understand. Mr. Speaker, he and I were in houses in that District and perhaps he will not do it now, and he can grin at some of the experiences that we had. When a longer fence, like I said this morning separated communities. And, you know, where you are going across a guy's lawn because he said that was part of Torbay or part of Flatrock, at one given time. But those are situations that are evident in the district that I represent and, Mr. Speaker, we want to keep them that way. We want to be part of what we are. We want to be part of our history. We want to be part of

our culture, and we do not want to become a part of anyone else's. And I speak for, I would say, eight-five per cent of the people in that District.

Mr. Speaker, like I said when I started off, there is a number of things - a number of issues that I could touch on, and perhaps speak on at length, because it involves me, it involves the district that I represent. And I hope that my few remarks today to the Minister, and to the hon. Members on the other side that they will see what is wrong with forced amalgamation. Do not do it, do not do it. There are people on that side - on the other side - have reservations as well as I have, and my reservations are such - is because of the geographics of it. It is because of the subordination, the subordinates in St. John's, the people who work in St. John's are from this area. I say to the Minister that no good will come from it, that there is nothing to be derived from it.

I was mayor of Flatrock for ten years, and when I left, we left with a sizable amount of money in the bank, a sizable amount of money. People say well you are always looking for something. You are always looking for handouts from the Government. The people in that area are not looking for handouts from Government any more than anywhere else in Canada. All they want is the basic necessities of life, and that is what Governments are for. Do not try to shirk your responsibility.

What I think the Minister is trying to do, and again Bill (22) proves it, is he is trying to get a minor number of people, a smaller number of people to talk to, so he can bully them into



getting more taxes for the Government, rather than have all the people that are involved right now. In my District alone, there is an excess of fifty councilors and mayors and whatever. Right now, the Department has to go to each council and try to persuade them. And what the Minister is trying to do, this is the basic reason, is to collect more taxes and to collect more taxes he needs fewer people that he would have to address.

Mr. Speaker, it is not going to happen. It is not going to happen. I do not know what way or if the Minister - and he certainly has that right, I suppose, but after what the Premier has stated over and over, I do not know if he does have that right. He would have to override the Premier if the areas do not want amalgamation.

AN HON. MEMBER:

No chance to that.

MR. PARSONS:

Oh yes. I do not know. He is a strong minded Minister, but I do not think he will override the Premier, really I do not.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

(Inaudible) sitting in his seat over there next week if he does.

MR. PARSONS:

That is right.

Mr. Speaker, I want to leave the Minister with this. Going away from our own regional - our own national issues. I looked last night, as many other Canadians, as many other people all over the world--

AN HON. MEMBER:

We are some proud of our Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

AN HON. MEMBER:

I am some embarrassed for Newfoundland.

MR. PARSONS:

One second now, I did not even watch the Premier, I said on an international basis not on a national basis. But what I want to impart to the Minister is yesterday, an historical event happened world wide. The Berlin Wall, it fell. People are allowed to go where they like. Freedom at last, in Berlin.

People do not want walls, people do not want to be forced into anything, people have the right to be free. That is what it is all about, that is why we wear the poppies, that is why we are here today in this Legislature, because it is democracy. And I say to the Minister, it will not work. It did not work there with guns. I told him before, and we told him privately that Mr. Minister, look, amalgamation in some areas is next to being as good as sliced bread, but in some areas it is just not applicable.

If they want to let them go, Mr. Speaker, let them go. If they want to stay at the status quo, let them be. I mean, they have that right. Do not be - and I will use an old Irish word - flahoolach, Mr. Minister, in giving away or taking what is not yours. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, the Minister need not try to rush. He is trying to ram the Bill through as it is. I would suggest to him that he just keep his seat, until we are ready, until we are finished, all Members over here, of which there must be another dozen who want to say a few words. No rush! If there was a rush in the minds of the Government, they should have brought the Bill in, and would have bought the Bill in I am sure, two weeks ago, when the House opened.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

They knew sixty days ago (inaudible).

MR. SIMMS:

It is a flimsy little one page Bill. It would take our very capable Legislative Counsel people about, I would say, thirty seconds to draft this. I worked with them before and I know they are very capable people, but they cannot do it unless they are instructed by the Government to proceed. Why did they not do it back in June or July, or whenever it was? The Minister inadvertently and without knowing what he was doing once again gave approval to this request to extend by twelve months the period of the Council, or whatever it was.

MR. GULLAGE:

That is not true.

MR. SIMMS:

It is not true? You did not give approval?

MR. GULLAGE:

(Inaudible) request of council.

MR. SIMMS:

You never did give approval?

MR. GULLAGE:

(Inaudible) request of Council.

MR. SIMMS:

Yes, they requested it. You never did give approval.

MR. GULLAGE:

(Inaudible) back in June now.

MR. SIMMS:

No, I said, whenever you did it.

MR. GULLAGE:

You said June.

MR. SIMMS:

No, I said June or July or whenever. When did you do it?

MR. GULLAGE:

September.

MR. SIMMS:

September. Why was the Bill not prepared in September then?

MR. R. AYLWARD:

You did that illegally.

MR. SIMMS:

Obviously you found out that it was illegal for you to do it. You make a mistake. You were highly embarrassed. You rushed off, ran to the Treasury Board President's Office down on the main floor, went in on bended knee and said, Oh, Wince, I have made a terrible, gross error. I have made a shattering mistake. But, Wince, I have only been here two or three months. I mean, I did not know. I did not know all this stuff. Please, get me out of this hole I have dug myself into. Get me out of it. And the President of Treasury Board, the Government House Leader said, Ah, I have the strategy for this. What we will

do is at the very last moment, just before the bill needs to be passed, we will bring it in and in that way we can ram it through the House. The Opposition will have no choice but to approve it, obviously, because they do not want to be seen as holding up a request of City Council, and so on and so forth. So we will bring it in at the last moment and they will get up and ramble on a little bit, but we will get it through. That is what the Government House Leader said in determining his strategy. I know that not for a fact, but I am sure that is what transpired.

In so doing, he would try to save the embarrassment to the Government created by this Minister's ineptitude. Because he should have found out. Before he opens his mouth and shoves foot in, he should check out whether or not he has the authority to do all these things he is going around bawling about: I can do this, I can do that. Then all of a sudden he finds out, oh, I cannot do this. I cannot do that - Please, please, Wince, save me!

Mr. Speaker, the biggest concern I have with the legislation is the process, not with the request or anything else. That is not the issue at stake here. Since the request was made, so that there would be more time to consider the very important issue of amalgamation, then obviously it is quite legitimate for Members on this side to talk about the amalgamation issue, even though the Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier tried to muzzle us yesterday by shouting across the House, hoping the Speaker might pick it up, 'Stick to the Bill. Stick to the Bill.'

In fact, by talking about amalgamation we are sticking to the Bill, because that is the reason for the request made by the City, as the Minister knows. He hates to hear us talking about amalgamation. He just absolutely hates it, because he knows he has gotten himself into one big pickle here.

I bet he wishes now, in retrospect, he had not. Every night before he goes to bed, when he gets down on his hands and knees to say his prayers, he also says, oh, I wish I had not opened my big mouth about amalgamation, particularly before I had a chance to give my colleagues in Cabinet a thorough briefing on what it was I was going to say. And he had to rush back to Cabinet and say, Oh please, fellow colleagues, I wish I had not opened my mouth. Please, help me out of this pickle. Do not tell anybody I did not talk to you about this to any great degree, just sort of pass it off and help me out of another pickle. The Minister, I am sure, wishes to heaven that he had not opened his big gob back when he did, and created the controversy he did.

Then, of course, to make matters even worse, the Minister says, By God! we will have amalgamation no matter what, and communities who get their backs up against us we will force to amalgamate. I have never heard the Minister deny saying that. He has tried to be a bit wishy-washy, tried to stickhandle around it, walk along the fence and all that kind of thing, but that is what he has said essentially. That is what has been reported and has never been denied. If you do not want amalgamation, too bad! That is tough.

Then, of course, the Premier comes back from wherever he was on a holiday or something at that time, and the Minister once again has to go to the Premier, run up to the eighth floor, knock on the door, go in on his hands and knees again - another example - Oh, please, Mr. Premier, do not embarrass me. Do not go out and tell everybody in the public that I should not have said that. The Premier said, Sorry. I am the Premier. I make all the decisions. If you want to stay in my Cabinet, you will keep your mouth closed. I will go out and tell the people that the Minister made a terrible mistake once again - for the third time now - and I will tell the people that they do not have to be concerned, they will not be forced into amalgamation. If they do not want amalgamation, they will not have it.

We thought that was the end of it, but then the comedy of errors continues. The Minister, when he was asked about the Premier's response says, Oh, no, the Premier and I agree on this. Then they tried to use some convoluted words to try to get around it, to explain their way out of it, but they just got themselves in deeper and deeper. We then asked the Premier in the House and he once again said, I did not say that, I said this, and he then proceeded to say exactly what he had said before.

Mr. Speaker, the concern I have on the Bill is with the process, and I want to make sure that everybody on the other side of the House understands this. I want to be brief, because, as I said, we have many other members over here, all of whom wish to make comments on this bill. But while I am on my feet and have the opportunity, and

since I did not get a chance during Question Period today, I want to ask the Minister a bunch of questions. I ask him to take note of them and respond whenever he gets a chance in closing the debate on this Bill next week, or the week after, or whenever it might be. These questions relate to my specific situation out in Grand Falls - Windsor, where we all know amalgamation is going to be forced, is going to be rammed. We all know that.

MR. GRIMES:

Most of them want it.

MR. SIMMS:

Well, the member for Exploits (Mr. Grimes) had better keep his mouth closed. He is not quite certain. He had better be careful. Let me ask these questions now. The Minister would know that there is a reasonable level of interest in pursuing the amalgamation idea out in Grand Falls - Windsor. I am not certain if they want it. I could not be as sure as the member for Exploits. I would rather be cautious and make sure all the questions are answered first. I do not jump like the hon. Member for Exploits.

But he would be aware that there is a reasonable level of interest, he would be aware that I have written him and indicated publicly that I have no particular problem with the concept of amalgamation. That is not my problem with it. He knows that, because he responded to me and thanked me very much. The Minister remembers that. The concept is not my problem. But he would also know, in the case of Grand Falls and Windsor, that there is a large number, a major number of concerns and questions that have been raised by both town councils in

particular, not just Grand Falls, but the town of Windsor as well. And that is not to mention, of course, the most important concerns of the people. That is what is most important.

He would also know that there have been studies undertaken, funded by his own department, which identify the needs that are required to bring together a uniform level of services to both communities, and these studies have been both engineering studies and financial studies. He would be aware of that.

He has also received a copy, been given a copy of the town council's policy statement with respect to the issue. I would like him to tell me, when he gets an opportunity, what is the current status with respect to discussions on the amalgamation of Grand Falls and Windsor? What is the current status? Where do they stand now? What is the next step? I would also like him to tell me what is his response to the policy statement given to him in writing by the town of Grand Falls, the town that I represent? I would like him to answer those questions.

There is one very important question, and probably one of the most significant questions I would like him to deal with, and this is the question that both towns have: Since these studies that have been funded by his department say that at this point in time, at least, a \$9 million to \$12 million minimum provincial contribution would be required for capital infrastructure upgrading in the town of Windsor in particular, payable over a five year period or something like that - he is aware of that. Even with this, by the way, other studies show that

afterwards Grand Falls taxpayers could still be facing an additional 18 per cent increase in their taxes annually unless there was more government assistance. This would be for maintenance and so on. But I want the Minister to answer this question or these questions for me if he would. In order to allow logical and sensible and rational and reasonable discussions to occur on the issue, would the Minister (a) commit to these financial requirements in advance, before the amalgamation question is finally decided. Both towns want a commitment from the provincial government that the capital funding required for infrastructure upgrading be committed in advance to allow them to properly make a decision. I think if you would give that commitment, which the former administration did, by the way, there is a very good chance, I suspect, of getting an agreement without much of a hassle, other than the normal things that would have to be worked out. So, I ask him that question. Would the government consider that?

Secondly, I would ask the Minister if he would give to the town of Grand Falls the list of benefits and advantages for the town of Grand Falls that they asked for at a meeting with the Minister back on July 19, which request, up till now, has not been replied to. The Minister shakes his head, and that is fair. He can say that if he wishes. But I spoke very early this morning with the mayor of Grand Falls and he assures me that they raised the question, and they particularly raised it in a subsequent meeting - the mayor did - with the Premier. He said we would like to know what the benefits and advantages of

amalgamation are for Grand Falls. And, by the way, we would like to know this, Mr. Minister, before the public hearings so that we can go to the public hearings and respond to what it is you suggest might be the benefits and the advantages. The Minister is shaking his head. I guess he is trying to say he never had a request. But he can check with his officials and ask them to check with the town, now that I have raised it, and get the request and respond to it between now and the public hearings, which, I think, are scheduled for early in the New Year. Perhaps he could mention that.

My final questions, Mr. Speaker, are these: Sometime ago, the Minister insisted or implied publicly that Grand Falls and Windsor will have no choice when it comes to the question of amalgamation. He has implied that publicly without question, that amalgamation will be forced on the two towns whether they want it or not. I want to know if that is still the position of the Minister. If it is not, then what is his position? And I would like him to be very specific, because I can assure him I will be reporting publicly to my constituency in Grand Falls in the next day or so with respect to his response to these questions, if not today.

MR. RIDEOUT:

You cannot let things go too long.

MR. SIMMS:

Also, the Premier threatened in this House, and everybody has heard him, and he has threatened out in Grand Falls - he has threatened, these are the words, these are the words. The Members will remember -

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. SIMMS:

No, it is everybody. Even the Member will agree with me, if he will let me finish what I am trying to say. He has threatened, and the Minister has as well, to force regional taxation on the Town of Grand Falls, in other words, take tax dollars from one community and give it to another community, in this case take it from Grand Falls and give it to Windsor, and I want to know if that threat is still in force.

I want to know if that threat is still in force and, secondly, I would like to know, is the Government prepared to face a court challenge on that particular matter if that is what comes about down the road? I would like to know if the Government is fully prepared to face a court challenge.

Finally, would he agree with the town's position which they have taken, which he may not be aware of, that they are prepared in the final analysis, when all these questions are answered and others, in the final analysis they are prepared to put the question to its people, the Town of Grand Falls, in the form of a referendum? That is the position they have taken, which they are entitled to do. They do not need the support or agreement of the Minister of Municipal Affairs in this case, they may do it. So that is what the town of Grand Falls' position is. They are prepared to have a referendum on it to ask the people of Grand Falls if, indeed, they wish to amalgamate with the town of Windsor. So I would like to know what his views are on that. Does he think that is a reasonable and

good position to take?

Mr. Speaker, with those few words, I thank my colleagues for allowing me to slip in here for five or ten minutes; it was a little bit off schedule.

AN HON. MEMBER:

No, you cannot go.

MR. WINDSOR:

The Minister is like a puppet over there today, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. the member for Mount Pearl.

MR. WINDSOR:

He is awfully anxious, Mr. Speaker, to get this piece of legislation through. If he was so anxious, he should have done the homework.

Mr. Speaker, in fifteen years in this legislature I have never seen a piece of legislation brought before this House that had already been acted on by the Minister. This is an affront to the House, it is an insult to the Members of the House of Assembly, and an insult to the people who elected us here to represent them. The Minister has presumed that the House of Assembly is going to approve this piece of legislation. I am sure it has never happened since I have been in this House, and I doubt that it has ever happened anywhere in the free world, that a Minister would presume that a piece of legislation would be approved. Mr. Speaker, let me make it very clear. We are not obligated to pass this piece of legislation today. And we may well not. Certainly, as my colleague just

said, there are many of us over here who have a lot to say on this piece of legislation yet. It may not pass today. We may be back here Monday or Tuesday debating this legislation, in which case the Minister has broken the law. He does not have the authority to defer elections in the City of St. John's. He has done that without any legal authority, and that is an insult to the people of the Province and it is an affront to the House of Assembly. I have never seen it happen before. It is illegal.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the principle of the Bill one cannot argue too greatly on, I certainly cannot, because the city is simply asking for the same provision that is in the Municipalities Act. Since I wrote that Act in 1979, I could hardly speak against the principle, although I have some concerns as to how that principle is being used. It is right to have in the Act a provision that will allow some deferment of elections in very, very exceptional circumstances, but I have a real problem with the Minister using that authority in trying to force municipalities to defer elections. He threatened to force Mount Pearl to defer the election of the city council in Mount Pearl. He had to back down on that, Mr. Speaker. And he is wise that he did. Because if he thinks he has problems with amalgamation now, had he forced Mount Pearl to defer an election, had he taken away their democratic right to elect a council in the City of Mount Pearl, he would have been in big trouble then, Mr. Speaker. He would have been in big trouble then.

MR. WALSH:

Barely had enough to be elected.

Barely had enough to be elected.

MR. WINDSOR:

Barely had enough to get elected? The hon. gentleman should know. He got his tail burnt the last time he ran.

MR. WALSH:

And there were nineteen of us.

MR. WINDSOR:

Yes, there were nineteen of you.

Mr. Speaker, as has been said many times in the House this afternoon, amalgamation is the real issue here. We are not against amalgamation. I say the City of Mount Pearl and the people of Mount Pearl are not against amalgamation per se. What they are against is the heavy-handed method that the Minister is trying to use in Mount Pearl and in other parts of this Province, to force amalgamation down the throats of the people. That is what we object against. There are certain cases, there are proposals that the Minister has put forward which are sensible proposals. The hon. gentleman from Placentia, I think, agrees with the amalgamation of Dunville, Freshwater, Jerseyside, Placentia, and Argentia.

The hon. gentleman will recall that at the 30th Anniversary Dinner of the Town of Dunville, in 1979, when I was Minister of Municipal Affairs I spoke, when it was not very popular at that time to talk about amalgamation of those communities. The hon. gentleman and I agreed upon it, and the hon. Member for Placentia at the time also agreed, Mr. Patterson, who is no longer here. I spoke at that dinner and said that I was not going to force it on them, but I strongly recommended that they look at it.

I said that I would never force it on them if they did not wish to have it, but I said up front then that I think it is in your best interest to amalgamate these four communities. And I still think that is right, if the people agree with it. If they do not agree with it, then I, for one, would never force it on them.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Mount Pearl, as I have said, is not against amalgamation. We have seen expansion. We have seen amalgamation. In 1955 the Town of Mount Pearl was formed by amalgamating Mount Pearl Park and Glendale, two communities that were in existence at the time. That was probably one of the first amalgamations in the Province. The Town of Mount Pearl was formed, and later in the late 1970s or early the 1980 I guess it was, we expanded the boundaries of the Town of Mount Pearl to include some of the Topsail Road area and Donovans Industrial Park and the Newtown Development area, which was part of the expansion of Mount Pearl. There has been some minor adjustments since, and we are proposing some more. And it makes some sense.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible) summer resort.

MR. WINDSOR:

Yes, Mount Pearl was indeed a summer resort, there were summer homes in there. It simply grew. That is the area now represented by the Minister. The Minister represents the original Mount Pearl Park. I as, Member of Mount Pearl, do not represent the original Mount Pearl Park or at least very little of it, a couple of streets. The hon. gentleman for Waterford - Kenmount represents Mount Pearl Park, I



represent what used to be known as Glendale and the expansion of the Glendale area.

Mr. Speaker, Mount Pearl is not against amalgamation. It is certainly against the proposal that the Minister put forward, which was a community of, I think, some 43 kilometers long, absolutely, totally unmanageable. There is absolutely no rationale for creating a municipality that large. We have nothing against the communities of Conception Bay South, St. Thomas or Paradise or the other Metropolitan Board areas that were proposed, nothing against them whatsoever. We are prepared to look at small portions of that. If the people in those areas, the people of Elizabeth Park, the people of Paradise choose to be part of the city of Mount Pearl, then the City is prepared to look at that, if it is in the best interests of everybody concerned. Mount Pearl is even prepared to accept a certain amount of amalgamation that may not be totally in the best interest, but it is in the best interest of the region. Mount Pearl has a regional conference as well, but we are certainly not going to accept the proposal as put forward by the Minister.

The first thing it would do, very quickly, is more than triple the debt of the City of Mount Pearl. Mount Pearl at the moment has a capital debt of about \$17 million and their debt service ratio is very favourable. Mount Pearl has never had to ask the Department of Municipal Affairs to pick up any of the cost of servicing the debt on the water and sewer system. The people of Mount Pearl have paid every cent that was required to put the water and sewer system in the City of Mount Pearl.

Conception Bay South, Mr. Speaker, is totally different. The Minister may have the figures and he can correct me, but I would say we spent \$30 million or \$35 million so far putting water and sewer in Conception Bay South. The hon. gentleman from Harbour Main (Mr. Doyle) and the former Member for Conception Bay South have been working very hard to get a water and sewer system in that area. It is one of the areas that needs water and sewage most in this Province. Because of the density of development there, wells and septic tanks are just no longer acceptable in many parts of that town. It is \$35 million, I believe, that has been spent to date. The Town of Conception Bay South is not even paying the interest on it.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
(Inaudible).

MR. WINDSOR:  
I doubt that. They are 20 per cent, because The Municipal Grants Act provides that a municipality can only be required to pay 20 per cent of their gross revenues towards servicing their capital debt on water and sewer, and the Province will pick up anything over and above that.

So what happens, Mr. Speaker, is that if you amalgamate Conception Bay South and Mount Pearl, immediately now the City of Mount Pearl, which is much more financially stable than the Community of Conception Bay South, which has a much broader tax base, immediately the City of Mount Pearl would have to start paying on that \$35 million; the Municipal Affairs Department would no longer be picking up that shortfall, because the City would not have exceeded the 20 per cent of their

gross income. There is the beginning.

And under The Municipal Grants Act, Mr. Speaker, as you well know, larger communities that collect more than \$2 million a year gross revenue, on the first \$2 million they receive forty-five cents by way of a municipal grant under The Municipal Grants Act from the Department. After \$2 million that decreases to twenty cents. The City of Mount Pearl is somewhere in the order of \$12 million or \$13 million. And Conception Bay South, I have no doubt, is more than \$2 million.

So, immediately, by combining the two communities together you still only get forty-five cents on the first \$2 million, let us say the first \$2 million that Mount Pearl collects, but the \$2 million that Conception Bay South collected and got forty-five cents on, now they only get twenty cents. So you have lost \$500,000 of revenue. There is where the Minister's \$50 million is coming from, Mr. Speaker. There is where he is going to save \$50 million. By amalgamating these communities his municipal grants are reduced, and by having larger communities, more financially sound communities, which is a valid and a desirable objective, those communities will be paying off the water and sewer debt. In this case, it is in Conception Bay South's best interest from this point of view to amalgamate with Mount Pearl, because the tax base of Mount Pearl will now pay the debt of the Town of Conception Bay South. But it is not in Mount Pearl's interest, because the people of Mount Pearl, who have paid every cent for the water and sewer that is in that City, every cent of it, or are paying off every cent on

the debt, will now be forced to absorb that \$35 million debt and would also have to find another \$50 million or \$60 million to complete the servicing of the Town of Conception Bay South.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the people of Mount Pearl have paid. In the case of a person who builds a home in Mount Pearl, they go into Admiralty Wood or to Power's Pond and they pay \$45,000 or \$50,000 for a building lot. In the price of their building lot, they are paying every cent of cost required to service that building lot. There is no subsidy on those developments, and the Minister knows that well. There is absolutely no subsidy. It is Federal/Provincial money. There is a partnership there. It is the corporation that has the money, has the capital invested, but recovers full cost. In fact, in some cases it recovers a little bit more than full cost.

But it is not costing the taxpayers of the Province one cent to service a home in the Power's Pond Subdivision or Admiralty Subdivision. But when you go out to Conception Bay South and buy a building lot for \$5000 or \$10,000, you buy a piece of vacant land and the municipality comes through and provides a water and sewerage system. I think it is only in the last few years that the town of Conception Bay South has even imposed a capital improvement assessment. I know when I was Minister I met with them and I told them they were going to have to start imposing a capital improvement assessment. You cannot spend \$100,000 putting water and sewerage in front of a large piece of vacant property and then allow that property owner to sub-divide and have ten fully

serviced building lots at no cost; that person should contribute towards the capital cost of improving and increasing tenfold the value of that property.

It is only recently that the town of Conception Bay South, I understand, has been doing that, and I would suggest that they are probably only recovering a very small portion of the cost.

So there is the imbalance, Mr. Speaker, and there have been no studies done on this. The City of Mount Pearl first asked the Minister's Department for information on the four communities. They said, well, if we are going to be asked to take in these three communities and these unincorporated areas, please give us the figures, tell us how much the tax base is. What is the value of all the property there? What are the tax rates and the property rates imposed, the mil rates? What service fees are collected and what other revenues are gained from those areas? The Department told the city of Mount Pearl they were not going to release that information. They were not going to release that information! Now, how do they expect the City of Mount Pearl to even make an intelligent decision on whether or not it was in their best interest to amalgamate with these communities when the Department would not even give it to them?

AN HON. MEMBER:

That is public information.

MR. WINDSOR:

Yes, it is public information. I could have asked for it under the Freedom of Information Act and so could the City of Mount Pearl, or they could go to these communities

and get it, but they said, Why do we not have the same data that you are basing your decision on? You told us you have looked at it and you think it is in the best interest. I would suggest to the Minister that they have not done any assessment of any financial plans of amalgamating these communities. There has been no financial analysis done. It is simply a scheme that was drawn up by his officials, the same officials, Mr. Speaker, who are now conducting the public hearings. How can the Minister expect us to have any credibility in these public hearings when the same officials who proposed these amalgamations are out doing the public hearings? There is nothing independent about them. They are still being directed by the Minister. They know what the Minister wants to do and they know the answers they have to bring back. I have great respect for those officials, Mr. Speaker, and to be very clear here I am not at all attacking those individuals. I am just saying that they are not free to bring back a clear and unbiased opinion; they are still being directed by the Minister.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible) commission.

MR. WINDSOR:

Sure. Sure there is, but who is going to really control the answer? Mr. Speaker, the real purpose of all this, as I said, is to save \$50 million. As a former Minister of Finance, I find it very difficult not to support any kind of scheme that would save the Province \$50 million. But we are not saving \$50 million, Mr. Speaker, we are transferring the burden from the Province to municipalities. If anybody can tell me that there is something

magic in the term amalgamation that all of a sudden plucks \$50 million out of the air, the Province saves it, well, where does it save it from? It does not grow on trees in this Province, not yet. If there is a tree, I would like to have one. It has to come from somewhere. It comes out of the pockets of the municipal taxpayer in this Province. Either that, or municipalities are forced to cut back on the level of service that they are providing. There is nothing magic about amalgamation. There is nothing magic about it at all. You can combine two communities and the only things that happen immediately, when you combine Mount Pearl and Conception Bay South, is that the municipal grant is cut back. That saves \$500,000 automatically, and the City of Mount Pearl starts paying off the capital debt that Conception Bay South has in place. That saves the Province dollars automatically, but it does not save anything for the municipalities. It does nothing for the municipalities. It does not put more services in there. It does not put more money in there. It does not lower taxes. In fact, to keep the same level of service, taxes have to increase in municipalities.

In the case of Mount Pearl, in order to simply absorb that capital debt of Conception Bay South we would have to have an 87 per cent increase in the tax rate in the City of Mount Pearl, to fully service that debt. Now, we could say we are not going to do that, we will go to our 20 per cent debt service ratio and the Province will do that, but the City of Mount Pearl has never asked the Province to pay five cents of their debt and we never

will, Mr. Speaker. It is a well-planned, well-run, well-managed community and the people of Mount Pearl are quite happy and well represented and well set up. I have been at it for twenty years in one form or another, and I am proud of it. It is a well-managed community, Mr. Speaker. It is a model for this Province. I would say it is probably the most financially secure, financially sound municipality in this Province, including the Cities of St. John's and Corner Brook and every other.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Wedgewood Park (inaudible) also.

MR. WINDSOR:

Wedgewood Park does very well because they have K-Mart. Primarily they have K-Mart. If Wedgewood Park were allowed to expand their boundaries as they asked to do about ten years ago, they, today, would not be financially sound, because they would have watered down this block of tax revenue they get from K-Mart.

And you have other communities, like Labrador City, that have huge blocks of money coming from a major industry. They do not have any large debt. The town of Grand Falls, for example, is secure, and it is secure because most of the original infrastructure that was put in the town of Grand Falls, including the stadium, was built by the paper company, so there was no debt to pay off. The City of Corner Brook is in the same way, as is the town of Buchans and Bell Island. All of these major industry towns, where the infrastructure is built by the industry, have a good opportunity to start off on a financially sound footing as they grow and

expand, as for example, the City of Corner Brook and the town of Grand Falls. Obviously, they are back into a more normal situation, but they did not have that original debt. They did not have that original debt. So it gives them a good beginning.

It is nice to start off without any debt, with a lot of infrastructure and a good tax base in place and no debt to service, unlike the town of Conception Bay South. And I am not picking on Conception Bay South, I am simply using it as an example of how the cost of servicing is horrendous. And I appreciate where the Minister is coming from when he is trying to get that under control. That will have to be dealt with, but you cannot do that by enforcing amalgamation on other communities and saying to the City of Mount Pearl, 'you take over responsibility for paying the debt in Conception Bay South and for servicing Conception Bay South and Paradise and Three Island Pond' - where I grew up as a boy, pretty well, in the summertime - the Topsail pond area. These people all want services.

And the Minister has a concept now of having different tax rates, having a different mil rate in an area where services are not the same. That is going to be very difficult to administer. I am not sure that there is provision in the Act for that. I guess we could bring an amendment to do it, but it would be very, very difficult to administer, Mr. Speaker.

How do you say what level of service is being provided? Are you talking water and sewer? Well, we pay water and sewer rates. You do not pay water and

sewer rates if you do not have water and sewer. So, there is a different cost, there is a different tax or assessment imposed. There is a different level imposed if there is no water and sewer, so that is taken care of. So do we say, Well, if there is no playground at that end of town we drop down by a mil? Do we say if the roads are not 40 feet wide, they are only 32 feet wide at that end of town, we will drop the mil rate a little bit? If the schools are in the other end of town, do we not pay as much? How do you vary the mil rate? How many factors would you look at to vary a mil rate to try to make it fair to everyone?

And what services are common? I mean, municipal planning, administration, garbage collection, street lighting, all of that I assume would be provided in all areas. And in the case of Mount Pearl, if Mount Pearl were to expand and take in all the areas as is proposed, in order to bring the rest of those areas up to the standards of the present city you are talking hundreds of million of dollars, hundreds of millions of dollars. And that is a valid objective, to raise the level of service in those areas to the standards in Mount Pearl, which are as high as any community in this Province, probably higher than any.

And I am always defending the recreation facilities we have in Mount Pearl. Mr. Speaker, all the parkways, the walkways, the tennis courts and the playgrounds were paid for in the price of the building lots.

MR. MURPHY:  
(Inaudible) Mount Pearl.

MR. WINDSOR:

Gift? What gift from whom?

AN HON. MEMBER:

The hon. Member's hard work.

MR. WINDSOR:

That is hard work in planning. The taxpayers of the Province did not pay for it, the persons who bought the building lots paid for those things. We put a few dollars into the arena, Mr. Speaker, into the summer games facility, into some the soccer pitches and the swimming pool and softball diamonds, and a few tennis courts. A few odds-and-ends we put a dollar in, I suppose. I do not apologize for that either, Mr. Speaker, I am proud of it. The hon. gentlemen opposite are jealous to what I have done in Mount Pearl. I am proud of it, Mr. Speaker.

But I am able to do it, Mr. Speaker, because the city and the taxpayers are shouldering their share of the responsibility as well.

MR. MURPHY:

What is the mil rate?

MR. WINDSOR:

Eight and a half. Approximately one and a quarter lower than St. John's at the moment, I think.

So, if we went to the super city, Mr. Speaker, unless the City of St. John's are going to lower their tax rate and shift the burden of the City of St. John's into the outlying regions, then, I guess, our tax rate would automatically go up by one and a quarter just to make it the same as the rest of this super city. I dread to think how high the tax rate would go in Conception Bay South. The hon. the Member for

Conception Bay South (Ms Cowan) may be able to tell me what the mil rate is in Conception Bay South, but I would suggest it is a lot lower than that. And I would suggest as part of a larger city your assessed values would change, Mr. Speaker. Your assessed values change as well, you see, because of the level of service and the whole strength of the community and when the assessments are done. Because there are two factors involved in determining what taxes are paid on a particular home. It is a product of the assessed value and the mil rate. So either or can vary the total amount of taxes paid.

And in the case of an amalgamation of Conception Bay South and St. John's, if your mil rate is going up, and if because of a larger area where better services are going to be provided, assessed values also go up and your tax rate, Mr. Speaker, the actual number of dollars paid, are going to increase very, very substantially.

AN HON. MEMBER:

What about your property value?

MR. WINDSOR:

Your property value goes up as well. There is no question about that.

And this is what I was talking about in capital value, and this is what is not always recognized.. Too few municipalities in this Province, when they install municipal services, get back that capital improvement cost. That needs to be done. Those who benefit should bear some portion. I mean, we could put all that on computer and do away with the Minister and his Department, if you were going to

make it that cut-and-dried, but you have to have a little bit of social conscience. Not every municipality can afford to bear that level of tax burden. And I am first to say that the people of Mount Pearl are not overly affluent people, but the level of unemployment and the instance of social assistance is extremely low, it is probably lower than most areas in the Province, maybe lower than any other community in the Province. They are young, working-class people generally, husband and wife both working, raising children and maintaining new, modern homes. That is the kind of society we have in Mount Pearl. There are other communities in rural Newfoundland, perhaps, where the average income is far lower and, therefore, the ability to support that kind of municipal tax burden is far lower.

So you cannot put it in black and white, Mr. Speaker. You cannot say that because a home in this municipality is paying \$800 taxes a year, that the home in community B, even though it is the same home, that they can afford to pay. You have to have some social conscience and balance that as well.

In communities like Mount Pearl that have been able to develop, and where the cost of those services have been wrapped into the cost of the building lot, it is included in the mortgage so that cost is paid out over whatever term the mortgage would be, that is a fairly easy way of doing it. There is no easy way of paying out money. But if there is an easy way, that is the easy way of doing it.

It is very difficult to go back, say in Conception Bay South, and

say we just installed water and sewer so we need \$15,000 from you as your contribution. Whereas you paid your \$15,000 as part of your mortgage when you bought a lot in Mount Pearl. It is tough to go to somebody and say go borrow \$15,000 extra and then start paying that back. It is a different thing.

Mr. Speaker, what we are talking about here again in this bill - we realize that Your Honour has given us great leeway in relevance here, but I think it is very clearly relevant that this amendment to The City of St. John's Election Act is because of amalgamation; we are talking about amalgamation here.

The bottom line is the Province is trying to save money on the backs of the taxpayers and municipalities across this Province. If the Province was saying to these municipalities, as they had to my friend for Grand Falls pointed out, if you are ever going to get Grand Falls and Windsor and perhaps Bishop's Falls to amalgamate, you are going to have to bring the level of services up. Our Government, the previous Administration made that commitment, that we would bring the level of servicing in Windsor, for instance, up to the level of Grand Falls. It is then reasonable to expect that the people of Windsor have a reasonable level of service, that if they are going to start paying more taxes - I think the tax rate in Grand Falls is higher than it is in Windsor - slightly, is it not? If the people of Windsor are going to pay higher tax rates then they will expect a higher standard. They expect the same standards. The people of Grand Falls are going to have to take over the cost of servicing that

municipality which does not have the same financial strength, then the people of Grand Falls have a right to expect that the level of services be brought up to their level, and so you are playing on an even playing field, and that is only fair and reasonable Mr. Speaker. Government should not be doing that on the backs of the tax payers, it has got to be spread. I know I probably should not be saying that, because the people of Mount Pearl would be paying part of that eleven million, and the people all over the Province would be paying that eleven million, but I think it is right to do, if it puts in place a municipal structure that is better for the residents of the community, it is more financially secure and sometimes Governments have to do that, that is why we have Provincial Governments. The Province has the authority to do that. The people of Mount Pearl are not against contributing a certain amount toward that sort of thing if it is in the best interest of the Province in the long term. Again I say the feasibility studies, Mr. Speaker, are very suspect, very suspect because of the officials who are appointed to those feasibility studies still being directed by the Minister, and they will come back with what the Minister wants him to come back with, with due respect to those individuals for whom I have great respect. The Minister has said municipalities will be forced to amalgamate if it is in the best interest of the region as a whole, well Mr. Speaker, in this region, the only city, the only community in this region as I understand it that has deferred elections is the City of St. John's, so if the Minister is saying that if his feasibility study says that it is in the best

interest of St. John's; then all the other municipalities would be forced to amalgamate into super city, he is heading for a rocky road. He does not have the power to do that. If he brings legislation into this House Mr. Speaker, to force a municipality against its will - we are having great trouble this morning finding out whether or not municipalities are going to be forced to amalgamate, the Premier says no, they will not, Government will not force communities to amalgamate, but what they have said very cleverly Mr. Speaker is that they will bring it to the House and let the House decide, so they will use their majority in the House of Assembly to force it down the throats of municipalities, and I give the Minister fair notice that he is going to be in this House a long time, trying to use their majority, and they will have to use closure to get that piece of legislation through this House. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. WOODFORD:

Thank you Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. WOODFORD:

I am getting worse than my partner now, I am moving the chair back and moving it side to side and the only thing I am not doing is drinking water. I would like to make a few comments, Mr. Speaker, on the amalgamation issue. Going back over the years, my participation, I suppose, and involvement with municipalities, not only in the District that I represent now, but also across the



Province and also across the country. When I look across at the other side I see a number of people who have been associated with the Federation of Municipalities over the years, and in order to be associated with the Federation you had to be doing something in your own municipality in order to be elected or appointed. I see the Member for Placentia, the Member for Carbonear, I served with the Member for Carbonear as President for a few years, and the Member for Naskaupi, the hon. Minister and the Member for Gander. I do not know if I am missing anybody but those are some of the people that I was associated with over the years. So it is not a case of not understanding where the municipalities in this Province come from, because one of the biggest representations in the House is on the Government side, certainly not a case of misunderstanding where small municipalities versus big come from. I must reiterate what was said by some of the previous speakers this morning, in the debate that is certainly not the intent that the Minister has brought in, it is not the intent of the amalgamation issue, it is the approach that was taken, like I said earlier, Newfoundlanders are, there is no doubt about it, a distinct society. We are, in every way. We have our own culture, our own ballads, our own songs, we have our own everything. There is no more distinct society in this country than Newfoundlanders.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

There is distinctiveness even among the municipalities. You leave the City of Corner Brook and

go down to Cormack and then up to Howley and back into White Bay. Just within the region and from District to District, you have a certain distinctiveness in each and every municipality.

So, there is nothing wrong with the intent, I have to agree. Over the years, nobody has been more vociferous on regional government - which when it all comes under amalgamation, I suppose, covers it all - than I was. I was on the Federation of Municipalities for years, representing small towns in the Province, and that meant representing 5,000 people or less.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. WOODFORD:

Also, as a representative for small towns in the Province, I was appointed the Provincial representative for small towns on the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. WOODFORD:

I will never forget a meeting I attended one time in Ottawa, where I gave an explanation of how some of the smaller municipalities worked in this Province. I also knew about PEI, and the county system in Nova Scotia and how hospitals operate under that system with sixty or sixty-five municipalities. But you had to speak as a person representing a small community who could equate with it. I spoke for about fifteen or twenty minutes, and I felt fairly uncomfortable, because it was my first meeting, and when you sit down and the Mayor of Ottawa and a Mayor from PEI and a Mayor from Alberta are all sitting

around the table, it is a bit hard to get up, looking at what is in front of you, thinking, what am I doing here? In fact, it was exactly what I said to myself when I got up. I certainly would not give in, I was not that type. I still went on. Anyway, I was from a small municipality representing 760-odd people.

Now, the representative for St. John's at that time was Andy Wells. He was sitting at the table. And about three-quarters of the way through the point I was trying to make, Marion Dewar, the Mayor of Ottawa at that time, butted in and began to more or less reprimand me for what I was saying about the smaller municipalities. Now, if ever you saw a pit bull mad, brother, I was a pit bull on two legs, I can tell you that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. WOODFORD:  
And when she finished and I went after her, I do not know if it was a good or a bad thing, but Andy got up and gave me a pat on the back. Looking back, I do not know if it was a good or a bad thing.

But I think the big thing here is when we talk about towns - for example, the town of Deer Lake has all the infrastructure; Cormack, Howley, Spillway, St. Jude's Nicholsville, or wherever, do not have any of that. It is the same thing around here: the larger municipality, such as Carbonear, attracts the business, and therefore, you cannot get business into the smaller municipality - which is good, looking at it in the business sense, you cannot blame them for it. But, still, you cannot expect the smaller

municipality to provide the same service as the larger municipality next-door which has the infrastructure to draw from. That is one of the things we have to recognize.

Another is that over the years, a certain animosity has evolved between the smaller municipalities and the bigger one in the area. It always seems as if Deer Lake is getting it all, or Mount Pearl is getting it all, and, over the years, animosity is built up, a dislike, not necessarily for the people, but for the system. And, then, when you approach them and say, 'You have to amalgamate,' right away, it triggers the feeling of 'I am not going in with Deer Lake, no way!'

The approach that I think the Minister and his Government should have taken is go ask, communicate, talk to the people first. Not after. Now let us face it, when it came out the preception was that all those municipalities in the Province were going to be amalgamated, period. And it is true. So after the big fuss about the municipalities in the Province kicking up and saying that we are not going to amalgamate and that is it, then let they had to draw in their horns and say, "Well everybody does not have to amalgamate. We will do it with some." Then even further because I sat in on two meetings with the Premier, we represent Districts that have common boundaries, my extreme District west is Hughes Brook and the two meetings that he had with his people in the Bay of Islands area, I was there on behalf of Hughes Brook as well, because it is just right on the road next to it.

And he told them at that time,

when the question was put to them, no, if you do not want amalgamation, you do not have to have amalgamation period.

But consider it a fair request as far as I am concerned. Look at the pros and cons. My question is why was it not done first. Why did we not go and say to the municipalities, let us do a feasibility study here, let us do a feasibility study there and see what happens. Then I do not think that you would have any of the acrimony that you have today. A prime example: I had requested two years ago for a feasibility study to be done in the Deer Lake area, concerning Spillway, St. Jude's, and Nicholville. It was commissioned and about to be started when the announcements came on amalgamation. It was immediately cancelled. The feasibility study was immediately cancelled. Something initiated by me, a person who was on the Government side for four years and yet that was cancelled. After the announcement on amalgamation the Town of Deer Lake decided to cancel their elections until next spring, then they said, "Okay, we will do feasibility studies in the areas that want it, and determine what happens from there." Then they can see the pros and cons. But even that has been hung up and the Minister may be able to answer that for me and take it when he goes back and just check with his officials. The Town of Deer Lake has been trying for weeks to try to get some information on when and if the feasibility study is going to be done. They cannot get information. They were one of the few areas of the Province who decided to go and delay their elections until next spring, and ask for the feasibility study to be done. To this day, as of one

hour ago, they have nothing, absolutely nothing.

Now we are getting into Christmas time, and everything like that, and there is going to be very little done between now and then, I am sure. Then you get into the New Year and you only have three or four months. I think that those people, who decided to do exactly what the Minister and the Government wanted, to go along and see what the pros and cons were, have the right to know and to get the people in place to do that study so that they can know what to do for next year. They cannot delay it a second time. They can, but I do not think they will. The intention of those people was to amalgamate in any case.

The other thing that was suggested over the years was, start off with regional sharing. That has been happening in the Province, more specifically in the area that I represent because we have been sharing ambulance services for years, shared and paid on a per capita basis. We have been sharing fire fighting for years, shared on a per capita basis. We have been sharing the incinerator, everybody had a dump. Everywhere you went, there was a dump. I was also a Member of the Humber Joint Council. It was always a very significant topic just about every meeting we would come on about the environment and it really comes out now, when in those days it was never mentioned, but just about everybody is concerned about the environment. So when the Town of Deer Lake applied for the incinerator the suggestion was made, why do not all the other municipalities chip in and we will do away with the dumps in the area, and use the one incinerator. The Town of Deer

Lake went along with it. Every other municipality in the area went along with it and the local service districts as well. Now, they use the one incinerator. This is an approach that was taken over the years. People taking the bull by the horns and saying, we will do this, we will try it. It worked, it worked well. Regional sharing on a per capita basis, everything was paid for, and we were just into regional sharing with regards to a regional water supply when this broke. That can be done in a lot of other municipalities around the Province without amalgamating, telling people what to do. When you have a small municipality with no infrastructure and forced, told to say, okay, you pay your way or else, where are they going to get it from? Will someone please tell me? The community of Cormack, for instance, 28 kilometers of byroads not counting the main road, serving a population of 768 people, spread out over an area of 13 miles long and 4 miles wide. And, to look at it another way, covering an area of 33,000 acres. Now, a small municipality that is going to service that. Does anybody think that Deer Lake, the town of Deer Lake and the people in the surrounding areas are going to amalgamate so that they can pay for the roads to be done in Cormack? No way.

AN HON. MEMBER:

What about Howley? Did they say anything about Howley?

MR. WOODFORD:

Howley was not included in it because of the distance, I suppose, but looking at some of the distances in other areas it is a wonder it was not. In any case, I think, some of the reason for it was the distance, and rightly

so, because it is up the Trans-Canada and in on the trunk road besides.

My colleague from Mount Pearl (Mr. Windsor) brought up a good point, one that I had intended to mention, and that is the grant, the forty five cents on a dollar. It used to be fifty cents and it was reduced to forty five cents so many years ago. In any case it was an incentive. The only thing about it is when they amalgamate now, like my colleague said, automatically that goes down, so maybe there is something in place to say that when they amalgamate the rate will go up to probably sixty cents, to at least cover the loss from each and every municipality, because once it goes over the figure of \$2 million, I think it drops to twenty cents.

AN HON. MEMBER:

It drops does it?

MR. WOODFORD:

Yes, to twenty cents. Those things were not addressed. The other thing, the question asked me by a lot of the municipalities in my area that were suppose to be included in the feasibility study, if they would come in and give you an example of what could have happened it probably could have been more positive and made it a lot easier on the Minister and his Government. If he had to say to those people in certain areas, we will sit down and talk about it, because the question put to me - for instance, the people from Nicholsville, if we amalgamate will we get water services in 1990, 1991, or 1992? If I thought we would get it in 1991 I do not mind paying the same taxes that Deer Lake is paying because we are going to get some services. But every question that was asked

could not be answered. It just could not be answered, and that leaves a lot of hesitation. They always think that so and so is going to take us over and we are not going to get the services. We will pay the same mill rate but we are not going to get the same services.

The extension on the elections in most municipalities, I do not know how many around the Province have done it but I know Deer Lake has done it in my area, and that could go up to a year. What happens if this feasibility is not done come April and the town of Deer Lake says we are not going to extend it another six months. So, I mean, that is something that is going to have to be addressed. Those studies and the independent commissioner should be the one to do the studies, because the people involved in municipal affair have been involved with those municipalities over the years, very close ties. And some of the same people have said over the years that you should amalgamate, we should not be doing this in Reidville or in Nicholville, you should be together.

So, their mind is made up, they go in with tunnel vision with the blinkers on and there is no room for compromise. And I think will all due respect to the officials, good competent officials - I have worked with them over the years, excellent. I have not anything to say about one of them - they are putting themselves in a position of compromise. They are going in because sooner or later it is going to come back to haunt them.

AN HON. MEMBER:

You have got to do something.

MR. WOODFORD:

Yes, you have got to do something, right. But I would think, and I would advise the Minister that he should, for his own protection and his officials protection, to put in an independent commissioner to do those studies. And I think you will see something positive come out of them, and the municipalities themselves would look and say, 'well, this is not someone from municipal affairs.' There is always a perception. In politics perception is reality. We have got to face it. They come in with someone from Municipal Affairs on that they will say, 'well look. He is working under the Minister, he is not going to go back and say to the Minister now, after the Minister saying you got to amalgamate, go back and tell him now, I do not think we should.' Some will, some will not. And I think that that should be taken into account.

You can speak for days on this type of thing, but one of my colleagues would like to have a few words. I would like to leave on a note with the Minister to check for the sake of expediency on this feasibility study, for an area of the Province that have agreed to go along with at least the feasibility study. And whether that will be determined or not in the final day, I suppose when the report comes in, whether they will amalgamate or not. But at least they asked for it. They went along with these requests, and I think they should be afforded the decency of having that study started as soon as possible.

So, with that, Mr. Speaker, thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Kilbride.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to have a few words on this Bill. And as most of the people before me said, it is not the problem I have with extending a request made by St. John's to postpone their election for a short time. I would like to see it a lot shorter than a year. And that is not the problem that I have, and the only reason is because that has been already placed in the Municipalities Act, that St. John's should be treated similar or the same as any of the other Municipalities.

I do have some problems with delaying elections, I suppose, out-of-hand, there are some reasons that might come. Wars, any disasters might be great reasons to delay elections for any one. But the fact that a Minister and a Premier of a Province want to force their philosophy or their ideas on what the municipal structure in this Province should be is not a great reason to postpone elections. But because the elected people in the municipality have requested it, I will go along with it whether I agree wholeheartedly or not. I will try to support them. I would definitely support them.

But I have several other problems. We have set up a good system this term in the House, and I give the Government credit for the Committee system that has been put in place. I must say when it gets in place more solidly, I suppose, it will be a good system to allow Government backbenchers, in particular, which I served for quite some time, and found it hard to serve there, and it will give the Opposition a chance to get a good look at legislation.

Now that is a good idea. And the first real important piece of legislation that came before this House, in this session that should have been put to these committees did not go. I find that to be troublesome actually, because the Minister does have a problem in time in getting this through, he delayed it. The Bill should have been brought before the House the day the House opened. There is no reason why a Bill of one page, two clauses, I believe it is, yes, three clauses could not be prepared in half an hour. When the Minister gave the City of St. John's permission to delay their election some sixty of seventy days ago this Bill should have come to the Committee immediately.

Now what an opportunity for the Members representing St. John's on both sides of this House. I am not sure that the people of St. John's agree with delaying the election. I have not had much call on it. The only calls that I have had are people who objected to the delays. But there have not been very many, I admit that. There is not a big lot.

My colleague representing St. John's East (Ms Duff) is one of the people who voted to delay it, and I respect her judgment. I would have to agree with her judgment. She did not get a big lot of calls either on the delay of the election. But if this Bill had been put before the Committee, the Committee which I serve on and the Member for St. John's South (Mr. Murphy), sixty days ago when it was known that it was necessary, the Members for St. John's could have held a public meeting and found out exactly what the people in St. John's wanted. Now we do not. We will go on the vote of the City of St. John's

because we did not have time to do what should have happened with the system we have set up in this House of Assembly now. I hope it does not happen anymore. I hope we have more time to work on these Bills. I would have liked for the people in my constituency to have had the opportunity to tell me if they wanted the elections delayed in St. John's. I know there is one Member, the Member for Pleasantville (Mr. Noel) who has problems with the length of elections in St. John's. I am surprised that he is not up here having a few words on this Bill. There are many Members over there, the Member for Mount Scio - Bell Island (Mr. Walsh) is effected by this. It is obvious that the St. John's Members on that side of the House have been muzzled. They are not allowed to speak on this Bill. They are not allowed to speak on amalgamation. They are sitting there in their place just taking heat for people who they should not have to. There is another problem I have with St. John's delaying their election, and it is a problem where being involved with the amalgamation issue as a critic for awhile I puzzled with, I could not find any answers, but we have several municipalities who are proposed to amalgamate with St. John's, from Bauline, I guess, right around to Petty Harbour, Maddox Cove and the Goulds, and not one of these communities have delayed their elections. Each one of them, I have a letter in my possession, say that they do not want to amalgamate with the City of St. John's. They are all going ahead with their elections so I do not understand the logic of St. John's postponing its election if there is nobody to amalgamate with. The Premier of our Province has said we will not be forced, we will not

force any municipalities to amalgamate if they do not wish to amalgamate. We do not have any municipalities in this area who said they wished to amalgamate with St. John's so we do not have an amalgamation according to our Premier. Yet we have a conflict with the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs who said that if his appointed feasibility study people would see fit there will be a forced amalgamation. I do not understand the conflict between the Premier's statements and the Ministers but I guess they will have to straighten that out amongst themselves. The only reason I can see for the big push on this amalgamation is there is mention of a \$50 million saving, a saving to the Provincial Government. I do not believe that is all of it. I do not have all the figures yet, but there are going to be savings to the Department of Municipal Affairs through the incentives grants no doubt, because budgets will go above the \$2 million limit. There are also going to be massive savings to the Department of Works, Services and Transportation when the larger communities such as St. John's, Mount Pearl, or Corner Brook have to take over the roads that are presently being serviced by the Department of Works, Services and Transportation. There will be other savings to the Provincial Government particularly to the Department of Transportation, but they will be transferred on the backs of the smaller communities in this Province, who presently get that service from the Provincial Government.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think that is fair. If a City such as Mount Pearl or St. John's or the Town of Grand Falls have to take on this

burden the people who have already paid for their services now in these areas, through buying their building lots, will have to start paying for the improvements and the services for people who have not paid their share. I do not think that is fair either.

But to get back to this Bill, I suppose, we do not have a great deal of choice in approving the Bill. The timing is going to be a problem though because I know there are other people on this side of the House who want to speak on it. I know there are other people representing St. John's on that side of the House who should speak on it, but I do not know why they are not speaking on it. The only reason that I can think why they are not speaking on it is because they have been muzzled.

Mr. Speaker, I see my time is near twelve o'clock, and I wish to adjourn the debate.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker, I move that the House at it's rising do adjourn until 2:00 p.m. Tuesday and that this House do now adjourn.

MR. SPEAKER:

It is moved and seconded that this House do now adjourn-

MR. SIMMS:

Before the Motion is put, I wonder if the Government House Leader might wish to be aware that the Opposition is quite prepared to continue debating this particular piece of legislation, today, if that is their desire in a co-operative way, if it does not

wish to have the Bill passed today and is quite willing to wait until Tuesday, well that is fine. But I would like them to be aware that we are quite prepared to stop the clock and carry on with a bit more debate and see where we go from here. If the Bill is of utmost importance to you.

Monday is a Provincial Government Legislative holiday.

So we are quite prepared to stay another little while and maybe the Government might be inclined. It is up to themselves. I wanted him to know that.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

I would like to thank the Opposition House Leader for pointing that out. I am not prepared at this point in time to go on indefinitely debating this Bill today. There is really no indication as to how long this will go on, Mr. Speaker. It is the kind of a Bill that should eventually be passed. Unless there is some indication we can get this thing through quickly I would just as soon adjourn debate until Tuesday.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Well, first of all we should agree to stop the clock for now. We are prepared to consider anything in a co-operative way, but can the Government indicate to us it is of importance to have the Bill passed today or not? Because if it is not, and the Government tells us that, then there is no need to



consider any further co-operation. We had the understanding that there was importance to have the Bill passed today and we have indicated to you now that we are quite prepared to co-operative in that respect. But if it is not of importance well then fine, we need not waste our breath.

MR. BAKER:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:  
My position is exactly as stated, Mr. Speaker. If there is some indication that we can get it done quickly I am very familiar with parliamentary rules and things that can happen and so on. And I do not really think it is absolutely necessary that we go on all afternoon and all night tonight and so on to pass the Bill. So I have received no indication from Members Opposite that this could be handled expeditiously, so hence the reason for my motion.

MR. SIMMS:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SIMMS:  
Mr. Speaker, could the Government House Leader answer my question. Is it important that this piece of legislation be passed today?

MR. BAKER:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. BAKER:  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

All Government Bills are important. This particular one ran into some problems, as I have already explained to Members Opposite. Technical problems which meant that the Bill did not get to the Committee, the Committees that were set up and did not get into the House as quickly as we would have liked. However, technically, I suppose, this particular Bill should have been through the House before the announcement was even made that the elections were deferred. It should have been brought to the House before the notice period for the elections and all that kind of thing. However, Mr. Speaker, the House was not sitting, and Cabinet gave approval after a request from the members of the City Council of St. John's. They requested that this election be deferred and the Cabinet decided to go ahead with it when the House of Assembly was not open. Now since the House of Assembly is open we brought the Bill in and there is no election in the City of St. John's on Tuesday, so I see no absolute emergency situation in this, Mr. Speaker. However, I would like to see the Bill passed, and as I indicated earlier, if I have some kind of a commitment that this can be dealt with expeditiously then I would like to go ahead.

MR. SIMMS:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SIMMS:  
Mr. Speaker, since the Government House Leader has been so humble to the terrible blunder that this

Government has faced, let me put out the olive branch as we often do.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. MURPHY:

Is there a rope on it?

MR. SIMMS:

Just a second now. Careful! I am going to put out the olive branch, I did not say I was putting out the tree. Just relax! I am not suggesting for a moment that the Government House Leader might want to send over twenty-one boxes of chicken wings from Knickerbockers. We are not making that kind of an offer or that kind of a bribe. It has nothing to do with any of that. However, if he wishes to ...

But let me offer this to him. Since he has been forthcoming and has explained they made a terrible blunder, I think he is trying to tell us in a roundabout way, and hoping beyond hope that I will make an offer like this, he is trying to say that they have to have this bill passed today. That is what he is really telling us and I assume that is what he is saying. That being the case, and since he has made the confession of the blunder, let me indicate to him we only have one or two, perhaps two maximum, who might want to have five or ten minutes, basically, on second reading, and then we are quite prepared to move on to the next step, whichever the Government House Leader wishes to do. As long as you understand we have made the offer, we are quite co-operative, then we will see what transpires. If you do not want to, then no problem!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. The Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker I do not particularly like negotiating in this way. However, the offer is still that we have one or two more speakers on second reading and then we will deal with the second reading as quickly as possible. However, as the Opposition House Leader recognizes, there is a Committee stage, Committee of the Whole House after that, which could go on for hours and hours and hours and could, at a certain point in order to stop it, necessitate closure being brought in and all this kind of thing. So there really is still no indication that we can deal with this expeditiously in the Committee stage, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. The Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

We now have an agreement on second reading, one or two more, and now the Government House Leader has come to his knees again and in his very unusual and strange way is now asking in a roundabout way would we then be prepared to waive the rules once again, break the rules once again, and move to Committee stage, which normally would not be able to be done until Tuesday -

MR. BAKER:

And third reading.

MR. SIMMS:

Now he is throwing in third reading as well. So now we have the whole gamut. That would

definitely be worth a couple of tubs of buffalo wings, or something of that nature. Mr. Speaker, I can indicate to the Government House Leader that we are prepared to co-operate in that regard without any undue delay.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. The Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Then I will withdraw the adjournment motion. And I suggest the clock which is now stopped, remain stopped for a short time.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Kilbride.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

In the spirit of co-operation, I will not continue my speech.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for St. Mary's - The Capes.

MR. HEARN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is amazing! We have just witnessed what has to be the greatest embarrassment that was ever perpetrated upon this House of Assembly, where we have a Government standing up - well, kneeling down practically, begging the House Leader to continue so that they could pass a bill which if not passed, as I said, would be a tremendous embarrassment to them, not because they did not try to ram it through the House today, but simply because they have had the opportunity for so long. The House Leader told us that Cabinet gave permission already, without any authority of course, thinking they could slip it through here in

the dying moments of the day before the deadline, and that we would all say, Oh, we are not going to object to this; we will not speak on it, we would not let the Minister be embarrassed. It is not a matter of embarrassing the Government or the Minister, it is a matter of dealing with what is an extremely serious issue, the whole principle.

MR. SIMMS:

They are quite capable of embarrassing themselves.

MR. HEARN:

They have done a good job of embarrassing themselves by bringing in bills changing the names of Departments. We have seen some heavy legislation here in this sitting. We have been here two full weeks and we have not seen a worthwhile bill yet. Housekeeping.

A committee which was set up to deal with legislation and which should have dealt with this, was by-passed and ignored and insulted in the process. So it is principle. And, of course, there are a couple of principles involved in amalgamation that also upset us.

I must say, Mr. Speaker, looking at the clock, even though it is stopped, when I get hungry I have a tendency to talk and talk and talk, and I am pretty hungry!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. HEARN:

I notice the Member for Mount Scio Bell Island has gone from the Chamber, and I presume his colleagues are encouraging him to be generous to this side of the House. If not, we might talk for

a long time - hint, hint.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned the word 'principle'. There are two principles involved here, one dealing with the bill itself, the extension of a year to The City of St. John's for its election. As a number of my colleagues have said already, I am not sure whether or not the residents, the taxpayers, the electorate of St. John's who elected people to govern them for four years and who might for one reason or another be quite upset with the council, or a number of the members right now, and who want a change, I am not sure whether or not maybe we should have a referendum in St. John's to determine whether or not they want an election. That is one principle right there.

The main principle is the process which is being used by the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs, and Culture, Recreation and everything else, the principle of ramming down the throats of people in Newfoundland what he thinks is good for them. The amazing thing, I suppose, is if you look at the list of communities the Minister drew up and then look at other areas of the Province that are not affected, the big question we could ask is why was the Minister so selective? We know that in certain areas he was selective because the will was there, perhaps, to amalgamate; he was selective in other areas because he thought the people in these areas could be forced to go along with his wishes; and he was selective in other areas by omission, because he knew the people in the areas would certainly not go along with his wishes and he would not have gotten away as he has to date, and

I say 'to date' because this issue is not over yet.

Maybe the Minister should have gone out diplomatically, like the Member for Gander, The Government House Leader, the President of Treasury Board, who was extremely diplomatic and meek and mild and can beg people to go along with him, as we have done. Maybe the Minister should have gone out to the areas that were willing to amalgamate, areas where for years they have been saying to themselves and others, it is time we co-operated. If he had got together with the Member for Placentia, who represents an area where, for a number of years, there has been talk about amalgamation, led, by the way, by the same Member as Mayor of Dunville; an area like that where, if the proper approach had been used, it would have been a lot easier to do what the Minister wants to do than the way he is going at it now.

There are a number of areas in the Province like that, where the Minister could have gone out and amalgamated these areas, given them certain concessions and help and all the positive benefits he is talking about. If he had shown that there were a lot of positive benefits, there were a number of other areas who were sitting on the fence weighing the pros and cons of amalgamation. And if he had shown that amalgamation is good for you - like cod liver oil - as good as he says it is, he should not have to force it down their throats. He could have shown a number of other areas, who, as I say, are weighing the pros and cons, that amalgamation is good and they would be lining up at his doors. If these people moved and amalgamated, then there

are others who would say, 'You know, a lot of people are coming together. Amalgamation seems to be working. Maybe we should talk to the Minister.' And he would not have to send a committee out to have hearings against their will, to ram it down their throats, they would be coming to the Minister and saying, 'If it is as good for us as you have shown through your generosity to these other areas, the benefits they have achieved, we want to go along with it, too.' On the other hand, if it were shown that amalgamation does not bring any real benefits, then the Minister would not be in the embarrassing situation he is in today.

So it is the process, Mr. Speaker, that we object to. The Minister must realize that just because an area becomes bigger, it does not necessarily become better. Sometimes by amalgamating you can save money. Sometimes by amalgamating, depending upon the areas and the individuals involved, it could become much more costly to service these areas. He must also realize that in many parts of the Province we already have a lot of co-operation. The Minister of Education well knows about co-operation. He knows that he cannot go out and ram amalgamation down the throats of the Denominational Education Council, and he knows what would happen if he tried to do it. He has to do what he is doing, going out, discussing, encouraging, promoting. That is the only way he is going to be successful at it. The Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs would do well to follow the example of the Minister of Education in this process.

There are many areas which share dumps, which share incinerators, which share fire-fighting equipment, which share municipal buildings, which share recreational facilities, but yet, they hold their own individual identity. In certain areas of the Province, in particular, this individual identity and control is extremely important, and they can do that by running things which are important to them locally individually, and yet they can share in things which benefit them collectively.

So these are the things the Minister should have looked at before he jumped. But, of course, representing St. John's, and sitting on the great St. John's Council, the Minister was not aware that these things were happening. And before he talked to his colleagues and asked the advice of the Member for Bonavista South, and the Member for Eagle River and the Member for Twillingate - looking at the Member for Twillingate, it might have been an interesting exercise if the Minister had first suggested the amalgamation of St. Bride's and Branch as a testing case, and see how well that would have worked.

Maybe he should have talked to his colleagues before he went out heavy-handedly and said, 'They are getting it whether they want it or not.' Of course, the Premier came out and said, 'No, that is not the case. Now, we have a real kerfuffle.' And we have one here today, Mr. Speaker.

Unfortunately, the people hung out to dry right now, besides the Minister and the Government House Leader, are the people in St. John's. We have no intention at

all of embarrassing City Council or the St. John's populace, just because these people were tardy in bringing in legislation and because they tried to ram it through. We, ourselves, I suppose, will have to eat a little bit of humble pie and leave all the many words of wisdom that are around here, that should be on the record about this bill, up in the air. Consequently, Mr. Speaker, we will have to let them proceed with pushing through a bill.

MR. SIMMS:

The Minister has five minutes to close the debate.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

If the Minister speaks now, he will close the debate.

MR. GULLAGE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The importance of this Bill, of course, is such that we do want to see it passed. I am not sure, really, what difference it would make, because certainly any election requires notice, in any case, and could not have taken place on Tuesday. But it would be wise to have this bill passed and confirm the fact that we are going to defer the elections in the City of St. John's for up to one year.

I could speak on and on, of course, about the benefits of amalgamation, which seems to be the topic more so than the deferment of this election, but let me speak to a few points raised by the Opposition House Leader, some questions he asked of me which really ties into the subject that everybody has chosen in any case, amalgamation.

The status on the discussion on amalgamation: I am not sure what he meant by that question, but certainly the status right now is that we have asked the commissioners, two in every case, to hold hearings throughout the Province over the next six months, or a year in some cases. Most of them are six months, the vast majority; some 90 per cent will be holding hearings within six months of Tuesday.

So the status of the discussions are such that we are naturally talking to the communities involved. We are helping them wherever they need help in preparing their submissions and their briefs. And I have said to my officials that the department is to be wide open; we have an open-door policy as far as information is concerned; they can access any of the information they need about each others town or cities, whether that be information that you can get directly from officials or staff, or whether it be information in our computer bank. Whatever it happens to be, they can have that information. We want to do all we can to inform them and help them in terms of preparing for the hearings which are going to take place in their areas, and that is true of Grand Falls/Windsor, as much as it is true of the rest.

I am not as the Minister, and the Government is not, going to enter into discussions or potential agreements, if you like, in advance of hearing what the councils and the people have to say at the hearings. I do not think that would be wise. I believe that is a question the Opposition House Leader raised, whether or not we would enter into discussions now about servicing,

in particular, in the Grand Falls/Windsor situation. There is a disparity, if you like, between the two towns as far as servicing is concerned, and also a difference in their mil rate. In spite of the fact that the Member for Mount Pearl mentioned that Windsor had a lower mil rate than Grand Falls, in fact it is the other way around. maybe that was just a slip. In fact, there is quite a disparity between the two towns in terms of having to pay taxes.

We have done some computer scenarios where even now, given status quo, if we do not do anything as far as any changes are concerned, the reassessments in Windsor will see a change in the gap between the two towns, significantly in that the assessments will bring up the revenue to the town of Windsor. If we reflected the mil rate by way of the assessment, it would be much closer to the town of Grand Falls.

And Grand Falls is aware of that. They are aware that if a proposed amalgamation takes place between the two towns, the change that would have to take place in the mil rate to reflect a fairer mil rate for the new town, would not be as great as they initially thought. And they agree to that it is obvious it would not be as great as they thought. We still have to address the problem of servicing, and we will certainly do that. But we want to see the commissioners report at the end of the hearing process before we deal with putting a proper procedure in place, a proper planning procedure for the new town.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIMMS:

If I might ask the Minister a question, if the commissioners' report reflects the opinions of those people who attend those hearings, and that opinion is that in order for us to amalgamate the Government should provide the necessary dollars for capital infrastructure, then the Government will then consider before any decision is taken on amalgamation? Is that correct?

MR. GULLAGE:

Yes, the government will certainly consider disparities between towns. We have a situation right now, Spaniard's Bay and Tilton, where the report is in to me, and one of the recommendation is to address the servicing needs and the disparities in servicing between those two towns.

So, yes, a very important part of every report of the commissioners, I believe, is going to be addressing disparities between the towns that are proposed coming together, and that includes disparity as far as the debt structure is concerned. We have many town, of course, that cannot pay their way, and, in fact, we are paying their debt charges right now. We do not want to unnecessarily burden another town if they are amalgamated, so we do have to address that. I do know that the commissioners are going to leave nothing out of the report, I would hope, in terms of what is being said to them, whether it be recommendation on forgiveness of debt, or whether it be servicing problems, planning problems, the need for equipment, and so on, and the list goes on. So we have given them a wide open mandate to recommend whatever they see is necessary to do a fair and proper amalgamation.

MR. SIMMS:

I can assure the hon. the Minister that there will be recommendations, then, from your commissioners, asking you to provide capital funding.

MR. GULLAGE:

The Member asked whether or not we would force an amalgamation in the case of Grand Falls/Windsor if it was recommended by the commissioner that the towns did not want to do the amalgamation. We would hope, first of all, and from my discussions with both those councils, that we are approaching a point where that is not going to happen. From a start where I think it was very negative in the minds of the councillors and the mayors in the Grand Falls/Windsor situation, after a lot of discussion with my officials and myself I think we have reached the situation now where it is very positive. Assuming we have a recommendation from the commissioners that indicates that amalgamation is the right thing to do, I think we will see a positive result from that situation.

MR. SIMMS:

So you are assuming that that is what their recommendation will be.

MR. GULLAGE:

I am assuming from the discussions I have heard so far that unless the Council for some reason or other changes its approach to amalgamation -

MR. SIMMS:

The people, not the council. The people will be going to the hearings.

MR. GULLAGE:

- I see that hopefully we will have a recommendation. I cannot

predict what the commissioners are going to say.

MR. SIMMS:

Ah!

MR. GULLAGE:

But based on the input of the councils into those hearings, if they continue to say what they are saying now, I can see that the results should be very positive for that particular amalgamation.

I do not want to go on any further, Mr. Speaker. I thank the House for the time we have had to debate this particular bill. It is an important one. It reflects the need of the City of St. John's to spend the time necessary to prepare adequately for the hearings that are going to be forthcoming in the New Year. I think it to be an important amendment to The City of St. John's Elections Act, a clause that should have been included when the Act was revised last, but was not for whatever reason, and now this is just simply bringing the Act in line with The Municipalities Act, and allowing adequate time for the City of St. John's to properly address the amalgamation procedure.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Amend The St. John's Municipal Elections", read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House now, by leave.

On motion, that the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole on said bill, Mr. Speaker left the Chair.

Committee of the Whole



MR. CHAIRMAN:  
Order, please!

Shall Clause 1 carry?

MR. BAKER:  
Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. BAKER:  
Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to move an amendment to Clause 1 of Bill No. 22. The reason is that there are two subsections of that Clause 1 that essentially say the same thing and appear to be a little bit of a clumsy way of making the point. Because this would simply have to be amended a year or two down the road if ever a difficulty arose with the wording, then I think it is better that it be amended now. I move that Clause 1 of Bill No. 22 be amended by striking out subsections (1) and (4) of the proposed Section 7(1) and by substituting the following. 'Subsection (1). Notwithstanding Section 6 and 7, the Minister may by order defer the holding of a general election for the City for a period not exceeding one year in total and the date of the General Election shall be set out in the Order. So it is simply a matter of tidying up the language in two previous subsections.

Secondly, 'Clause 1 of the Bill is further amended by renumbering subsection (5) of the proposed section 7 (1) as subsection (4)', because then, of course, subsection (4) disappears and subsection (5) then becomes subsection (4).

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:  
Mr. Chairman, this is beginning to get nauseating. The comedy of errors just goes on and on and on. The Government House Leader made no mention of this publicly. He did, months prior to introducing the amendment say to me we have a little amendment to present. Ten minutes ago, when he was up speaking in the House he said, if we had some assurances that this would move quickly and everything like that, and then he himself brings in an amendment which will further delay the process. Exactly what is going on? He did use words that I think are very appropriate. He talked about how clumsy the words were - clumsy - and I think that word describes aptly what has transpired in this whole process, and fits in nicely with other words that have been used, like incompetence, botched and ineptitude. They all flow and fit.

Having said that, of course, Mr. Chairman, and realizing that the Government has been holding over our heads through the Caucus Chairman over there, waving at us over in the doorways like little chicken wings and things like that, I must say with respect to the substance of the amendment - and, of course, we could go on and on and on as the Government House Leader knows - it is really very, very minor. I am absolutely surprised, by the way, that our very competent Clerks at the table did not mention this and pick it up earlier on. I cannot quite understand that. Perhaps I will have a private discussion with one of the Clerks afterwards and find out how come. Was this bill actually drafted by the Government

House Leader rather than the Clerks? If it was drafted by the Government House Leader, well, then, I can clearly understand what transpired.

Anyway, Mr. Chairman, there is really not much else to say about it. Again, it is another attempt by the Government to ram things through and on the one hand say, if the Opposition is going to tie this up, we are not going to proceed. Finally we succumb to their pressures, after being browbeaten, slugged over the head and everything else, and then he has the gall to stand up and say, well, now that we have them on the run, let us throw in some more stuff, let us make some more amendments.

MR. RIDEOUT:

I dare say they will call Meech Lake before the day is out.

MR. SIMMS:

You talk about trampling on the rights of members. This is a perfect example of it, Mr. Chairman. Nevertheless, hurry up with the chicken, please!

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

I just have one quick question for the Government House Leader. I know what you are doing in making the combination of the two clauses, but it seems to me that you are also going beyond what was in the original bill in the sense that in combining you are saying that the Minister can by order defer the holding of the general election for the City for a period

not exceeding one year in total, and that is fine, that was in the other two clauses, and the date of the general election shall be set out in the order. So when the Minister issues the order, the legal order to defer the election pursuant to this legislation, does that mean he will also then, at the same time, have to name the date for the election? It has to be within the year, I understand that. But what about if the City is ready to proceed in six months?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

My understanding is that the way the two sections read there now subsection (1) 'the Minister may order the holding of a general election for the City on a day set out in the Order. Then (4) said, 'the Minister may by order defer the general election ordered to be held under this section for a period not exceeding one year in total.'

It is simply putting the two together. My understanding is that that order is a subsequent order.

MR. RIDEOUT:

The order for the election? They can give a subsequent order.

MR. BAKER:

Yes, a subsequent order.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Okay. Well, that is fine.

On motion, amendment, carried.

On motion, clause 1 as amended, carried.

On motion, clauses 2 and 3,

carried.

Motion, that the Committee report having passed the Bill with amendment, carried.

On motion, that the Committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again, Mr. Speaker returned to the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Trinity - Bay de Verde.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report having passed Bill No. 22, with amendments.

On motion, report received and adopted, amendments ordered read a first and second time, now, by leave, bill ordered read a third time, now, by leave.

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Amend The St. John's Municipal Elections Act", read a third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper.

MR. SIMMS:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

I do not have the procedure in front of me, but was that the precise procedure that should have been followed at that point in time? I am not discounting the thing that the Speaker has done, but I am just wondering if the Clerks can tell me. Was that the actual procedure? Is there not some part in the procedure where a request has to be made for leave

to proceed on to third reading on the same day.

MR. BAKER:

That was done.

MR. SPEAKER:

I thought it was done.

MR. SIMMS:

I certainly did not hear it.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Leader of the Opposition just said by leave.

MR. RIDEOUT:

I said now, by leave.

MR. EFFORD:

Apologize (inaudible).

MR. SIMMS:

Listen! The way this thing has been going, and the way the Government has presented it, they have been flying at it, they have been going on a wing and a prayer, anyway.

MR. SPEAKER:

Just to make sure hon. members know, we shall read the last part again.

This bill is now read a third time and it is order that the bill do pass and its title be as on the Order Paper.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

I was tempted to bring in another order, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to advise hon. Members that we did order a couple of buckets of chicken. They are going to be delivered in a few minutes on the other side, in case

anybody missed their lunch and would like to grab a quick bite before they get back to their work they obviously have to do this afternoon.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank all Members of the House for their co-operation in seeing that this particular bill was passed today. I move that the House at its rising to adjourn until 2:00 p.m. Tuesday, and that the House do now adjourn.

On motion, the House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, at 2:00 p.m.

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Mr. Short, (Lib) .....	St. George's
Mr. Simms, (PC) .....	Grand Falls
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