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| ***Province*** | ***Législature*** | ***Session*** | ***Type de discours*** | ***Date du discours*** | ***Locuteur*** | ***Fonction du locuteur*** | ***Parti politique*** |
| Terre- Neuve et Labrador | 34e  | 2e  | Discours du Trône | 21 février 1968 | Fabian O’Dea | Lieutenant Gouverneur | Liberal |

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

Newfondland, through its Government, took part in the historic discussions of the constitutional future of Canada carried on recently in our nation's Capital. This Province was very proud of its right to play a part in a Conference that will assured­ly be regarded by the historians of the future as one of the most important assemblies of the elected statesmen of Canada of the past Century. My Minister at that Conference asserted Newfoundland’s determination to play an honourable part in the great task of preserving the unity of Canada, and you will asked in the present Session to give your emphatic endorsation ­of my Government's policy. You will be asked to consider ­legislation designed to give to all Canadian citizens in this Province whose mother tongue is French rights equal to those enjoyed by law by Canadians in the Province of Quebec whose mother tongue is English. Legislation to be laid before you will make the French language co-equal with English in your House. Other legislation that you will be asked to consider will provide for the printing of the Statutes of our Province in French as well as English.

I am quite sure, Mr. Speaker, that all honourable Members of this House and the people of Newfoundland in general will be happy to hear from me on this occasion that a turn-key con­tract entailing more than $60,000,000 has been signed with Litton Industries Incorporated covering the design and construction of the third mill to be built at Come-by-Chance for Newfoundland Pulp and Chemical Company Limited. This plant, popularly known as the third mill, will have an output of 600 tons of news-print paper each day. Two newsprint machines, each with a daily capacity of 300 tons produced at the rate of 3,000 feet a minute, have been ordered from the Beloit Corporation of the United States. Under the contract with Litton Industries Incor­porated the design, engineering and construction of the third mill will be done by Rust Engineering Company, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. That company are a division of Litton Industries Incorporated, and they in turn will operate through their Can­adian affiliate, Rust Associates Limited of Montreal. Rust Assoc­iates Limited are the Company who installed the great new paper machine which recently commenced to produce paper in the mill at Grand Falls. More than twenty United States news­paper publishers have joined with Shaheen Natural Resources Company of New York to provide a dependable market for the output of the third mill, and my Ministers therefore regard the mill's financial success as being well assured. The pulp and paper mill being erected at Come-by-Chance is one of the three large industries being established there to form the newest industrial complex in our Province, the others being a large oil refinery and an anhydrous ammonia plant having a capacity of 1,000 tons each day.

My Ministers have received the Report and Recommendations of the Royal Commission on Minimum Wages, and legislation will be laid before you to deal with this important matter.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

My Ministers have continued to concern themselves closely with the problem of providing adequate housing for our people. My Government, in common with many citizens, have been disturbed by the rising cost of housing and they hold the firm belief that this costliness is one of the most grievous problems in our Province today. My Ministers have constantly sought ways and means to reduce the cost of housing, and they are very pleased to have the announcement made on this occasion that two new factories are to be established at once for the construction of houses that are intended to sell at prices substantially lower than those prevailing generally throughout the Province today. One of these factories is to operate at Stephenville and in it will be manufactured, under licence, the newly proved type of house designed by the Aluminum Company of Canada, and generally known as the Alcan house. The Aluminum ­Company of Canada have in recent days, in a new factory erected in Ontario, commenced construction of the Alcan house, and the new factory about to commence operation in Stephen­ville will be one of the latest such factories to operate anywhere in Canada. It will produce a minimum of 500 new houses each year. These houses will be built to completion in the factory, and each house will be equipped with all of the basic household furniture and equipment, including electric range, plumbing and toilet fixtures, refrigerator and similar conveniences, and electric heat. About 200 men will be employed in this factory. The second factory will be at Bay Roberts, and it, too, will produce factory made houses, although of a design and type somewhat different from the Alcan house. About seventy-five men will be employed in this factory. Both factories will manufacture other buildings as well as domestic housing, such as schools, summer cottages, warehouses, relocatable construction camps and buildings. I am quite sure that I express the hope of all people that these factories will quickly prove to be the means of bringing necessary housing more easily within the financial means of the average family.

The amount of housing that our Province is going to need in the next few years is impressively great. Housing programmes will have to go forward in the Blackhead Road area, and in the Mundy Pond area. Housing programmes are to be carried out in Corner Brook, and in a number of towns and settlements where special growth and expansion are going forward. Typical of these growth centres are Harbour Breton, Grand Bank, Burin, Fortune, Marystown, Trepassey, Harbour Grace, Clarenville, Come-by-Chance, Sunnyside, Port Blandford, Glovertown, the Gambo-Dark Cove-Middle Brook area, Gander, Lewisporte, Windsor, Grand Falls, Springdale, Stephenville, Port aux Bas­ques-Channel, and numerous other places as well. My Ministers will continue to strive earnestly to meet the Province's needs for new and improved housing, at prices more within the reach of the average family than those of the present time.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

The diversification of our Newfoundland and Labrador economy, the creation of a number of new industries and the prospective creation of still others, are having the not unexpected result of producing a much higher degree of sophistication of our Newfoundland society than was heretofore known. This development clearly calls for reorganization, for the purpose of greater efficiency, of those functions of Government that impinge upon the industrial and economic life of the Province. Administrative responsibility for such matter as apprenticeship training, training in our various vocational trades schools, and in the Technical College, and the College of Fisheries, Navigation, Marine Engineering and Electronics is presently found in a number of Departments of Governments. The College of Fisheries answers to the Minister of Economic Development. Apprenticeship training is answerable to Minister of Labour. Administration of the Technical College and vocational trade schools vests in the Minister of Education. Labour and industrial affairs come under the Minister of Labour. Industrial matters in Labrador come presently under the Minister of Labrador Affairs. All of these divisions of authority and administration were practical and sensible when they were made, but my Ministers now feel that the time has come when a thorough-going reorganization of these functions is necessary. Measures will therefore be laid before you in the present Session for the creation of a new Department of Manpower and Industrial Relations, and the abolition of the Department of Labour. My Ministers feel that this change will result in a more efficient and smooth-running operation of these matters, the importance of which increases almost every year.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

Perhaps the single greatest source of employment and prosperity for our people is the forest resource of the Prov­ince. Many hundreds of millions of dollars have gone into the pockets of our people as a result of the starting of the two great paper mills at Grand Falls and Corner Brook, and hun­dreds of millions more from the same source will go into the pockets of our people in the years to come. Many scores of millions of dollars have reached our people, in the past cen­tury, from the sawmill industry as well. The third pulp and paper mill at Come-by-Chance, and the great new thousand-ton liner board mill at Stephenville, when they commence production in the next two years or so, will add greatly to the earn­ings of our people and the strengthening of our economy. My Ministers, in their strenuous effort to bring about the establish­ment of these two new mills, have had urgent reason to concern themselves with the problem of our forests: their extent, their rate of growth, the methods used to exploit them, the incidence of disease, techniques of fire prevention and of extinguishing fires when they do break out, and above all the economics of forest operations in this Province. It is imperative that pulpwood be harvested in Newfoundland at a cost that will enable the pulp and paper industry, and the forest industry in general, to compete successfully with the forests of other parts of Eastern Canada. My Ministers would reject emphatically any sugges­tion that reduction in the cost of harvesting pulpwood might be brought about by reducing the earnings of the men engaged in that industry. It is not along the line of lower pay or reduced earnings that economies and savings can safely be made in the production of pulpwood for our mills. It is, rather, in the dir­ection of improving the quality and quantity of our pulpwood forests, improving the economics of transport of the wood, and above all perhaps by increasing very materially the growth of our pulpwood stands. My Ministers appointed a Royal Commission to look into these weighty matters, and they spent months looking for the most suitable persons to be members of that Royal Commission. The Chairman, Dr. L. Z. Rousseau, came to his position as head of the Commission from the post of Deputy Minister of Forests for Canada. From the United States Dr. R. E. McArdle joined the Commission. He had been head of the United States Government Forest Service for the whole of that great nation. The third Member of the Royal Commission is Mr. H. J. Hodgins, Vice President of the great Crown Zellerbach Corporation of British Columbia, in charge of their forests and forest operations. My Ministers feel that it would be most difficult to find three men anywhere in North America who would be more highly qualified to make careful study of Newfoundland's forest problems. Their work will continue throughout most of the remainder of the present year, but already, after their work of last year, they are in a position to submit to the Government their first interim report. They have given considerable oral amplification of their written interim report, and their firm opinion is that the Government, in friendly collaboration with the two pulp and paper mill companies operating in the Province, and with all other holders of fee simple or other rights to our forests, and on the basis of fair and honourable valuations, should in return for cash payments reacquire for the Crown all the forests growing on the Island of Newfoundland. My Government emphasize their determination to work closely with existing title-holders with a view to bringing about a situation that will strengthen and improve the competitive position of existing and future mills. It goes without saying that the existing mills, and those to come, with their vast effect upon the fortunes of all our people, must emerge from any change made to a stronger position than they enjoy today, and this is the basis of my Government's plans. You will be asked to give your earnest consideration to these weighty matters.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

I said a moment ago that our forests constitute perhaps the greatest single source of economic strength in our Province, but the developments at Bay d’Espoir, and the much greater developments at Churchill Falls, reminds us that power is rapidly overtaking all other resources in sizes and importance. Quite literally the hydro-electric power that will be produced and sold in this Province in the next quarter of a century will be worth, and will receive, thousands of millions of dollars on the market within and without the Province. My Government have given deep thought to this great possibility, and always with a view to finding the way to give Newfoundland, her people and their economy, the greatest possible benefit from this natural resource with which Providence has blessed us. Legislation will be laid before you in this Session to deal with this great issue.

Only a very unobservant person could be unaware of the veritable revolution that has taken place in this Province, since the coming of Confederation, in the construction of new roads, as well as the rebuilding of old roads, and the paving of both. Hundreds of millions of dollars have been spent on this purpose, and we are incomparably better off than we were. Our population, however, is growing at such rate, and our economy is expanding so rapidly and is achieving so encouraging a diversification of its character, that it has become abundantly clear that much more needs to be done if our Province is to stand favourable comparison in this matter with the other Provinces of Canada. You will be asked to consider this matter in your present Session.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

A year or two ago you gave my Government authority to create a new Department of Social and Community Development, to enable the centralization of a number and variety of matters that had hitherto been the care and responsibility of several Departments and Divisions of Departments. It was the hope of my Ministers that the act of bringing these affairs to­gether in one Department would result in a considerable ac­celeration in the tempo of their development. My Ministers are pleased to find that this has indeed happened, and they are ready to present you with proposals of a very far-reaching char­acter. You will be given my Government's programme to operate within the ambit of the Fund for Rural Economic Development of the Government of Canada, as well as the Agricultural and Rural Development Act. I am sure that when the details of these great projects are laid before you they will receive your interested and intense attention.

Legislation will be laid before you providing for the reorganization of the Board of Liquor Control. It is perhaps inevitable that the rapid growth of our population, together with the growth and diversification of our economy, and the great degree of prosperity resulting therefrom for so many of our people, should have created the need for this particular reorganization.

There is a matter of considerable public interest which although in a constitutional sense it comes within the ambit and responsibility of the Parliament and Government of Canada, is nevertheless one in which, my Ministers think, the Government of the Province would be justified in taking a part. This is the matter of television reception in many parts, especially the more distant parts, of the Island and Labrador. My Ministers have become aware of a thoroughly practical device, not costing too great a sum, that can be installed in an area where, for geographical or topographical reasons, reception is presently very poor or non-existent, and will bring the quality of reception up to that found anywhere in the Province. In most of the areas where this difficulty exists, or reasonably close to them, municipal bodies exist, and it is the thought of my Ministers that loans of public funds might be made to such bodies to pay the cost of installing this appar­atus, with the municipal bodies recovering the cost of installing of the loan from the owners of television sets, who would doubtless be pleased to pay a modest fee for the greatly improved reception.

My Government's efforts to develop a strong herring meal and herring oil industry in this Province is showing encouraging signs of success. Four years ago, in 1964, when my Government commenced their special effort, the herring fishery yielded 1,800 tons for the year. In the present season, which is about half-way along, the catch is already nearly 85,000 tons and there is every expectation that by the end of the season the herring fishery will have produced 150,000 tons. My Ministers believe that even this large figure will be multiplied many times in the next few years, and they expect to see a large fleet of modern herring boats, employing substantial numbers of men, engaged in it, together with another large number of persons earning their liv­ing in shore-based herring meal and herring oil factories located along the Coast.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

There will come into effect on the 1st day of July the great Canadian Medicare scheme enacted by the Parliament of Can­ada, and this will be available to any of the ten Provinces caring to avail themselves of the programme. To any Province enter­ing into the Medicare programme the Government of Canada will pay one-half of the per capita cost for the year of all insured services furnished. Under the plan all services rendered by medical practitioners that are medically required would be paid for by Canada as well as the Province once the scheme came into effect.

It is unthinkable that such a great social reform should be offered to the Government and people of Newfoundland and the offer be rejected. My Ministers have therefore decided to take the necessary steps to prepare for the introduction of Medi­care for the people of our Province. It will not be possible, thanks to the considerable uncertainty on this matter prevailing throughout Canada in recent months, to complete the careful preparations that must be made to enable Newfoundland to enter the Medicare scheme by the 1st of July. My Government have decided that, contingent upon the Canada legislation re­maining unchanged, Newfoundland will enter the scheme not later than April 1st of 1969. You will be asked to adopt in this Session of your House legislation that would give my Ministers the necessary authority to proceed along these lines. It will be necessary to institute substantial increases in the rates of salary paid to medical doctors serving the Government in our Cottage Hospitals, District Medical Services and other hospitals, and throughout our Government service generally, and you will be asked to authorize these increases to take effect from April 1st next.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

It is by now well known troughout our Province that laws governing the matter of divorce are enacted by the Parliament of Canada for all ten Provinces. Your House does not have the authority, under the British North America Act, to pass laws governing the divorce of married persons. The Parliament of Canada have quite recently made substantial changes in the law of Canada in this matter, and these changes of course apply automatically to Newfoundland as they do to all of the Provinces. Provision is, however, made in the new divorce legisla­tion enabling the Government of this Province to request the Government of Canada to give power to a Newfoundland Court to hear and dispose of divorce cases. You will be asked to authorize my Government to make such a request. The request that my Government would in that case make would be to authorize the Supreme Court of Newfoundland to handle those cases. No Court in the Province presently possesses authority to deal with divorce, and all cases in this Province have had to go to authorities or Courts operating outside the boundaries of our Province. This fact admittedly puts applicants for court action in divorce matters at a considerable financial disad­vantage compared with Canadian citizens living in other parts of Canada. The new law recently passed by the Parliament of Canada lays great stress upon the desirability of reconciliation of couples proposing to seek divorce, and my Ministers attach great importance to this new feature of Canada's divorce legis­lation. They do not feel that this reconciliation aspect of the legis­lation can possibly receive from outside the Province the care­ful and sympathetic time and attention, or even within the Prov­ince at the hands of a Court visiting the Province for a few days at a time, that its social and personal importance demands. My Government will therefore lay this matter before you in this Session to the end that the Supreme Court of Newfoundland will be authorized to handle these cases in future.

My Ministers will ask you in this Session to enact legislation to outlaw the publication, by newspaper, radio, television or other such means, of any information about divorce cases, separation cases, custody of children cases or such domestic or family matters as may come before any Court or other public authority in this Province. My Ministers feel that this legislation will receive the cordial approbation of almost the entire popula­tion; indeed, of all but the most callous persons in the community of Newfoundland.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

Nearly two years ago my Government, having by then held office from the beginning of Confederation, and with clear per­ception of the fact that the first great phase of Newfoundland's Confederation was drawing to its end, resolved to launch our Province upon a great new wave of progress and development in all fields of social and public importance. They therefore created twelve separate Royal Commissions, and to each in­dividual Royal Commission entrusted the task of considering in depth a particular aspect of Newfoundland's life or economy. It is doubtful whether any Government in Canada’s history ever embarked upon so concentrated and intense an examination of a Province's affairs, or caused such an examination to be made as was done in this case. Nearly two score men and women in Newfoundland accepted the duty of making these extensive examinations. Nearly all of the Royal Commissions have now completed their work, and handed their Reports and Recommendations to my Government. My Government are profoundly pleased with the results. They do not agree, and it would scarcely be expected that they would agree, with all conclus­ions or recommendations of these Royal Commissions. Indeed, with some of the observations, conclusions and recommendations they disagree profoundly. On the whole, however, the results have been of supremely great value to my Government in planning for the advancement of Newfoundland.

Not the least of these Reports, but rather one of the greatest of them, is that of the Royal Commission on Education and Youth. Perhaps never in Newfoundland's history did any group of citizens devote themselves more conscientiously or with more effort to an examination of a great affair, and the wisdom of my Ministers in appointing this particular Royal Commission at this time must be apparent to you. My Ministers accept, and if authorized by your House so to do, will act upon the main recommendations of the Royal Commission.

Long before Confederation came to Newfoundland, the Churches made a noble contribution to the cause of education of our youth. Tongue cannot tell the nobility and greatness of that contribution. We would be a poor people indeed were we not to recognize the greatness of that contribution. And at the coming of Confederation it was written indelibly in the bond, that is the British North America Act, that certain religious bodies existing at that moment, and having certain statutory rights at that moment, were to be protected in the continued enjoyment of those rights. My Ministers have no intention whatsoever of asking your House to pass laws unilaterally expunging those rights, or without the free and willing consent of the religious bodies concerned changing the system in such a way as to violate the Constitution of our land. It is, of course, clearly a different matter altogether when these religious bodies, by common consent, freely and voluntarily offer to give up rights that they enjoy by Constitution and law. In that case it is right and proper that your House should pass new legislation designed to afford greater help and encouragement to the youth of Newfoundland in this matter. My Government have been in constant and intimate touch with the various religious bodies enjoying rights under the Constitution of Canada and under the law of our Province, and made it abundantly clear to them through­out that much as they wished that the Churches would volun­tarily accept the recommendations of the Royal Commission, the Churches would never be forced to do so by the Government of the Province. My Ministers have experienced great joy over the acceptance of most of the recommendations by nearly all of the Churches, and you wil be asked to adopt legislation giving effect to these changes and reforms, and our whole Province will pray for the success of these changes. My Government wish to make it quite clear that any religious body having rights under the Constitution or the law of this Province shall continue to enjoy and to exercise them if that be its wish.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

My Ministers have decided to ask for your concurrence in their decision to create a new agency of Government to take administrative responsibility for numerous matters affecting the youth of our Province, insofar as the Government have responsibility for them. These matters include a number of functions which will presently be found in a number of Departments of Government. The Junior Red Cross movement is one of most useful in the Province. The 4-H movement is one of the most valuable activities among the youth of Newfoundland and Lab­rador. Cultural activities among the youth, insofar as the Government have responsibility for them, come under the Department of Education. My Government, some months ago, announced an elaborate programme designed to encourage the creation and operation of recreational facilities throughout the Province, and administrative responsibility for these will have to be vested somewhere within the Government. Matters of physical fitness are presently the responsibilty of the Minister of Provincial Affairs. All of these matters are to be grouped in a new agency of the Government, to be known as the Newfoundland and Labrador Youth Administration, and that agency will be commissioned in the legislation to be laid before you to set up and maintain friendly liaison with voluntary bodies and ­youth agencies throughout the Province. Needless to say, the new agency, although it will be governmental in jurisdiction and responsibility, will maintain a friendly relationship with such bodies as the Churches, service clubs and others that have hitherto been virtually the sole agencies serving this great purpose.

Numerous other pieces of legislation will be laid before you in this Session of your House, and I know that you will give them your most assiduous attention.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

Estimates of Expenditure will be laid before you in due course and you will be asked to grant Supply unto Her Majesty.

I invoke God’s blessing upon you as you commence your labours in this Session of the Thirty-fourth General Assembly.