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| ***Province*** | ***Législature*** | ***Session*** | ***Type de discours*** | ***Date du discours*** | ***Locuteur*** | ***Fonction du locuteur*** | ***Parti politique*** |
| Terre- Neuve et Labrador | 34e | 1ére | Discours du Trône | 30 novembre 1966 | Fabian O’Dea | Lieutenant Gouverneur | Liberal |

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SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HONOURABLE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY:

I welcome you to this First Session of the Thirty-Fourth Assembly of Newfoundland. Our people have reposed their confidence in you, and I am confident that you will discharge your duty faithfully and well. As we are about to start the eighteenth year of our history as a Province of Canada, and you commence today the work of the Thirty-Fourth General Assembly, Newfoundland is entering upon a great new phase in her notable march of progress of these recent years. Never were the people of Newfoundland sustained by such profound in their destiny; never did Newfoundland face her future so resolutely and confidently as she does today. To you our people have entrusted the task of shaping wise laws and policies for the better government of our Province, and history will not fail to take note of your efforts in the coming years.

In less than a month Canada enters upon her centennial year, and Newfoundland, although she has shared for so few years in the precious privilege of Canadian citizenship, will join with her sister Provinces in joyous celebration of this birthday. In many parts of our Province, as in so many parts of Canada as a whole, communities have made plans to mark the occasion in a way that will impress it upon the minds of all our people young and old alike. In our two cities of St. John's and Corner Brook noble arts and culture centres are under construction. My Ministers have decided to request the University to accept, for the people of the Province, control and management of the Arts and Culture Centre in St. John's with a view to integrating the artistic and cultural activities of both institutions.

We look forward with great pleasure to the coming visit of the Queen Mother, and for many thousands her presence her will arouse happy memories of earlier times.

We have in recent months been visited by many tens of thousands of our fellow-Newfoundlanders across Canada, throughout the United States and the United Kingdom and other lands. Pleasant family re-unions and revivals of old friendship have marked Come Home Year in a way that will long be remembered by those who came and by all of us in this Province. The event was an outstanding success.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HONOURABLE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY:

Our Province continues to sustain her quite remarkable progress in education. Memorial University has on its campus today just under 4,000 full-time students and 800 part-time students. This total enrollment of 4,800 students makes our University one of the largest in Canada. We are most encouraged to learn of the expectation that next year there will be nearly 4,800 full-time students and 1,200 part-time students, or a total of 6,000 in all. This year's faculty of 205 is expected to increase to 260 next year, and we cannot doubt that the growth of our University will continue at this or even a greater rate in the years Immediately ahead. All full-time students now have their tuition fees paid for them, and fifth year and fourth year students at the University are now receiving salaries or allowances of $50 or $100 a month depending upon whether they are domiciled in St. John's or other parts of the Province. Newfoundland enjoys the proud position of being the only part of the Western Hemisphere whose university students enjoy the blessing of free tuition, and all of whom will shortly be receiving monthly salaries or allowances.

Third year students will, in the next academic year, be brought under the salary or allowances plan, and at that point only second and first year students will remain outside of the plan.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HONOURABLE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY:

More than three years ago my Ministers came to the conclusion that the public interest required the establishment and operation of a thoroughly modern and efficient Medical College in this Province. The Premier made this decision known to the people at large and in particular to the authorities of the University. The University has applied itself with great diligence to a painstaking study of this matter, and has spared no trouble or expense in its effort to put itself in a position to make a clear and unequivocal recommendation to my Government. Indeed, it may truly be said that rarely in Newfoundland's history has a considerable matter received such careful thought and study, and my Ministers are deeply pleased to have received, in recent days, from Dean Morgan, the Acting President, on his own behalf and on behalf of the Board of Regents and the Senate, their final considered opinions on this great issue. My Ministers are very happy indeed to receive this recommendation, for it coincides exactly with their own view. Newfoundland will, we know now, have her own Medical College. It will be a very costly venture, both to establish and to operate, but my Ministers are confident that the people of our Province will approve your action if you accede to my Government’s request for authority to make the necessary expenditures for this great purpose. Detailed information will be laid before you in the present session.

My Ministers are profoundly convinced that no effort should be spared to broaden and strengthen the basis of education in this Province, and in line with their broad programme in education they will ask you in this session to adopt measures to wipe out all tuition fees in all the schools of the Province. To wipe out all tuition fees in all our schools will be a costly step to take, but my Ministers have decided to take this course in the coming financial year, and to meet the cost of this reform by adding one additional percentage point to the Social Security Assessment. This will have the effect of removing the present concentrated burden of school fees from the shoulders of the parents of children at school and placing it more equitably upon the shoulders of the whole population. My Ministers have already commenced the payment of a monthly allowance to the mothers of all children at school, to assist them in the task of clothing and otherwise equipping their children to attend school; but my Government have noted that in many communities the local school boards have, in effect, captured this Mothers' School Allowance by raising the rates of school fees. This new reform will not only spread the cost of school fees over the whole community, but will make sure that the Mothers' School Allowances will remain in the pockets of those whom they were intended ta help. You will be asked to amend the legislation which authorizes certain communities to impose and collect school taxes.

My Ministers introduce this reform in the belief that many steps must be taken in Newfoundland to make education at all levels (primary, elementary and high school, university and all other forms) abundantly available to all our people regardless of the particular financial strength or weakness of each individual family. To the children of Newfoundland education must be made as free as the air they breathe, and step by step my Ministers are determined to move toward that great ideal.

One of the largest communities our Province now possesses is the teaching community, numbering more than 5,000 persons. Newfoundland can have no prouder boast than in his eighteenth year of Confederation, and no effort can be spared to improve the lot of our teachers as much from the standpoint of their levels of income as from that of their academic qualifications as teachers. You will be asked in this session to make provision for generous increases in the salaries of all teachers. You will be asked as well to make provision for a substantial increase in the size of the revolving fund created by my Ministers a few years ago to enable teachers to occupy suitable residences.

By the very nature of our modern society it has become altogether necessary to provide for many thousands of our young people greater and better opportunities for technical and vocational training, and we are indeed fortunate, in this regard, that we are part of the great nation of Canada. More than thirty million dollars has already been spent to establish vocational training schools, the Technical College, and the College of Fisheries, Navigation, Marine Engineering and Electronics. Nearly 6,300 male and nearly 1,700 female students have thus far enrolled in our vocational schools to a total of just under 8,000. At this present time some 3,000 students are in attendance at these schools, in addition to nearly 2,400 other students who are in part-time attendance a total of 5,400. To examine the tables showing the numbers of these students who have found employment in the trades that they have learned at the vocational schools is one of the most encouraging experiences a Newfoundlander can have in this Province today. The 200 auto mechanics, 160 carpenters, l00 electricians, 130 plumbers, over 300 welders, 130 draftsmen, 170 bookkeepers who have found employment are but a fraction of the large number of young men and women who today enjoy useful and profitable jobs that they might never have had but for the work of these schools. This is a movement, which is destined to see much growth, and our Province cannot fail to benefit greatly from it.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HONOURABLE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY:

My Ministers have always made it a first principle that any citizen must receive fair and impartial treatment from agencies of the Government. The Civil Service have honoured this obligation, but my Ministers are concerned that the ever increasing size of the Civil Service may lead to a feeling on the part of individual citizens that they are not invariably treated with the utmost impartiality, a feeling that is not unique to Newfoundland and Labrador. In Sweden, Denmark, Norway and New Zealand the Legislatures have created an officer to whom a citizen may take any complaint he has against the administrative process. This officer is usually referred to by his Scandinavian title of Ombudsman. The Government of the United Kingdom have recently appointed a similar officer known as the Parliamentary Commissioner. My Ministers believe that such a proposal should receive a thorough examination in the Newfoundland context. They accordingly propose to ask the House to constitute a Select Committee to examine all aspects of the question and to report thereon.

My Government have decided to enter into an agreement with the Government of Canada according to the terms of the Canada Assistance Plan, whereby the cost of child care, as well as services and assistance to needy mothers and assistance to other classes of needy persons, and certain administrative costs will be shared between the two Governments. This agreement will make possible a substantial expansion of public welfare services throughout the Province, and in anticipation of this my Ministers have already put one increase into effect for the benefit of some classifications of needy persons, and will introduce yet another increase in the coming months. You will be asked to give my Government the necessary authority to carry reforms.

My Ministers have decided to provide additional temporary accommodation for the Boys' Home and Training School at Pleasantville, and for the Children's Home at the former Royal Canadian Air Force Station at Torbay.

My Ministers have received a report from a Board set up to review and report upon all aspects of Workmen's Compensation, together with certain recommendations that the monthly payment to widows and to children under sixteen be substantially increased. Legislation will be laid before you to give effect to certain increases that my Ministers propose to make.

Before leaving the general subject of public welfare I express my Minister’ satisfaction that the Government of Canada have recently requested the Parliament of our country to authorize substantial increases, of up to $30, in the Old Age Security to persons in Newfoundland and elsewhere in Canada who find themselves to be in need of such increase. My Ministers believe that approximately 80% of those who receive the Old Age Security in Newfoundland will qualify for this increase, which will bring them to a total of $105 each month. Who could attempt to depict the good that this increase will bring to so many of our elderly people?

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HONOURABLE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY:

The end of this calendar year will bring with it the expiration of certain legislation under which the Government of Canada are authorized to collect a portion of the income tax payable by the people of this Province. Substantial and increasing proportions of the amount of income tax, both personal and corporation, collected by the Government of Canada each year are being paid to the Government of this Province and the Governments of all Provinces in Canada. In the coming year the Government of Canada will pay very large increases to the Government of Newfoundland under this heading, but it is necessary that you enact new legislation to give the necessary authority for the collection of this tax. My Ministers have no intention of asking you to authorize the imposition of a larger rate of taxation, and I am confident that you will give prompt attention to this legislation when it is laid before you.

My Ministers desire to increase the rates of salary payable to nurses and certain other employees of our hospitals, and you will be asked to give the necessary authority for these increases. My Ministers also desire to shorten the work-week in certain health institutions by reducing the number of hours in each work-day.

My Ministers desire as well to increase the rates of salary payable to the civil servants of this Province, and you will be asked to give the necessary authority for this.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HONOURABLE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY:

It is most doubtful that there has ever been a moment in the history of the Newfoundland fisheries when so much development and progress were to be seen at one time. One of the largest fishing concerns in the world, the Birdseye Company of England, has joined with a well-known local fishing company to embark upon a very great expansion in the Newfoundland fisheries, and after an unavoidable but useful period of preparation they are about to embark upon this great expansion. Another well known British company in the fisheries, the Ross Group, has joined with an important Newfoundland fishing company and launched a two-pronged effort at fishery development, in the salted and frozen divisions of the industry. British Columbia Packers, who are possibly the largest single fishing company in Canada, have in recent months greatly expanded their operations. They have recently built a large herring-reduction plant at Harbour Breton, and are contemplating the construction of at least one other such plant in this Province. They have brought a substantial fleet of herring-catching beats of modern types to our Newfoundland waters, and persons competent to express sound opinions on the matter are confident that we are about to witness a very substantial development indeed in that part of our fishing industry. My Ministers have recently joined with a consortium of important United States concerns to conduct exploratory and experimental fishing for herring, caplin, and sand eels in deep waters surrounding the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador, and to carry out a revolutionary new process for the production of high-quality fish meals. These two American companies are W. R. Grace and Company, Inc., and Litton Industries, Inc.

At Marystown, Atlantic Fish Processors Limited, the wholly-owned subsidiary of the well-known Atlantic Sugar Refineries Limited of Toronto, have built and are shortly to commence operation of a very large and modern fish processing plant that is to be served by ten newly-built stern trawlers of the latest type. Five of these trawlers have been built, or are nearing completion, in shipyards in the Province of Quebec. Construction of the other five is to be done in the new shipyard at Marystown. This shipyard may also be regarded as a significant development in our fisheries, for it will be capable of manufacturing ten to twelve modern draggers each year worth substantially more than a million dollars each.

My Ministers are not, however, content to assist in the rapid expansion of the modern, industrialized deep-sea fishery. They are devoting their attention to the future of the inshore fishery as well. That future must inevitably depend upon the industry's ability to adapt itself to new methods, new techniques, and new processes, all of which require new and improved boats, engines, gear and fishing premises. My Ministers are not satisfied that the average inshore fisherman is sufficiently familiar with the many ways in which the Government are willing and eager to assist fishermen to equip themselves with these improved tools and means of producing and processing fish. They have therefore, in recent weeks, appointed seven experienced men to be fieldmen whose duty it will be to move among the fishermen and to help each individual fisherman to make the proper application for loans and ether financial assistance. They will travel frequently and confer with the fishermen in their own communities. These seven fieldmen are presently receiving careful training before they engage in this important work.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HONOURABLE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY:

My Ministers have received, and will lay before you in this session, the reports and recommendations of several of the large number of Royal Commissions and Investigations instituted within the past year or so. It is not likely that there was ever so concentrated an effort to carry on enquiry and investigation into the problems of Newfoundland. There were the Royal Commission on Health, headed by the Right Hon. Lord Brain; the Royal Commission on Economic Prospects; and those on Electric Power, Education and Youth, Transportation, Minimum Wages, Food and Drug Prices, Pensions, Youth and Sport, Accounting Practices, the Tax Structure of St. John's, the City Charter of St. John s, and Workmen's Compensation The reports and recommendations of five of these enquiries have been received and will be laid before you. These are Health, Power, Transportation, Accounting Practices, and Workmen's Compensation. Reports and recommendations still to be received are Economic Prospects, Education, Minimum Wages, Food and Drug Prices, Pensions, Youth and Sport, St. John's Tax Structure and St. John's City Charter.

My Ministers have been informed that they may expect the first part of the report and recommendations of the Royal Commission on Education and Youth early in the coming winter. The Royal Commission on Minimum Wages, under the chairmanship of Mr. Justice Higgins, are to open their public hearings shortly. The Royal Commission on Food and Drug Prices, under the chairmanship of His Worship Mayor Adams, are now at the stage where public hearings are being held. The report and recommendations of the Pensions Commission are expected early in the new year. The report on Youth and Sport is expected to be received in December. The Royal Commission on Tax Structure in St. John's are about to begin their public hearings.

It is very clear that if most of these reports are received in time, and action is to be taken on them in your present session, you will be called upon for your greatest exertion in respect of these weighty matters. Your efforts will be followed with the warmest interest and sympathy by all our people, and the hope will be universal that you will consider these reports and recommendations with the most scrupulous care and wisdom.

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HONOURABLE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY:

The hearts of all Newfoundlanders were stirred with pride and pleasure at the joyful news that development was to begin in the Churchill Falls power scheme. Through long and anxious years my Ministers worked and planned this development, as now they devote themselves to the purpose of making sure that the law of this Province is carried out faithfully, in spirit as well as in the letter, in the development of the Churchill power. The law of this Province, drafted by your House, requires that Newfoundland men and materials, to the limit that Newfoundland is capable of providing them, shall be given priority in that development. My Ministers have commenced to carry out a programme of thorough and intensive training and re-training of men to fit them for the jobs that will become available to them in Labrador. This programme must be carried on continuously for many years to come, for it is a fact of great significance to our Province that there are thousands of lads in Newfoundland today who have not yet reached school age who will enter school, and subsequently go through vocational and other such schools, to work in Labrador ten and even twenty years from now, as the development of the numerous watersheds goes forward in that great territory.

My Ministers are deeply convinced that it is not enough to train or re-train men to qualify them for the jobs, and to make it possible and easy for our men to obtain employment on the Churchill project. It is, they believe, equally necessary that all possible steps be taken to encourage men to continue to hold the jobs once they have obtained them. My Ministers propose to carry out a number of projects to that end, among them being one that the Premier has already announced on behalf of my Ministers. This, with your assent, will consist of generous payments out of the Treasury toward the cost of enabling the workers to make fairly frequent return to their homes so as to relieve the monotony of work in the wilderness and encourage them to return to their jobs.

My Ministers are determined that the great hinterland of Labrador, which contains not alone the Churchill and other watersheds, but other forms of great natural wealth, shall have its own front-door, so to speak, through which entry and exit may easily be made, within the boundaries of our own Province. This is surely an objective with which no reasonable person anywhere is likely to disagree. It is for this reason that my Government have decided to proceed without delay with the building of that section of the great Labrador highway, which extends from Goose Airport to Churchill Falls, a distance of nearly 200 miles. Tenders will be called in the coming winter so that contracts may be let and work commenced as soon as the break-up comes in the spring. It is my Government's hope that contracts may be awarded to five or six or even more contractors during the coming winter. In the meanwhile, my Ministers, in an effort to prevent the loss of over half of 1967 in the building of that road, have arranged for at least two shiploads of road-building machinery and equipment to be landed at Goose Airport during this pre­ sent month, before the close of navigation in Lake Melville. The machinery will thus be on hand and available to contractors who wish to purchase it.

My Ministers have decided also to advance the commencement of construction of this great highway by building almost immediately what is known as a "tote" road from Goose Airport along the route of the proposed road, to enable machinery and equipment to proceed up-stream to the points at which the various contractors will commence their construction. Tenders for the building of this tote road will be called within a few days.

The building of this great highway from the sea to the Churchill site is a thrilling challenge to the energy and capacity of Newfoundland, and to the imagination of great Canada. It will be a highway into the heart of the last great storehouse of undeveloped natural wealth remaining on this Continent, and Canada herself must become a greater nation because of the development of those resources. There would thus appear to be ample justification for Canada's sharing in the building of this great highway.

It is the view of my Ministers that the principal advantage to Newfoundland of the great electric power development in Labrador will lie not mainly in the sums of money that will flow directly into the Treasury of the Province from the development by way of royalties, taxes, and dividends; nor from wages paid to Newfoundlanders employed in the construction programme; nor in income derived from sales of Newfoundland goods or services in the development. The main advantage must be the industries that will be attracted to our Province by their ability to purchase, at very low prices, massive amounts of electricity. Indeed, it is my Government's view that if, to make that power cheap enough to ensure the growth of new industries to use it, it became necessary to use a substantial portion of the money income derived directly from the development, such use of the direct income would be justified. There are many types of industry that can operate successfully only upon the basis of their consuming great quantities of electric energy obtained at very economical prices, and it is these that my Ministers are endeavouring to bring into our Province. The type of industry that occurs instantly to the minds of most people is the making of aluminum, but there are numerous other industries that are equally in need of large amounts of energy purchasable at very low prices. The money income coming directly from the Churchill development so spent would not be lost to the Treasury for any appreciable period of time before re-appearing as income from the new industries thereby established.

You will be asked in this session to consider many pieces of drafted legislation, with a view to their enactment. Among them are: The Adoption of Children (Amendment) Act, The Big Nama Creek Mines Agreement Act, The Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada Limited (Agreement) Act, The Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing Act, The Department of Supply Act, The C. A. Pippy Park Act, The Education (Amendment) Act, The Education (Teaching Training) (Amendment) Act, The Harbour Grace Golf Course Act, The Harmon Corporation Act, The Income Tax (Amendment) Act, The Legislative Disabilities (Amendment) Act, The Local Government (Amendment) Act, The Motor Carrier (Amendment) Act, The Newfoundland Municipal Financing Corporation (Amendment) Act, The Parliamentary Assistant Act, The Patino Mining Corporation (Agreement) Act, The St. John's (Metropolitan Area) (Amendment) Act, The University Fees and Allowances Act, The Department of Health Act, The Trustee (Amendment) Act, The Crown Lands (Amendment) Act, The Food and Drug (Amendment) Act, The Memorial University (Reservation of Lands) Act, The Family Courts (Amendment) Act, The Newfoundland Marine Works Limited (Agreement) Act, and The International Fisheries & Fishmeal, Ltd., (Agreement) Act.

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 First Session of the Thirty-Fourth General Assembly.