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SPEAKER: THE HONOURABLE JAMES M. RUSSELL

The House met at 3:00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Order! The honourable the Minister of Tourism.

HON. T.M.DOYLE (Minister of Tourism): Mr. Speaker, I have a statement I wish to make at this time. On Friday past, March 30, an article appeared on page (1) of the St. John's "Evening Telegram" under the heading; "Tourism Department gives French Tourist Run-around." The article purports to describe a set of bizarre circumstances, which members of my staff are accused of giving the gentleman in question, a Captain G. Lesney. The story claims that Captain Lesney was switched around to about ten different people. In fairness to members of my staff who are mentioned in the article and others who were involved, I feel that I am completely justified in hereby condemning the article in the "Evening Telegram" as a complete misrepresentation of the actual facts. To make matters worse, nobody from that newspaper contacted any of my officials to find out if in fact this gentleman's story was correct.

Attached to this statement is a photocopy of the actual story from the "Telegram" and I will now set forth the true facts. A comparison of my story and the newspaper's story will show that this is an example of irresponsible reporting on behalf of this newspaper.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. DOYLE: I am not having an off day, gentlemen. On Wednesday last, March 28, at approximately 3:00 p.m., the Tourist Services Division of my department received a telephone call from a person who said that he was interested in going fishing and that he would be calling at the office in Elizabeth Towers shortly to discuss details. Shortly before 5:00 p.m., that is an hour and a-half later, a Captain Lesney arrived at the office of the Tourist Services Division and was shown into Mr. Bruce Metcalf's office, as in his position in the information services of this division, this type of inquiry is part of Mr. Metcalf's

normal duties.

At the time Captain Lesney arrived at Mr. Metcalfe's office Mr. Metcalfe was in the midst of a telephone conversation which took approximately five minutes to complete. During this waiting period, Mr. Forward of the division spoke briefly with the gentleman. Mr. Metcalf then attempted to point out to Captain Lesney that guides are not readily available at this time of the year and, while still offering Captain Lesney any possible assistance, suggested to him that this was not the ideal time to undertake a fishing trip, unless he intended to go ice fishing, (which he did not) and even this might be hazardous on certain ponds and lakes.

Mr. Metcalf pointed out to the Captain that the Wildlife Division of the department maintains an index of guides and if he (the Captain) knew exactly where he wished to fish, Mr. Metcalf would undertake to secure names of several guides in that area. Captain Lesney then decided that he should discuss this list with a representative of the Wildlife Division and shortly after 5:15 p.m., Mr. Metcalf telephoned the office of the director of wildlife, Mr. Pike in this building to see whether or not he was in. Mr. Pike's secretary told Mr. Metcalf that Mr. Pike would be in his office until 5:30 p.m. Mr. Metcalf informed Captain Lesney of this but suggested that in view of the time which was now approximately 5:20 p.m. the unusual traffic conditions around Confederation Building at that time and the fact that he had to get a taxi, he suggested that he call on Mr. Pike at Confederation Building early the next morning. At no time did Mr. Metcalf tell Captain Lesney that Mr. Pike would be waiting for him in the building.

Mr. Pike was in fact in his office until slightly after 5:30 p.m., up to which time Captain Lesney had not arrived. Due to a previous commitment, Mr. Pike then left his office. Apparently, the Captain arrived at Mr. Pike's office at approximately 5:35 p.m. and became quite upset to learn that Mr. Pike was not there. I should

emphasize again that at no time was the Captain given a positive appointment with Mr. Pike because of the obvious time lapse that was involved in getting from Elizabeth Towers to Confederation Building at that time of the afternoon.

I understand that Captain Lesney then proceeded to the office of Mr. Manuel, my deputy minister where he arrived at approximately 5:40 p.m. and was told that Mr. Manuel had just left. Captain Lesney then proceeded to the lobby outside the House of Assembly and at approximately 5:45 p.m. I was informed by one of the commissionaires that there was a gentleman outside wishing to see me.

I immediately went out to the lobby and spoke with Captain Lesney, listened to his story, told him that there was not much that could be done at that particular time of the day but assured him that I would make the necessary arrangements for him the first thing the next morning. I also apologized for any inconvenience he may have suffered. I ascertained that the Captain was staying at the Hotel Newfoundland but as soon as I mentioned wanting to assist him the next morning, he informed me that he and his friends were returning to Montreal on the first available flight.

On the following morning, Thursday, I discussed the situation with my officials and satisfied myself that the facts as given to me by Captain Lesney were grossly exaggerated. The next thing I knew was the appearance of the article in Friday's "Evening Telegram." It is unfortunate that situations like this arise from time to time but I feel I should point out that obviously Captain Lesney is not a sportsman in the true sense of the word or he would have realized the implications of fishing in Newfoundland at this time of the year.

However, the most unfortunate thing about the whole situation is the fact that the "Evening Telegram" chose to accept one side of the story, which was grossly exaggerated, and did not bother to check on the actual facts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. J.C.CROSBIE (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I want to clear up a matter that arose yesterday on equal pay for equal work. I would like to make the following statement:

On March 3, 1971, the former administration which shall be nameless) announced the introduction of a new Human Right's Code and the adoption of a policy of equal pay for equal work for male and female employees across the province. They announced it. On April 1, 1971, the former administration introduced a new classification and pay plan for the public service. Included in the cost of implementing the new pay plan was a provision for equal pay for equal work. Prior to the implementation of the new pay plan, government had paid men employees in certain classifications a higher salary than female employees doing similar work. With the announcement of the Human Right's Code and the introduction of the new pay plan, all persons employed in the same classification were implemented on to the same pay scale. However, since male employees were being paid more prior to April 1, 1971, the application of the implementation formula resulted in male employees being placed on a higher step in the new scales than their female counterparts doing the same work and having the same number of years of service. Therefore, it is obvious that the policy implemented by the former administration was not equal pay for equal work but rather equal pay scales for equal work.

During salary negotiations last year, the question arose as to whether placing the employees on the same pay scale was sufficient to comply with the Human Right's Code. Treasury Board's negotiating committee at that time made it clear that the matter would be raised with the people administering the code, for an interpretation. A legal opinion was sought from the Department of Justice and it confirmed that the past government practice did not in fact comply with the intent of the code. An action was immediately initiated to correct the situation.

In the summer of 1972, Treasury Board investigated situations involving possible violations of the Human Right's Code in government service and after a detailed study of payroll records, carried out by the payroll division of the Department of Finance, it was revealed that over 700 employees paid directly by government and 550 employees in board operated hospitals required salary adjustments to accord with the Human Right's Code.

Effective September 1, 1971, which is the date of the proclamation of the Human Right's Code, adjustments were made in the salaries of these employees at an approximate cost of \$725,000 to the government. In other words, Mr. Speaker, we adjusted this situation to ensure equal pay for equal work and made it retroactive to September 1, 1971, which cost \$725,000.

Then we had further complaints. Based on a legal interpretation by the Department of Justice, these adjustments applied to individual government establishments or institutions rather than the government as a whole. This interpretation which we still believe to be correct legally, nevertheless caused some salary anomalies, particularly in institution where there are no male employees. In other words, the legal interpretation was that this applied to each institution, not throughout the service, so that if you had an institution with no...

AN HON. MEMBER: Are there any such institutions?

MR. CROSBIE: Yes, there are, apparently. There are a number where there are no male employees in the same classification. As a result, this caused anomalies, especially in institutions where there are no male employees. As a result, in January 1973, treasury board initiated a

further study the results of which recommended that pay for equal work policy should apply to all government employees and all institutions whether or not there are any male employees in the institution. The government is now in the process of making further retroactive adjustments to approximately 130 employees, mainly in the classifications of nursing assistants, operating room technicians and cooks. The cost of these adjustments is estimated at \$80,000, making a total of \$800,000.

In conclusion, by way of summary, I should like to state that it is the policy of the Progressive Conservative Government that equal pay for equal work applies across the public service and that in order to create the unanimous situation introduced by the previous administration, which resulted in an equal scales for equal work policy, the government has made and will be making retroactive salary adjustments costing \$805,000.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, let me thank the honourable gentleman for his statement. Let me say that on this side we welcome the news that the Progressive Conservative Administration are carrying on the policy adopted by the Liberal Administration. We regret that it has taken them so long to implement it. The Proclamation of the Human Rights Code was made in September, 1971. Shortly thereafter the people of this province were consulted as to their wishes as to who should be their government. The result was inconclusive and in the up shot, as we are all aware, it was January the 18th before the matter was settled, January 18, 1972.

All that the minister has said, no matter how he chooses to guild it, is that in applying the code the various legal opinions had to be sought and the various anomalies that evolved out of the actual state of events had to be set straight. So, it has taken them a year and a-half to do it. That does not strike me as unusual. The heraldic news is that they have carried through with the Liberal policy, equal pay for equal work.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

HON. J.C. CROSBIE: (MINISTER OF FINANCE): Mr. Speaker, if we are going to have the rules observed in this House, I want the honourable Leader of the Opposition to withdraw the remark made a minute ago, that I have lied again.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, if the honourable gentleman says that we adopted a policy that was not the policy that we adopted, then he is lying. It is that simple.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, that is not the point at all. I have stated that the policy they adopted was not equal pay for equal work. That is not a lie. The honourable gentleman can say, if he likes, that it is a mistaken opinion. It is not a lie and the use of the word "lie" is unparliamentary. Now, if we are going to have the rules observed in this House, let us have them observed. If the honourable Leader of the Opposition did use unparliamentary words, then he should be suspended as should anybody else who violates the rules of the House.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I am all for the rules of the House being observed and I am quite aware of what happens. If the honourable gentleman did make a statement that is incorrect then that is a terminological inexactitude but if he made that statement deliberately and knowing it is incorrect, then I say that is a lie. If he did not know it was incorrect when he made it, then it is not a lie. The honourable gentleman made a statement which is incorrect. I am quite willing to give him the benefit of the doubt and say that he was sufficiently ignorant of the true state of affairs to realize that it was incorrect when he made it. The statement was incorrect.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, I have been called a liar in this House. Now is that going to be withdrawn or not? That is the question. It is not terminological inexactitudes or mistakes or anything else. The word "liar" has been used about me in this House. I want it withdrawn and the honourable gentleman should withdraw it or the proper procedure follow.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, let me again say that if the honourable gentleman made the statement not realizing it was incorrect then I have no hesitation in withdrawing the term "liar" as applied to him. If however he made an incorrect statement knowing it was incorrect, it is a plain matter of fact by any definition that that is a lie. If the honourable gentleman says that he did not realize - am I allowed to make a statement without harassment from - if the honourable gentleman, Mr. Speaker, made a statement not realizing that it was an incorrect statement, I am quite willing to withdraw. That is merely a mistake in a statement. I have no hesitation at all in withdrawing it then. If however he made a statement knowing it was incorrect, then that is a different matter altogether.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, I am not satisfied.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. CROSBIE: I would like to address myself to this first. Either the appellation that I am a liar should be withdrawn unreservedly, with none of this fooling around or cuteness, or it should not be. If the rules in this House permit us to call one another liars, then that is the rule from now on. If not, I want that withdrawn unequivocally, as Beauchesne and every other parliamentary authority dictates.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable the Minister of Finance is quite correct. The honourable the Leader of the Opposition has on numerous occasions, on at least three different occasions, used the word "liar". I think that this practice has gone on long enough and I am now calling upon him to retract the statement.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, if you direct me to, I shall, but that does not change my belief. My belief is that if the honourable gentleman -

MR. SPEAKER: I call upon the honourable the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw the statement.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I have already said that I shall do as you direct. Because you direct, I do it, but I am still allowed to state that if the honourable gentleman made an incorrect statement knowingly

then that is an incorrect statement knowingly and one can look up ones own definition of it. I have my own views on what it is. It is at best a terminological inexactitude. We are not allowed to knowingly make incorrect statements. That is not a matter of opinion, that is a matter of fact, curtesy, precedents and lodgic.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, I have just read a statement which sets out the position exactly. Now, is the honourable gentleman withdrawing the statement that I am a liar or not? That is the question. Never mind the definition of "liar". We know the definition of liar. A liar is a person who deliberately tells an untruth knowing that it is untrue. We know that definition. Now, I have been called a liar. I want to know whether the honourable gentleman withdraws that or not.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable the Leader of the Opposition was called upon to withdraw the statement. He made further statement. Nowhere throughout that statement did I hear a definite withdrawal of the statement. Maybe he would like to elucidate somewhat further on it.

MR. ROBERTS: No, I do not intend to elucidate on it any further, Mr. Speaker. I have already said twice that I shall do and have done as Your Honour directs me. I shall do exactly as His Honour directs me to do.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Leader of the Opposition says that he shall do it. The Chair rules that he will do it immediately not shall do it sometime in the future. I call upon him to withdraw. Withdraw is in the present tense not future tense.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, my knowledge of grammer may not be any better than yours but it is at least as good as yours. If the honourable gentleman says he did not make a statement knowing it was incorrect, I am quite willing to withdraw. I do withdraw. I have now withdrawn. If, however, he made a statement that is untrue knowing it is untrue, then I do not withdraw.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, has the honourable gentleman withdrawn his

statement that I am a liar, or not? That is all that I am interested in not other terminology. The honourable gentleman had charged me in the House this afternoon with being a liar. Does he withdraw the statement that I am a liar, or does he not? That is the question.

MR. SPEAKER: While the Leader of the Opposition did add a little small speech by way of definition of what liar was or what he would do if the honourable the Minister of Finance has lied, I do rule that he has withdrawn and the remarks that he made subsequent to his withdrawal are irrelevant.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Hon. H. R. V. Earle, Minister of Public Works and Services:

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to present a petition from the residents of Frenchman's Cove, Fortune Bay.

This is rather an unusual petition and normally I would deal with it in the departments concerned but actually on Sunday night last a large delegation from Frenchman's Cove left Frenchman's Cove at eleven o'clock at night and were waiting for me when I arrived at the building on Monday morning. So they were obviously pretty perturbed about this situation, and they asked me to present this petition to the House, which I shall do. I shall also make a statement on it.

"We the undersigned residents of Frenchman's Cove, Fortune Bay, in the Province of Newfoundland, hereby protest the leasing of land within Frenchman's Cove to one John Nolan and/or his son Austin Nolan for the purpose of pasturing cattle. We demand that the lease be revoked immediately.

"The land in question lies in the centre of the community, north of and adjacent to the Frenchman's Cove Airstrip. The said land has been used by the people of the community for forty years and constantly, for the past twenty years, as a recreational area, football and baseball ground. Also the fishermen of the community use this area for drying their fishing gear and nets, traps etc. Also this land borders the property of a number of residents and it contains wells of water used for human consumption.

"Therefore, insisting on our rights as free citizens in a democratic society, we demand that proper action be taken upon our request." It signed by some eighty-odd adult, residents of Frenchman's Cove. There is quite a story behind this, Mr. Speaker. In the first instance I might say that the said John Nolan and his son, Austin Nolan, energetic people who have endeavoured through their own initiative to make a good living at Frenchman's Cove. They were applying for agricultural land for a period of three years and it took me all of three years to get them suitable land so that they could operate a farm and graze cattle. They then apparently heard that the land adjacent to the air strip, which had been taken over in 1956 by the Department of Highways, it was expropriated by the Department of Public Works on behalf of the Department of Highways, was not to be used in future because of the fact that a new air strip had been built at Winterland and consequently the Frenchman's Cove air strip would have future very little use. So they applied for a lease of this land in the summer of 1971. It took some time for this lease to get through but by order-of-council in May, 1972, approval was given for the lease of this land and the lease eventually went through on January 1, 1973. Apparently the residents of Frenchman's Cove are unaware of all this and certainly I as their member had not been informed that this was transpiring. But suddenly, a matter of a few days ago, Mr. Nolan and his son started to fence the land for the purpose of grazing cattle and immediately the people of the settlement got up in arms, in fact feelings were running so high that two young men of the settlement set fire to Mr. Nolan's barn and burned it to the ground, and they are now in jail. So the feelings on this particular matter were, as I say, running extremely high.

The point is this petition, Mr. Speaker, I present it to the House but in referring it to the department or to the

departments to which it relates I would ask that in consideration of this they give attention to the fact that Mr. Nolan and his son should be encouraged in every way possible to start a farm and if this area has to be taken from them that other suitable areas be found, replacing this.

I therefore place the petition on the table of the House and ask that it be referred to the departments to which it relates.

HON. DR. T. C. FARRELL (MINISTER OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION):

Mr. Speaker, I would ask permission of the House to table these regulations under the Highway Traffic Act.

HON. H. A. COLLINS (MINISTER OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS AND HOUSING): Mr. Speaker,

I also table the annual report of the Harmon Corporation for the year 1972, and I also have the reports for 1971 and 1970, the reason being that there seems to be some doubt as to whether those reports were tabled. If they were, fine, if they were not they are here now.

NOTICE OF MOTION:

HON. T. A. HICKMAN (MINISTER OF JUSTICE): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the hon. Minister of Agriculture and Forests I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce a bill, "An Act To Amend The Dog Act, 1966."

HON. J. C. CROSBIE (MINISTER OF FINANCE): Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave of the House to introduce a bill, "An Act Further To Amend The Gasoline Tax Act."

QUESTIONS:

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I have the answer to question 214 on the order paper of Monday, April 2, asked by the hon. member for White Bay South. "What are the names of the persons who, as of a current date, are members of the Newfoundland Crimes Commission showing in each case: (a) the date of his appointment and (b) the term of his appointment?" The members of the Newfoundland Crimes Commission Board are Mr. H. B. Morgan, Q.C., chairman; Mr. M. Francis O'Dea, as the chairman and Mr. Thomas J. O'Reilly, member. All three were

appointed on February 1, 1972. The answer to the second part of the question, "What is the value of any amounts payable a member of the Newfoundland Crimes Board in respect of: (a) per diem allowances; (b) travel, (c) annual salary etc.?" The chairman, vice-chairman and members are paid \$40.00 an hour whilst engaged in work of the board. In addition the chairman is paid an annual fee of \$1,200 for administrative services.

The answer to number three is, Mrs. Patrick McCormack, secretary to the board, is on the staff of the Department of Justice and does not receive any additional remuneration as secretary to the board. The answer to number four is, the total amounts paid to the board members for the fiscal year which began April 1, 1972, are as follows: chairman, fee for administrative service \$1,100; travel expenses \$339.20, amount paid whilst engaged in board work \$180.00 for a total of \$1,690.20. Vice-chairman, amount paid whilst engaged in work of board \$180.00. Member, amount paid whilst engaged in work of board \$280.00.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, I have the answer to question number ninety-three on the order paper of March 1, 1973, asked by the hon. the Leader of the Opposition. The first part of the question is, "As at January 31, 1973, what is the value of the gross funded debt of the government, less any sinking funds?" The answer is as at January 31, 1973 the total of the gross funded debt of the government, less sinking funds, stood at \$768,571,589 including \$85,851,342 being a transfer of guaranteed debts from Javelin Linerboard projects to direct debts. I will give the member a copy. The next question is "As at January 31, 1973, what is the value of the net funded debt of Crown Corporations involved in leasebacks?" The answer is as at January 31, 1973, the total of the net funded debt of Crown Corporations involved in leasebacks was \$56,645,502. Question: "As at January 31, 1973, what is the value of the direct unfunded debt of the government showing amounts within each of the

following brackets: (a) bank overdrafts?" Answer: nil. "(b) temporary borrowings?" Answer: \$8,435,842.81. "(c) amounts due on new road machinery?" Answer: nil. "(d) amounts due on road building contracts?" Answer: nil. "(e) amounts due on hospital equipment contracts?" Answer: nil. "(f) other unfunded debts?" Answer: \$2,439,000.

The fourth part of the question: "As at January 31, 1973, what is the value of the guaranteed debt of the government for amounts within each of the following brackets: (a) guaranteed debenture debt in respect of

municipalities in Newfoundland and Labrador." Answer \$16,862,470.

(b) Guaranteed bank loans to the municipalities in Newfoundland and Labrador. Answer, \$14,947,994. (c) I guess the next part is guaranteed bank loans for other than municipalities in Newfoundland and Labrador. Answer, \$12,702,185. "(d) Any other guaranteed debt?" Answer, \$269,822,194.00. "(5) As of January 31, 1973 what is the total value of amounts committed by government to guarantee debts for others in the future showing for each amount so committed the name of the municipality, corporation, person or firm, to whom such commitment has been given by government? Answer; (a) Mr. Wilbur Warr, \$75,000; (b) Arctic Fishery Products Limited, \$150,000;(c) Port aux Basques Seafoods Limited, \$656,250; (d) Town Council of Fortune \$100,000.

I also have the answer to Question No. 95 on the Order Paper of March 1 asked by the honourable Leader of the Opposition. Question, what is the value of Newfoundland debentures and exchequer bonds which are due for redemption in the fiscal year ending March 31, 1973?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, to save the time of the House, would the honourable minister just table the answers or send us over a copy of the answers? We would be quite happy with that.

MR. CROSBIE: I would like to do that, Mr. Speaker, but if I did all members might not see the answers and I think it is well worthwhile for all members to hear the answer.

Now I will have to read that again, you have gotten me off the track. What is the value of Newfoundland debentures and exchequer bonds which are due for redemption in the fiscal year ending March 31, 1973 showing for each issue (a) - I might point out, Mr. Speaker, March 31, 1973 is at the end of last week. Its number or other designation; (b) the date on which it is due for redemption; (c) the value of sinking funds, if any, which are applicable; (d) the nature of the arrangements that have been made for repayment of the issue?

Answer, the value of Newfoundland debentures and exchequer bonds which are due for redemption in the fiscal year ending March 31 are attached. The figures were included in our budget speech of last year and the programme financing this debt and other expenditures were outlined at that time. However, in case the honourable gentleman has forgotten, here is the answer. These are the debts that came due during the past year. The nature of the series (dd) five and one-quarter per cent, 1957/72 2MM, that is \$2 million, particular debenture U.S. date due for redemption the 1st. of May 1972, gross redemption \$2 million U.S., sinking fund accumulation to the date of redemption \$1,568,000, the net debt that was due \$432,000 U.S.

The next issue thirty-one seven and one-quarter per cent, 1967/72, \$2 million, particular debenture date due for redemption November 1, 1972, gross redemption \$2 million, sinking fund accumulated to the date of redemption \$242,208,000, net debt due \$1,757,792.

The next issue 3K, seven and one-quarter per cent 1967/72, five year term, \$5 million, debenture was due November 15, 1972, the gross amount was \$5 million, the sinking fund was \$239,431, the net debt due was \$4,760,569.

The next issue 3M various 1968/73 \$15 million, exchequer bond U.S. The date that it was due, February 7, 1973, gross redemption \$15 million U.S., no sinking fund, net debt due \$15 million U.S.

The next issue number thirty, seven and one-half 1969/74 \$12 million, exchequer bond U.S. it was due February 19, 1973, the gross amount was \$6 million U.S., no sinking fund, the net debt due \$ 6 million U.S.

The final issue 3 X, eight and one-half per cent 1971/86. The U.S Euro dollar loan, the date due for redemption March 2, 1973, the gross redemption \$400,000 U.S., the net debt due was \$100,000 U.S. That made a total for last year, Mr. Speaker, gross redemptions \$30,400,000; sinking funds available \$2,040,639, the net debt due

\$28,350,361.

I have the answer, Mr. Speaker, to Question No. 96 on the Order Paper of March 2, asked by the honourable the Leader of the Opposition. What debenture loans have been raised by government since March 31, 1972, showing in each case; (a) its number or other designation; (b) the date of issue; (c) the price of issue; (d) the currency of issue; (e) the listed interest rate; (f) effective interest rate; (g) the due date?

The answer, the debenture loans that have been raised by the government are listed as, during the past year. No. 4 (e) 1972 to 1977, date of issue, April 17, 1972, the price of issue, par currency U.S., listed interest rates varies every six months. It is presently seven and one-eighth per cent. The due date is April 17, 1977, the principal amount \$50 million U.S. Issue 4 F, 1972 to 1992, date of issue September 1, 1972, price of for the syndicate \$98.75, the currency of issue Canadian, the listed interest rate eight and one-quarter per cent, the effective interest rate eight point four three per cent, the due date September 1, 1992, the principal amount \$15 million Canadian.

Next issue JL 1972 to 1982 exchequer bonds, date of issue October 16, 1972, the price of issue par currency U.S., listed interest rates seven and three-quarters per cent, effective interest rate seven and three-quarters per cent, due date October 16, 1982, the principal amount \$20 million U.S.

Next issue G5, 1972 to 1987, date of issue November 1, 1972, the price of issue \$96.25, the currency of issue Deutschmark, listed interest rate six and three-quarters per cent, the effective interest rate seven point one five per cent, the due date November 1, 1987; the principal amount 100 million Deutschmarks.

Next issue 4 H 1972 to 1993, the date of issue September 15, 1972, the price of issue \$98.00, currency of issue Canadian, listed interest rate eight and one-eighth per cent, effective interest rate eight point three zero per cent, due date December 15, 1993 \$20.

million Canadian.

The next issue 4I, 1973 to 1993, the date of the issue is January 3, 1973, the price of issue par, currency Canadian, listed interest rate seven point two eight per cent, effective interest rate seven point two eight per cent, due date January 3, 1993, the principal amount \$4,636,689

MR. CROSBIE: Canadian. Issue 4J 1973 - 93, February 15, 1973 was issued, the price \$98.25, the currency Canadian, interest rate \$8 million, effective interest rate \$8.7 million, due date February 15, 1993, principal amount \$20 million, Canadian.

Then there are a series of Canadian pension plan loans, 3(a) - April 10, 1972, par, Canadian, 7.08 per cent. The due date is April 10, 1992. The amount is \$2,163,000 Canadian. Then there is another one, May 1, 1972, par, 7.38 per cent, May 1, 1992, \$2,017,000. I hope you are not getting bored by it.

AN HON. MEMBER: No, no, it is very interesting.

MR. CROSBIE: Then the next one was June 1, 1972, par, Canadian, 7.38 per cent, June 1, 1992, the amount - \$2,731,000.

I might explain, Mr. Speaker, that these are loans made to us by the Canada Pension Plan, when they have money available, collected from this province, we are entitled to borrow it.

AN HON. MEMBER: Why do we do that?

MR. CROSBIE: We usually borrow it because the interest rate is lower and you do not have to go to the market for it.

The next one was July 6, 1972, that was par 7.45 per cent, it is due on July 6, 1992, the amount is \$1,831,000 Canadian. On August 1, 1972, par, Canadian, 7.49 per cent, due date August 1, 1992, the amount \$1,512,000 Canadian. Next, September 1, 1972, par Canadian, 7.50 per cent, September 1, 1992 is the due date, the amount is \$1,689,000. October 2, 1972, par, Canadian, 7.49 per cent, it is due on October 2, 1992, \$1,152,000. November 1, 1972, par, Canadian 7.51 per cent, it is due on November 1, 1992, the total amount is \$1,197,000 Canadian. December 1, 1972, par, Canadian 7.38 per cent, it is due December 1, 1992, \$1,100,000 Canadian. On January 2, 1973, par, Canadian, 7.26 per cent, January 2, 1993 is due, \$618,000 Canadian. The second last February 1, 1973, par, Canadian 7.25 per cent, due date February 1, 1993, \$759,000 Canadian. Finally March 1, 1973, par, Canadian, 7.23 per cent, due date March 1, 1993, and the amount is \$2,231,000 Canadian.

MR. CROSBIE: I have the answer also, Mr. Speaker, to question no. 98 on the Order Paper of March 2.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. CROSBIE: Would the honourable gentleman like me to answer that one again, 96? This one here is 98, on the Order Paper of March 2, asked by the honourable Leader of the Opposition, the question is - since March 31, 1972 - this is going to be a very lengthy one I am afraid but I do not know how to shorten it.

AN HON. MEMBER: You have two hours and ten minutes.

MR. CROSBIE: I hope I am not taking up too much time of the House, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WM. ROWE: You are abusing the rules of the House.

MR. CROSBIE: I am?

I remember one afternoon we were over there, it was quarter to six when they finished. We are different. We are too different. We are giving you too much leeway, and then you abuse us.

Question no. 98 on the Order Paper of March 2, the question is - Since March 31, 1972, what is the total value of amounts of monies borrowed by government which are to be repaid following a period in excess of one year, showing for each individual amount, a) the date when it was borrowed; b) the source of said funds, c) the rate of interest payable; d) the price of which said government securities were sold indicating also whether it was at par or whether it was under par; e) the cost to government of said borrowing; f) its terms of repayment?

AN HON. MEMBER: No quorum.

MR. CROSBIE: I cannot go on if there is no quorum, I just cannot do it.

MR. ROBERTS: I will stick it.

MR. CROSBIE: We had to stick it and you can stick it too. You know where you can stick it.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, the total value of amounts of monies borrowed by government since March 31, 1972, which are to be repaid following a period in excess of one year are listed, it is about ten pages but it is valuable information.

The issue 4 (e) 1972 to 1977, the date of that issue is April 17, now this is a bit repetitious but Mr. Speaker, it is because the questions were repetitious. It is exactly about the same as the one I just answered. The date of the issue, April 17, 1972, price sold - \$100, the currency of the issue was US, the rate of interest varies. It is presently seven and one eighth per cent. The cost of the borrowing is \$437,500. The due date was April 17, 1977. The principal sum was \$50 million US, the terms of repayment, five equal parts semi-annually, beginning April 17, 1975, 1977 for \$10 million each. The source of the funds - Western American Bank (Europe) Limited.

The next issue 4 (f) 1972 to 1992, the date of the issue was September 1, 1972. The price sold \$98.75. The currency of the issue Canadian, the rate of interest is eight and one quarter per cent. The cost to government of the borrowings - \$187,500. The due date is September 1, 1992, the principal amount \$15 million Canadian. There is a one and one-half per cent sinking fund and the source of funds was public issue.

The next issue JL 1972 to 1982, the date of the issue was October 16, 1972, the price sold \$100, the currency of issue - US, the rate of interest - seven and three-quarter per cent, the cost to the government of the borrowing - nil, the due date - October 16, 1982, the principal amount - \$20 million US. The terms of repayment - the bonds may, at the option of the province, be prepaid in their entirety or partially in multiples of not less than \$ 2 million US, the source of the funds - Bank of Tokyo Trust Company of New York.

The next issue G5 1972 to 1987, date of issue - November 1, 1972, the price sold - \$96.25, currency of the issue DM (deutschemark),

MR. CROSBIE: rate of interest - six and three-quarter per cent, cost of borrowing - \$1,214,397, Canadian, the due date - November 1, 1987, the principal amount 100 million deutschmarks, sinking fund of 10 million deutschmarks, payable November 1 in the years 1978 to 1987, the source of the funds - German.

Issue 4 (h) 1972 - 1993, the rate of issue - December 15, 1972, price sold - \$98.00, currency of the issue Canadian, rate of interest - eight and one-eighth per cent, cost to the government of borrowing - \$100,000, due date, December 15, 1993, principal - \$20 million Canadian, terms of repayment, two per cent sinking fund, source of the funds, public issue.

Issue 4 (i) 1973 to 1993, the date January 3, 1973, sold at par, currency Canadian, rate of interest, 7.28 per cent, cost to the government, nil, due date, January 3, 1993, the principal amount - \$4,636,689 Canadian, one per cent sinking fund, and it is a federal government loan.

Then 4 (j) 1973 to 1993, February 15, 1973, price sold \$98.25, currency of issue Canadian, rate of interest, eight per cent, cost to the government of the said borrowing, \$350,000, due date, February 15, 1993, principal amount, \$20 million Canadian, terms of repayment, two per cent sinking fund, public issue.

Then there is also a list of the Canadian pension plan loans, but I just read them in reply to the previous question and therefore, I think I can skip them, unless honourable gentlemen opposite want me to deal with that again.

MR. NEARY: Do not delay the House.

MR. CROSBIE: I do not want to delay the House, I just want to give you the information. I will skip that then. You do not want me to read that again.

One other answer, Mr. Speaker, question no. 100, on the Order Paper of March 2, this year, asked by the honourable Leader of the Opposition, Now this is a bit repetitious because the question was repetitious-

This is number 100. "What are the proceeds that the government have received from the issue of bonds since March 31, 1972, showing the amounts received for each issue and showing whether or not the proceeds from each of these issues were paid into Newfoundland Exchequer Account?" Where were they going to be paid, Mr. Speaker, if they were not paid into that? "Were they paid into the Newfoundland Exchequer Account and if not, what action was taken with respect to these proceeds?" I can assure the honourable gentlemen that they were not paid to me. If they were, I would not be here. If they had been paid to me, I would not be answering the question. Anyway, I might be answering some other question.

Now, I will try and shorten up the answer to this because we are now familiar with all those issues. The following are the proceeds which the government has received from the issue of bonds since March 31, 1972:

The Exchequer bonds, \$50,000,000 U.S. The amount received was \$49,562,500.

The first Canadian issue, principal amount, \$15,000,000. The amount received, \$14,812,500.

Exchequer bonds, \$20,000,000 U.S. The amount received was \$19,640,600 Canadian.

German loan, \$100,000,000 Deutschemarks. The amount received was \$30,666,600 Canadian.

The second Canadian loan, \$20,000,000 principal. The amount received \$19,600,000.

The Federal-Provincial Employment Loans Programme, 1971, that is the \$4,636,689.47 loan. The amount received, \$4,636,689.47.

The third Canadian loan, \$20,000,000. The amount received, \$19,650,000.

The Canada Pension Plan loans, \$19,000,000. We received, \$19,000,000.

In every instance the funds were paid into the Newfoundland

Exchequer Account. If the honourable gentleman wants a written copy, I will try and supply him with it. I am sorry to have taken the time of the House, Mr. Speaker, but these are important financial matters and I know all members are vitally concerned about them.

HON. T.V. HICKEY: (MINISTER OF PROVINCIAL AFFAIRS AND ENVIRONMENT):

Mr. Speaker, I have the answer to an oral question by the member for Bell Island about two weeks ago. The question was, "What consulting firm was to do the solid waste disposal study?". The firm is Proctor and Redfern. The amount is \$50,000. There is quite a lot of information that I would like to give the House but I asked leave and was not permitted so, I am afraid I will have to provide the other details to the press.

HON. GORDON DAWE: (MINISTER OF MANPOWER AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS): I

have the answers to some questions here.

The answer to question no. 184 asked by the honourable member for Bell Island on the Order Paper dated March 21, 1973, "What are the names of those persons who, as of a current date, are members of the Labour Relations Board, showing in each case:

(a) the date on which he was so appointed;

(b) the term of his appointment;

(c) the title of the position held, being it Chairman, Vice-chairman, Member or otherwise?"

Answers to question no. (1):

Chairman, Mr. John J. O'Neill. Date of appointment, January 1, 1973. Term, two years.

Geoffrey L. Steele, Vice-chairman. Date of appointment, January 1, 1973. Term, two years.

Frederick L. Russell, employers' representative. Date of appointment, January 1, 1972. Term, two years.

Anthony G. Ayre, employers' representative. Date of appointment, January 1, 1973. Term, two years

G. Gillingham, employees' representative. Date of appointment,

January 1, 1973. Term, two years.

Wilson Russell, employees' representative. Date of appointment, January 1, 1972. Term, two years.

Alex H. Crosbie, alternate employers' representative. Date of appointment, January 1, 1973. Term, two years.

Mr. S.J. Dyer, alternate employers' representative. Date of appointment, January 1, 1973. Term, two years.

"Question number (2), what is the value of any amounts payable a Member of the Labour Relations Board in respect of:

- (a) per diem allowances;
- (b) travel, meal and accommodation expenses;
- (c) annual salary in connection with the performance of his

duties in this respect?"

Answer to question two:

Members are paid a per diem allowance of thirty-five dollars for each day that they are engaged with work of the board. Members from outside of St. John's are paid an actual and reasonable travel, meal and accommodations expenses. No other salary is paid to members.

"Question (3), what is the value of any amounts payable the Chairman of the Labour Relations Board in respect of:

- (a) per diem allowances;
- (b) travel, meal and accommodation expenses;
- (c) annual salary in connection with the performance of his

duties in this respect?"

Answer to question (3):

- (a) no per diem allowance is paid to the Chairman.
- (b) travel, meal and accommodation expenses are paid to him when he attends a meeting outside St. John's.

(c) the Chairman received an annual remuneration of \$3,000.

Question number (4), what is the value of any amounts payable the Vice-chairman of the said body in respect of:

- (a) per diem allowances;
- (b) travel, meal and accommodation expenses;

(c) annual salary in connection with the performance of his duties in this respect?

Answer to question (4):

(a) no per diem allowance is paid to the Vice-chairman;

(b) travel expenses are paid to him if he is required to attend meetings outside St. John's;

(c) the Vice-chairman received an annual remuneration of \$1,500.

Question no. (5), what is the value of any amounts payable a person being a member of said body who is serving other than in an ex-officio capacity and who is holding any capacity other than those referred to in (2), (3) and (4) above in respect of:

(a) per diem allowances;

(b) travel, meal and accommodation expenses;

(c) annual salary in connection with the performance of his duties in this respect?

The answer to no. (5), (a), (b) and (c) is none.

"Question no. (6), for each Member, Chairman, Vice-chairman or otherwise of said body and for the fiscal year which began April 1, 1972 of a current date, what is the total value of amounts that have been paid him in respect of:

(a) per diem allowances;

(b) travel, meal and accommodation expenses;

(c) annual salary in connection with the performance of his duties in this respect?"

Answer to no. (6):

John J. O'Neill, per diem allowances total, nil. Travel expenses total, \$230.56. Salary or remuneration, \$3,000 per annum.

G.L. Steele, per diem allowances totals, nil. Travel expenses total, nil. Salary or remuneration, \$1,500 per annum.

F.L. Russell, per diem allowances totals, \$315. Travel expenses total, nil. Salary or remuneration, nil.

A.G. Ayre, per diem allowances totals, \$595. Travel expenses,

nil. Salary or remuneration, nil.

G. Gillingham, per diem allowances totals, \$385. Travel expenses total, \$464,54. Salary or remuneration, nil.

W. Russell, per diem allowances totals, \$980. Total travelling expenses, \$1,098.85. Salary or remuneration, nil.

A.H. Crosbie, per diem allowances totals, \$210. Travel expenses total, nil. Salary or remuneration, nil.

James Walsh, per diem allowances totals, \$315. Total travelling expenses, nil. Salary, nil.

S.J. Dyer, per diem allowance total, thirty-five dollars. Travel expenses total, nil. Salary or remuneration, nil.

Payments referred to under column (c) are considered to be

remuneration, in accordance with the act.

"Question No. 7: For the fiscal year which began April 1, 1972 as of a current date what is: (a) the total value of amounts that have been paid in respect of salaries and wages for part-time and full-time staff employed in the service of the said body; and (b) the total number of persons that have been so employed at any time within that period of time?" The answer to Question No. 7: The board does not have any full-time nor part-time employees. When required officers of the department are seconded to carrying out specific assignments such as investigating into applications for certification and conducting of votes of employees, etc.

"Question No. 8: For the fiscal year which began April 1, 1972 as of a current date, what is the total number of occasions on which meetings of the said body have been held?" The answer to Question No. 8: For April 1, 1972 to March 15, 1972, there were a total of fourteen meetings of the board.

"Question No. 9: For each Member, Chairman, Vice-chairman or otherwise of said body and for the fiscal year which began April 1, 1972 as of a current date, what is the number of meetings he attended and in which he participated during said period of time?" The answer to Question No. 9: Mr. John J. O'Neil, fourteen meetings; Mr. G. L. Steele, ten meetings; Mr. F. L. Russell, seven meetings; Mr. A. G. Ayre, fourteen meetings; Mr. G. Gillingham, seven meetings; Mr. W. Russell, twelve meetings; Mr. J. Walsh, seven meetings; Mr. S. Dyer, one meeting.

"Question No. 10: To what Vote or Votes and under what Heading is the cost of the amounts referred to in paragraph (2) through (7) chargeable?" The answer to Question No. 10: The fees and expenses of the Labour Relations Board are paid out of the expenditure subhead, 1611-02.

Question No. 56, on the Order Paper of February 26, asked by the hon. member for Fogo: "What is the number of journeys involving public business which he has made since January 18, 1972 to places outside Canada, showing for each journey: The answer to part (a): London; (b) September 1, 1972; (c) \$869.00; (d) yes, Captain E. T. Pearcey, Director of Air Services - cost, \$423.68.

I table the answers to these questions.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. S. A. NEARY: The ministers are so anxious to answer questions, I wonder if the Minister of Finance could answer this question: Could the minister tell me if the matter of a debt between the Newfoundland Government and the Newfoundland Transportation Company has yet been settled? Has the debt been forgiven?

MR. CROSBIE: I just happened to have brought with me to the House a file on this matter, Mr. Speaker. This may take some time but I know the honourable gentleman is quite anxious. I have to go back, of course, to the year 1952 when this all started.

Mr. Speaker, Newfoundland Transportation Company Limited was incorporated on November 13, 1953 for the express purpose of operating a ferry service between Portugal Cove and Bell Island. This company has experienced financial difficulty all its life.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, may I raise a point of order please? I merely want a simple yes or no answer from the minister, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CROSBIE: I cannot give the answer without some background.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member has the right to ask the question but he does not have the right to demand which answer is to be given.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, may I rephrase the question?

MR. CROSBIE: No that is quite all right. I understand the question.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, would the honourable minister give me a simple yes or no answer to whether or not a loan to the Newfoundland Transportation Company has been forgiven?

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, I am about to give quite a simple answer but I have to give the background. The company experienced financial difficulty all its life with the result that in the 1950's the province on the company's behalf paid for and refitted the "M.V. Elmer Jones" at a cost of \$170,907.30. Also in 1959 the province guaranteed a bank loan in the amount of \$75,000, subsequently paid by the province, to cover extraordinary costs incurred due to heavy ice conditions experienced during that year. The government in fact are underwriting the losses of the company by means of loans in excess of \$225,000 to the company, so that it could provide a service to the residents of Bell Island. Up to August 1, 1961, the company had never made a profit and consequently no dividends were ever declared or paid out. On August 1, 1961, the company, Newfoundland Transportation Company Limited -

AN HON. MEMBER: Who was the principal owner?

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. McCallum in Toronto. Captain Strickland used to look after certain things for them. - Captain Uriah Strickland, a former member.

On August 1, 1961, the company entered into a chartered arrangement with the Government of Canada and the "M.V. John Guy" entered the ferry service. Under this agreement the company provided a service, subsidized by the federal government, to the residents of Bell Island. The agreement stated that the company would be required to remit to the Department of Transport all profits earned. This clause was inserted by the federal government so that the company would not be able to refund or make payments on the provincial government loan nor to any outstanding indebtedness prior to August 1, 1961.

On that date the company owed \$110,000 which amount is still outstanding as of this date and cannot be paid in accordance with the charter agreement in existence. The company is at present operated by a trustee for the general trade creditor, on an informal basis. It is all a very informal arrangement.

The arrears to the provincial government are these: The entire amount of \$225,155.75 is in arrears. The only payments on the loan have been government cheques intercepted by the Department of Finance. The company claims that a verbal agreement existed with the former Premier, Mr. Smallwood and the former Attorney General, Mr. Curtis, to grant \$75,000 to the company to enable it to offset extraordinary expenses in the year 1959. There appears to be no formal agreement in existence.

The company is further satisfied that the debt of \$170,907.30 secured by a first mortgage on the "M.V. Elmer Jones" was discharged through action taken by the company in taking possession of the vessel from the company and turning it over to Fishery Products Limited at an annual rental of \$1.00. There are all kinds of unusual things which have gone on in this transaction, Mr. Speaker. I do not know if the honourable gentleman is aware of them. That is why I just briefly wanted to review it. Are you aware of them?

MR. NEARY: I am aware of them.

MR. CROSBIE: I bet he is.

Now the present indebtedness to the government is this: The purchase of the "M. V. Elmer Jones," the government spent \$119,187.83; refit costs, \$51,719.47; (that was \$170,907.30) working capital advances, \$75,000, making a total of \$245,907.30, less stop payments instigated by the Department of Finance, \$20,751.55, so that the present debt is \$225,155.75.

Now what is the provincial government's position? This is what the honourable gentleman is asking. Oh, the honourable gentleman

has gone. He could not have been very interested. Oh, there he is. He could not have been too interested in this question. He is not listening attentively. He is paying little attention to the answer. I want the people of Bell Island to notice that. When the answer was given, the honourable gentleman was not listening. Now I have to go through the whole thing again. In other words the sum and substance of it is this: The company is operated, on behalf of the creditors really, somehow or other by chartered accountants, in the hope that the action will permit the Government of

Canada to, well in order actually to permit the service to continue and to clear the way for the Government of Canada to continue to subsidize the service and hopefully improve the means of transportation - the government have decided or did decide actually several months ago to write off the amount of \$225,155.75 that Newfoundland Transportation Company Limited owed to the Government of Newfoundland. So that has been done. On March 21, Mr. H. B. Morgan Q.C. was written and informed of that decision because he is a solicitor of the company. Now what has happened since then I do not know but we have done what we can do to help this situation and we hope the Canadian Transport Commission will follow through. As a matter of fact the Minister of Transportation has communication from Ottawa which says that the company, and a copy went actually to the honourable member for Bell Island, but he may not read his mail - they are working diligently to secure a replacement for the "Kipawo." I am glad to have this to announce, Mr. Speaker. I am very glad to have this to announce. "Hear this! Hear this!" The member should have announced this first.

The Newfoundland Transportation Company and the Water Transport Committee of the Canadian Transport Commission are working diligently toward the objective of securing a replacement for the "Kipawo" and although their efforts are not yet productive they do not anticipate failure. It does not seem realistic however to expect that the replacement would be available by the time the "John Guy" goes in for her overhaul in May but we want to assure the people of Bell Island of this, for what comfort it may be, there is an assurance that the vessel will be out of service for only ten days. Therefore steps are underway, as a result of the efforts of Mr. McGrath, the federal member for St. John's West, the provincial government and the federal government, everybody's efforts except the honourable gentleman's to see that this situation is resolved.

I hope that clears the matter up for him and I thank him for

giving me notice on radio today that he might ask that question.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I did give the honourable minister notice and I thank him for the answer to his question. It makes a lot of sense to me write off that note. But now I would like to ask the minister another question, Sir. Are negotiations taking place between the minister or the government and the Department of Transportation, the Water Transportation Commission, for the province to take over that ferry service between Bell Island and Portugal Cove?

MR. CROSBIE: Not as far as I am aware of, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Campbell was down here a few months ago, I cannot remember the exact time, but no negotiations have ever been proceeded with on that basis. It is a service the Government of Canada is operating and that we wish them to continue to operate.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, would the honourable minister inform the House if any steps have been taken to provide free ferry service between Bell Island and Portugal Cove as promised in two provincial general elections by the honourable the Premier?

MR. CROSBIE: We have just freed up \$225,000, that is the only step taken to date.

MR. NEARY: In other words, Mr. Speaker, another broken promise. I would like to direct a question now, Mr. Speaker -

MR. CROSBIE: This matter is not concluded by any means. It is under review.

MR. NEARY: Then the province may take over the ferry service.

MR. CROSBIE: Not to take it over, the question of fares being reduced.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, before I leave the Minister of Finance, Sir, I would like to ask him another question on a different matter. Would the minister inform the House if there is any foundation to the reports that annual increments for public service employees, police, wardens at the penitentiary and so forth have been dropped in this fiscal year and instead will be included in any increase in pay that is negotiated

by these various groups?

MR. CROSBIE: Well this is a matter you know that one would like a little notice, if there were such a sinister plot underway. One would like a little notice of that question. Even without being given the notice, I can tell the honourable gentleman that there is no plan to change. People to whom the automatic increment of five per cent has applied in the past it is continuing this year. So there is no truth in that report.

MR. NEARY: I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Transportation and Communication. Will the honourable minister inform the House if his department or the government have yet taken a decision on whether or not to grant a subsidy for freight and passengers to and from Bell Island by air while the ice blockade continues?

MR. FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, I have referred this matter to my officials for their comments and observations. They are watching the situation very closely, to see how it develops, and we will see how it goes over the next few days before any final decision will be made. We have emergency services available at any time and at all times in the interim.

MR. NEARY: Would the honourable minister inform the House what kind of emergency services he is talking about.

MR. FARRELL: I meant if there were an emergency there for hospital, a helicopter whatever in the interim.

MR. NEARY: As there is now.

MR. FARRELL: Yes.

MR. NEARY: The problem is, Sir,

MR. FARRELL: You will need a subsidy, and we are looking at the matter now.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, one more question for the honourable the Minister of Finance because the Minister of Finance apparently is the only one in the House who can answer any questions on the government side, who knows what he is talking about. Could the minister inform

the House how much longer the strike at Come by Chance can continue before it interferes with the scheduled start-up date of the refinery later this year?

MR. CROSBIE: It is difficult, as the honourable member knows, it would probably be dangerous to answer that exactly. All that can be said is that every day that is lost through labour unrest increases the chance that the refinery will not be completed by the end of 1973 which is a situation that would be very poor from the point of view of Provincial Building and Provincial Refining. As we understand it, it can be completed in 1973 if the weather is reasonably good or no worse than it has been in the last two years and if full advantage is taken; if there is no labour strife or unrest. So it is hard to say how long but certainly every day is necessary. Other than that you cannot say how many days.

MR. SPEAKER: This being private member's day, we move to Motion 11, a motion by the honourable member for White Bay South. I believe at adjournment the honourable the member for Bell Island had the floor.

MR. NEARY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, Sir, you would never say it was private member's day. Sir, I am glad to have the opportunity to participate in this debate and support the resolution so ably presented last Wednesday or the Wednesday before last, I think it was, by my colleague the honourable the member for White Bay South.

With all due respect, Sir, to the self-righteous member for Labrador South, I do hope that more members will participate in this debate because I think, Sir, it is a very, very important matter. I do not think for one moment that we will be wasting the time of this House by debating a resolution asking for a royal commission to investigate fatalities on our highways, especially, Sir, in a year when deaths on our highways and injuries are setting new records.

Mr. Speaker, last Wednesday, when debate on this resolution adjourned, I was making a few remarks about the government's decision to purchase cheap, unreflectorized licence plates. Mr. Speaker, one

thing that stood out in this unfortunate controversy was the inability of the Minister of Highway's to clearly refute statements made by Robert Neal Limited and the Newfoundland Safety Council, pointing out that taking reflectorized plates off the cars would lose an extra safety precaution on our streets and highways.

Sir, the

Newfoundland Safety Council clearly proved the safety advantages of retaining reflectorized plates for up to another three years. Despite this, Mr. Speaker, despite a strong case all round in favour of retention of existing plates, the minister in his silly, foolish decision went against the interest and the wishes of the people of this province especially, Sir, the 200,000 vehicle operators, and placed an order out of the province for cheap, non-reflectorized license plates and, in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, this is a backward step. I now hope, Sir, that the minister is prepared to admit his mistake and I feel, Sir, that it is of the utmost importance that a commitment be made by the minister that the next time plates are ordered that they will be reflectorized.

Mr. Speaker, last Wednesday we heard a strong condemnation of the Newfoundland Safety Council. We saw a personal attack on the executive director of that council, Sir. In Friday's edition of the, I think it was in the weekend edition of the "Evening Telegram" we saw, Mr. Speaker, where the Newfoundland Safety Council had taken exception to this unprecedented attack upon them in this hon. House by the Minister of Transportation and Communications. Mr. Speaker, I cannot say that I blame them for being hurt by this unfair and unwarranted criticism especially with reference to Mr. O'Neill, the Executive Director of the Safety Council, who was described by the minister as being a little over-zealous. The president of the Newfoundland Safety Council said at a press conference, Sir, I think it was on Friday of last week, (and I am quoting Mr. Murphy): He said, "I wish to state that it is the considered opinion of the Newfoundland Safety Council that the minister's comments were not welcomed by this organization and we feel that they were completely and undeniably a willful intent to question the credibility of the council."

Sir, I think this showed very poor judgement on the part of the Minister of Transportation and Communications in unleashing this unnecessary vile attack upon the Newfoundland Safety Council. The president of the Safety Council went on to say, "The councils efforts are well above reproach and one only has to look at the tremendous achievements in public safety in this province during the past several years to verify this." Well, Mr. Speaker, I do not think that there is anybody in this hon. House can deny that. When it comes to safety on our highways, Sir, the Newfoundland Safety Council has been well out in front. They have taken the lead and this attack, this unwarranted attack on the Newfoundland Safety Council, in my opinion is unjustified. The Safety Council's president went on to say, Mr. Speaker, "It is understandably difficult to determine what the Transportation and Communication Minister means when he says that his department is co-operating with the council."

Mr. Murphy said that the council waited for two and one half months, listen to this, Mr. Speaker, "The Safety Council waited for two and one half months for a meeting with government, to present its annual brief which contained a number of recommendations, chief of which was the establishment of a royal commission to investigate highway safety." They waited two and one-half months, Sir, and during that two and one-half months maybe if some of the recommendations of the Newfoundland Safety Council had been carried out, if the minister had listened to him, it may have saved a few lives on our highways, Sir. Then the minister has the gall to criticize the Newfoundland Safety Council.

Then he said, Sir, that is Mr. Murphy, the president of the council said, "The council has been ignored by the Department of Highways on a number of other matters including the question of reflectorized plates, regulations governing seating on the

province's school buses, the changing of signs on the Trans Canada Highway without prior notice, or educational programmes and many others." Mr. Speaker, it is indeed unfortunate in my opinion that a serious rift has occurred between the Department of Transportation and Communication, especially the minister of that department, and the Newfoundland Safety Council. It is tragic, Sir. Members of this House should not have to be told that the Newfoundland Safety Council is a non-government, non-profit organization and in fact, Mr. Speaker, is the only organization of its kind acting in this province for traffic, industrial and school safety.

I do not think, Mr. Speaker, that I would be overemphasizing the importance of the Newfoundland Safety Council if I said, Sir, that this council has done more than any other organization in this province to further the cause of safety on our highways. Mr. Speaker, this is too serious a matter for the Minister of Transportation and Communication to allow his own personal feelings to sway his relationship one way or another with this organization. After all, Sir, they are only trying to help by offering constructive criticism when the need arises. As far as I can learn, Sir, the Newfoundland Safety Council has always co-operated with the Department of Highways, is willing to co-operate in the future with the Department of Transportation and Communication and I see no reason why a good relationship, good liason, good dialogue cannot continue with the Newfoundland Safety Council in the future.

Mr. Speaker, there is no political game for the minister or his government to get into the war that is going on between the minister's department and the Newfoundland Safety Council. I plead with the minister here today, Sir, to lay aside his stubborn persistence and re-establish dialogue and liason with an organization that can only do good for all concerned, for both the minister's department and the drivers and the people of this province. Mr. Speaker, before

I get off this matter I want to say that I feel the decision of the minister and the Department of Highways, on April 7, 1972, to reduce the grant to the Newfoundland Safety Council had a disastrous affect on their programming. If that council, Sir, is to make meaningful progress in the areas of public safety, greater co-operation and greater financial support is needed so that the council can not only broaden its programming, Sir, but establish offices in other parts of this province. I do not think the minister will disagree with that. Would the minister not like to have a branch of the Newfoundland Safety Council opened in Corner Brook? Of course, he would.

Mr. Speaker, to switch over now to another matter. Hon. members are aware that at the present time any licensed motorist who so desires may open a driving school in this province for the purpose of giving instructions to people wishing to learn how to drive. Mr. Speaker, these so-called driving instructors are not required to take any special tests or even give a practical demonstration of their skill and ability. In my opinion, Sir, this is a very serious situation and one that should be corrected immediately, possibly, Mr. Speaker, with the introduction of an appropriate set of regulations to qualify and issue a special license to driving instructors. I submit that to the minister as a constructive suggestion.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Transportation and Communications made it pretty obvious last week that he is going to lead the government majority to defeat this resolution. His argument, Mr. Speaker, is that a

royal commission will take too long and that he intends to set about improving conditions right away. What nonsense, Mr. Speaker! Why not the minister set up a royal commission and give the commission a three week deadline and the authority and numbers of bodies to compile all necessary data as well as turn out their report and recommendations within that period.

Mr. Speaker, I am quite sure that with proper organization and selection of interested people that such a royal commission is the only means of putting the hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications back in touch with the needs of the people of this province. I am quite certain, Mr. Speaker, that if the honourable minister (I say this with all due respect, Sir.) has been able to survive as long as he has in medical practice in this province, he must have been able to read his patients' symptoms and make a few correct diagnoses in his time. Surely then, Mr. Speaker, with all the symptoms of the Trans Canada Highway illness in this province our honourable medicine man should realize that he has to do an in-depth study of these symptoms, and call in the expertise of those who are most affected by our troubled Trans Canada Highway, to provide the cures. Exactly. The minister agrees with me, Sir. Why does not the minister support this resolution?

If, however, Mr. Speaker, the minister should persist in opposing such a reasonable proposal as that made in the present resolution, the only course then that I can see open, Sir, is to call in immediately specialists in the field of highway engineering, and not leave matters to his own general practitioner thinking. I think if the honourable minister leads the government to vote against this resolution, Sir, he must go beyond the limits of those within his department who, no matter what their qualifications are, Sir, or what their engineering competence and abilities might be, will be swayed by the opinions of their minister, Sir, human

nature being what it is. The simplest way out of this whole matter, Mr. Speaker, would be for the honourable minister to back-track his attitude towards this resolution in this honourable House and give it his support and ask for the support of his colleagues so that we may finally and quickly bring to a close, Sir, an unfortunate situation that daily is taking its toll in lives of motorists, innocent passengers and in crippling injuries to large numbers of people as well as property loss, Sir, that is shoving insurance rates in this province far beyond the capacity to pay by the average member of the driving public.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I hope that members on both sides of this House will support this most important and timely resolution.

MR. R. WELLS: Mr. Speaker, I have read the resolution and I commend the hon. member for White Bay South for bringing this matter to the attention of the House because I think there are probably very few things that we can more profitably debate than this business of traffic accidents and people being injured and killed on the roads. What to do about it, of course, is very much a matter of opinion. The honourable member in his resolution refers to certain figures. He says that during the past ten years over 60,000 accidents have occurred. Personal injuries were over 25,000 people and 800 people killed. Now I do not know if these figures are correct or how accurate they are but they sound to me to be more or less what I would expect. Are they in fact taken from statistical sources? They are. Yes, they sound right. There is no question about it. We have a terrible slaughter in Newfoundland on the roads for our population and an appalling rate of accidents, appalling personal injury suffering and appalling property damage.

Now in the past fourteen or fifteen years I have had, I suppose, myself as much experience as anybody, certainly anybody in the legal profession, I would venture to say, in sorting out

and being involved in matters arising out of difficulties on the roads. There is no question about it. I suppose the bulk of the criminal matters coming before our courts, way and beyond everything else, arise out of use of the motor car and there is no question about it that the bulk of the civil actions coming before our courts arise out of the use of the motor car. Anyone dealing with these things, Mr. Speaker, over the years, begins to see certain things that play a very, very great part in the whole business of motor accidents. I think anybody who has been involved in this has to say and certainly I do not have any hesitation in saying that one of the chief causes is alcohol. Most of the criminal offenses involving motor vehicles are related and come back to alcohol; impaired driving, criminal negligence, dangerous driving, reckless driving, careless driving, all these offenses. When you get down to them in court, when the evidence begins to be heard and the facts begin to come out, you find that alcohol is behind it. Even in cases that I have acted on, where the police were not aware of the involvement of alcohol, where perhaps the victim was not aware of the involvement of alcohol, finally you find out, because you are told, that alcohol was involved.

That seems to me, Mr. Speaker, and in my experience is the number one cause of accidents. I do not subscribe to the view that if you engineer highways better, if you make them broad and sweeping that you are going to do away with highway accidents. What you will do is perhaps make it more convenient but you will raise the level of speed so that when accidents do occur they will be more devastating.

AN HON. MEMBER: More fatalities.

MR. WELLS: Well that is right, more fatalities. It is all very

well to say, all right, fine, we will make the road better. Yes, by all means you make it better and for the sober driver and the conscientious driver and the good driver, the driver who is capable of operating a car safely at high speed, fine; you make it convenient for him and you are doing him a great favour and you are moving large numbers of people rapidly. The point is that when you get a man with a half a dozen drinks in or ten drinks in and I have heard of them and they have been before our courts with twenty, with fifty drinks in, that man -

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. WELLS: Yes, you would be surprised. Truth is stranger than fiction. When you get that sort of man driving, and this happens and it comes before our courts, to give him that kind of road only increases the danger to other members of the public.

Now there are other causes of accidents. I wonder how many honourable members have talked to people who work in garages and they say that a good many cars, when they go up on the ramp that even the man who is to grease them is astonished. Some of them are held together with bits of wire, where the tie rod end should be and rubber bands and all sorts of crazy gear. It sounds stupid, Mr. Speaker, but it is not, it is true. This is happening. People will take a car on the road in the most appalling conditions. You might ask why? The answer is simple. Very often they cannot afford to get it repaired and they are going to drive it anyway. You talk about taking away licences for instance and imposing penalties, I will have a word to say on that in a moment. That also is very necessary but there are a great many people and they have said it to me, in the course of professional work that I

am going to drive anyway. I do not care if my licence is taken away. It just does not matter to me. I am going to be on the road. This is the attitude, unfortunately, not of all our citizens but the attitude of far too many citizens to whom the law insofar as impaired driving

is concerned and drunken driving does not mean a thing, not a thing. These are the people, a small group or perhaps not such a small group, small maybe percentagewise but these are the people who are doing most of the damage and most of the injury on our roads.

The other group are the group that will drive vehicles that are not fit to drive. That is another not large group but none the less fairly substantial.

The other group are the incompetents, the people who although cold-sober should not be behind the wheel of a motor car because they do not know how to drive. I do not know if these people fooled the examiner in the first place or whether they were examined some years ago and perhaps learned how to drive then or knew how to drive then and have slipped backwards and cannot drive now in increased and heavy traffic and higher speeds.. We see them, all of us, on the roads every day, people who are really incompetent to be behind the wheel. This goes, I think, to the root of the motion here. There is carnage taking place on the highways but I do not think that it is a mystery what the causes are. I think some of the major causes are the very sort of things that I have spoken about.

Now, what are we going to do about them? What ought this House, the Legislature of this Province, what ought we to be doing about this? Now, on the question of impaired driving, alcohol, which I feel myself to be the biggest single cause of accidents, I do not think the law needs to be changed. The law is there and the law now, I think, is effective and good. What it needs to a much greater degree - we as citizens of this province are going to have to pay for this - but what it needs in my view, to cover this aspect of it, is far greater enforcement. I think if the Minister of Justice, for instance, asked this House this year for a sum of money that I myself would consider adequate for policing the roads of this province, there would be cries from the public and probably cries from a great many members of the House. I think that the presence of police officers

in cars, in helicopters, where that is feasible, is absolutely necessary and absolutely necessary to a far greater degree than we have now. I have many times myself driven, for instance, from here to Gander, and not seen a single police car on the road. I am not knocking the R.C.M.P. for that. They are paid under contract for doing this sort of thing but they have relatively few men and if we want the sort of policing that I think is necessary on our roads, we are going to have to pay for it. We are going to have to make up our minds that this is worth paying for and necessary and we are going to have to pay for it and that is all there is to it. You see, if the administration of justice, if the enforcement of traffic rules is not considered important, if we are not prepared to pay and we just send the policemen out between here and Whitbourne and let them patrol back and forth all day, if that is all there is going to be to it, then the people who will take advantage and the people who are careless of the rights of others are going to go right to it and they could not care less a lot of them, Mr. Speaker and there is going to be this sort of carnage. So, important in that respect and probably the most important thing is enforcement, not that the police officer would necessarily have to do that much, he would just have to be there. For instance, if I set off this afternoon for Holyrood and I am quite confident that between here and Holyrood I am not going to see a policeman, I may be well tempted to drive at eighty or ninety miles an hour. I use that as an example. If I am pretty well certain from experience and knowledge of it that if I am going that fast that I am going to come behind a police car and that I am going to see police cars going the other way, then I will not drive at that speed. That is really what it comes down to. We are not talking about something that is particularly abstruse, we are talking about ordinary common sense. If the police cars are there, if the radar traps are there, if the physical presence of the police are along our highways in sufficient number, we will cut down the

speed and we will cut down the drinking.

On the question of drinking and driving, again to deal with the subject. We are allowing - there is nothing wrong with it I suppose but we are allowing licensed premises to go up all along the highway. There is nothing wrong with a man going in there and having a drink or a beer but we all know that people go in there and they will have a dozen drinks or a dozen beers and they will come out and get in their cars. Now, I have said myself on occasion in court that it is very mean for a police officer to wait outside the place to apprehend a person whom he thinks or has reason to believe is going to be drinking and coming out and getting in his car, but at the same time, Mr. Speaker, it may be mean, it may be dirty pool in the eyes of a lot of us but at the same time if we are going to prevent people from causing damage and death on the highways, we are going to have that sort of enforcement.

Now, another thing is this question of rattle trap vehicles. I know it is costly to maintain a car. We all know that. It is like the cost of living in every respect in Newfoundland and in Canada, it is going up and up and up. I know the garage rates are high. We all know that but at the same time we have to enforce and we have to be sure that vehicles on the road are properly maintained and if they are not properly maintained, they go off the road.

Now in England, about three or four years ago, a system was instituted that went on the matter of tires. A tire had to have a certain amount of thread and every policeman was provided with a little gadget for measuring it. He went along and if he measured the thread on your tires and it was not sufficient, you were just somberly taken off the road, just like that, and the fines I think were high, much higher than we would pay for a comparable offense. I myself was talking to one person who was convicted of such an offense in England and I believe it cost

something of the order of twenty-five pounds. There is just no fooling around at all. Now, the theory behind that is not just that good tires are safer - we all know that - but also when it comes to the rattle trap car, the theory over there was and apparently it worked, that a person was not going to put a set of tires which would cost a hundred dollars or something close to it on a car that was not worth the hundred dollars. Therefore, they would get some of these unsafe cars off the road. They were very rigid about it and I think it has had some effect.

I have heard criticisms and I appreciate that it is hard to keep a car especially a three or four year old car maintained. I have heard criticisms of the governments inspection system. I have heard criticisms this spring. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, we have to be firm about that and I think the government has to be firm. It has to insist on a proper standard of vehicle before it is licensed because if we do not, there is another major contributor to accidents.

On the question of highway design, the fact that a road may be winding and narrow, I do not believe that is what contributes to accidents. I really do believe that the accident rate very often on these narrow, twisting roads is sometimes much better than the accident on a highway such as the Trans Canada or even a great big freeway because it is other factors, it is speed particularly and most of all a driver who in some way or another is not fit to drive or does not know how to drive that really brings about the accidents. So, I do not think when we are talking about this question we are necessarily talking about engineering of highways. I do not think that at all. I think we are talking about very human things which are going to cost money in enforcement and of course in the enforcement of the standard of cars.

Now, there is another thing that has been raised in this debate and quite honestly I do not believe it has any place in this

debate and that is this business of the government's decision to get plates which happen not to be reflectorized instead of the reflectorized plates that have been on the cars for the past six or seven years. Now the figures are very clear and I have heard the Minister of Transportation and Communication both inside and outside this House talk about the relative cost of the two plates. Now I have the figures here because I asked him to give me some, and the figures which he had published many times. Without boring the House with figures, it is absolutely clear that the cost of these reflectorized plates would have been considerably more, not just a matter of ten or fifteen per cent but vastly more than the cost of the non-reflectorized plates. Now I, like every other member of this House and I suppose like every citizen of Newfoundland, would prefer to see the product manufactured or bought in Newfoundland but at the same time, this House and this government have a duty to the taxpayer. When it is a question of a ten dollar bill versus the twelve, a ten and a two, I would say by all means give it to the local manufacturer. If you are talking about a difference of ten or fifteen percent and in

some places, I believe the City Council of St. John's has something built in like that to give a little bit of advantage, a ten percent or a fifteen percent advantage to the local manufacturer. When the local manufacturer is talking about something which is two or three times as expensive, then I am afraid our duty and the government's duty to the taxpayer of this province overrides such considerations.

I do not mind criticizing when I think it is necessary. I would have criticized the Government of Newfoundland if they had paid the extra money, a considerable amount of extra money to get the plates for the price that they were offered for by the local manufacturer, which in my view is absolutely noncompetitive.

To talk about the issue of reflectorized plates as such, against the non-reflectorized: In my experience, the business of reflectorized plates does not really seem to enter into the question of accidents. If a man is drinking or half drunk and he is coming at you, it does not matter if you have reflectorized plates, if you are careless yourself and you are going off the road and through a guardrail or something, it does not matter what kind of plate you have. The only possible area that I can see where the reflectorized plate might mean anything is a car parked on the highway at night. If we had sufficient policing we could ensure that that sort of thing did not happen anyway. But a car parked not on the shoulder but actually improperly parked out in the highway, you might make an argument for a reflectorized plate there. I wonder even then if the argument would be sensible, because most cars have built into their apparatus reflectors which show up just as quickly as the plate.

When you look at populous provinces like Ontario, when you look at places where the pressure of population so far outweighs ours, I am thinking of England particularly, there are no reflectorized plates there, there are plates which go on the car when it is made and sold and they come off when the car goes to the dump. They are not reflectorized and I have never heard in other countries of anybody

making a big issue out of reflectorized plates. If reflectorized plates were going to solve the damage and carnage on our highways, it would be the cheapest possible investment, but I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that they have very little to do with it really.

I am one of those persons who happen to feel that the answers are there and the answers I am sure are known by the Department of Highways, and that the answers are known by the Department of Justice. I feel that they should be put into effect and it is important enough for public monies to be found to put them into effect. If this House has to authorize the expenditure of monies for these things, then it should do it. If monies have to be borrowed to do these things, then it should be done. I am thinking particularly that if money should be borrowed, it is necessary to borrow money for more effective policing, not that there is anything wrong with the police that we have but more of them on the highways, then I think that should be done.

In this regard I would like to refer, Mr. Speaker, to a subject which was mentioned in the House last year. It was mentioned by me, it was mentioned by the Minister of Justice, and nothing has been done about it yet, to my knowledge, although perhaps the Minister of Justice will tell us that it has been looked into, but I would like to see the Newfoundland Constabulary enlarged.

I think when the previous government started the Highway Patrol, the previous administration, it was a good thing. They dropped it. I was sorry to see it dropped. I think it is a necessary thing and we should increase the number of police cars on the highway. In that connection it is peripheral to this question of highway safety. I would also like to see the government take a very, very close look, in fact more than a close look, I would actually like to see the government enlarge the Newfoundland Constabulary to other parts of Newfoundland, particularly cities and towns, starting off with a pilot idea somewhere like Labrador City, carrying on to Corner Brook

The arrangements would have to be made with the municipalities, It would cost money and the cost would have to be shared. It may mean borrowing or it may mean higher taxes, I do not know what, but if we are going to have these things we have to pay for them and it is just as well for us all to realize that. Some things like highway safety are so important that they are worth paying for. They are in my view, Mr. Speaker, priorities.

This leads me to something else that I think is worth talking about. I talked about it last year, I will talk about it this year and again now, I will talk about it as long as I am in this House, and that is the matter of the \$35,000 limit. I say we have a lot of the answers, it is a question of taking the bull by the horns and doing it. This \$35,000 lower limit on third party insurance is one of the things I spoke about last year in the Throne Speech Debate and which I hope to see done while I am in this House. To be quite frank, Mr. Speaker, I will say as often as I can, as loudly as I can, wherever I can that this ought to be tackled, not after a study by a royal commission but right now, today, tomorrow, as fast as the amendments to the bills can be drafted.

For the benefit of those who are not familiar with it, we have a situation in Newfoundland where you only have to put \$35,000 public liability insurance on your car and you can go on the highway. That means that if you are involved with another party, another person, you have only \$35,000, through your insurance in any event, available to satisfy the damages. So that I can get in my car this afternoon and drive out and I can meet four family men driving the other way in another car, my carelessness or negligence can kill these men and their families have to settle for and share up \$35,000.

I can be driving out the road and my negligence and carelessness can injure Your Honour, can make Your Honour a paraplegic, which happens frequently on our highways, so that you are never able to work again, never able to do more than move your head and shoulders

for the rest of your life. I have acted on cases that involved young men left in that fashion, where damages have been awarded by the court as high as \$90,000. What is there? \$35,000 and sometimes with a hospital bill that runs to \$20,000.

I know of one case at the moment where the hospital bill and loss of wages for a man and his wife actually has arrived at \$34,700 and there is only \$35,000 to satisfy the whole thing. It cannot satisfy it. Somebody who does not know any better might say: "Oh well, go after the individual after you get the \$35,000 from the insurance company." What individual? How many individuals can pony up even \$5,000 let alone an additional \$35,000 or \$50,000 which might be awarded by a court or which the insurance company's solicitors might very well feel is a legitimate amount?

This to me, Mr. Speaker, is an outrage, a shocking outrage. Anybody who has anything to do with the administration of justice knows this and they know that five, six, seven, eight people are being asked to share this miserable \$35,000 which sometimes does not even pay the hospital bills of the injured. It should not be allowed to continue another second. As I say, anybody familiar with this knows of cases where out-of-pocket expenses consequent upon an injury or injuries eat up the whole \$35,000 and people are left to face life as cripples, seriously injured people, impaired in their ability to earn a living and with no insurance money forthcoming. They are told; "Oh go and look to the individual who caused the accident for the excess above the \$35,000." That individual, if you turned him upside down and shook him and his possessions with him, you might be lucky to get \$5,000. It is not going to be a practical thing to strip that man of everything that he has in life anyway.

There is the situation, there is one of the things peripheral to highway safety but it arises out of highway accidents, one of the things which should be done right now, no royal commissions, no studies, we just know. Anybody who knows anything about it can be told that this ought to be done. I have enquired into it, I think

it would cost to make the minimum \$100,000, which I think is the proper minimum, it would cost the average motorist who has third party liability, according to the figures given me by one or two insurance agents, something like an extra eight or nine dollars a year.

Okay, it is an eight or nine dollars a year, fine. Let them pay it, if it is ten dollars a year let them pay it, because some unfortunate people are maimed and ruined in their lives and their ability to enjoy their lives and are not being compensated, not even being half compensated. It is a disgrace, Mr. Speaker, and I cannot speak too strongly, I cannot find words to express what I feel when I see a person banged to pieces, disfigured, prohibited from earning a living in the future and looking at \$35,000 and most of that already gone in hospital bills.

We do not need royal commissions, we do not need royal commissions to step up and pay for, which it is going to cost our enforcement procedures. We do not need royal commissions to step up and do as the minister has been doing this year, better enforcement to the mechanical standard of vehicles.

Let us take the flack, if some people do not like it, but it has to be done. To do this thing with the insurance, that has to be done and if there is flack coming from it, well let us take it. This House should rise, I think, as one man and without regard to party matters support the idea of doing something like that.

As I say, we do not need studies. Certainly those of us who are familiar with the way things work in these areas know it and we have known it probably for years. So there you are, Mr. Speaker. I like the idea expressed in this resolution. I think the honourable member has done the House a service in pointing out something of the figures that have been involved and are being involved in highway traffic deaths and accidents.

I do not think it needs a commission of enquiry. I think that the honourable member himself, as a practicing lawyer, knows a lot of the things that should be done. I think you could go down to the magistrates court and talk to the people who work there, not just lawyers, policemen, talk to some victims (there are plenty of them around) and the answers are right there. Quite frankly, I think the Department of Highways is aware of the answers and is moving to correct some of these. I think it is a question of expending a little bit of public money.

We stand here and we argue, we listen and we debate over the expenditure of public monies and God knows I do not want to see public monies wasted. Unnecessary expenditures should be cut down and I think to have gotten these reflectorized plates would have been an unnecessary expenditure. I would like to see that \$100,000 (and I think that is what the difference would have been)

SOME HON. MEMBERS: (Inaudible)

MR. WELLS: Maybe, maybe.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: (Inaudible)

MR. WELLS: Mr. Speaker, before I—

MR. SPEAKER: Order please!

MR. WELLS: Thank you. I would like to see that \$100,000 put in enforcement. I would like to see it put in, making sure that the standard of vehicles is higher. Wherever money needs to be spent to really come to grips with this situation, I think it should be spent. I for one would have no hesitation in supporting that sort of thing in the House and I would hope members on all sides of the House would do so.

Rather than a commission of enquiry, and it is perhaps not a bad idea but I would say there are three or four things that should be done right now. I have outlined some of them and we could start with this \$30,000 tomorrow, or as fast as draftsmen can be made to draft the amendments to the Highways Traffic Act. I suppose judgement recovery would have to be brought in line also, the same thing, minimum \$100,000.

Simple amendments that could be drafted in a matter of a day or two, and do it.

MR. NEARY: Will that stop people getting killed on the highway?

MR. WELLS: No, it will not stop them from getting killed, it will not stop them from getting killed.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. WELLS: The honourable member is not talking to me about relevance, is he? He is not talking to me about relevance after what I endure just as every member of this House does from time to time? My God, Mr. Speaker, some things one can take but some things are hard to take!

What it would mean, Mr. Speaker, is that this business of the insurance would compensate the people who are going to be injured on the highway and compensate the families of those who are going to be killed. Because what ever we do, as long as vehicles run on the highways there are going to be accidents and serious accidents. No amount of action is going to do away with it.

MR. NEARY: More money for the lawyers.

MR. WELLS: I thank the honourable gentleman, that is a real contribution. When human suffering comes up and is discussed in this House, that is a real contribution. The honourable gentleman, Mr. Speaker, has a hang-up. He is a sea lawyer who wishes he were a lawyer. Surely we do not have to listen to that when a serious subject is under discussion.

As I say, Mr. Speaker, not a commission but action which I think is clear and available to be taken and which I have every confidence the honourable minister and his department are taking and are preparing to take at this time.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

HON. T.A. HICKMAN (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, I had not intended to participate in this debate but the very lucid contribution and real contribution by the honourable the member for St. John's South has brought me to my feet. All I am doing really, I suppose, is, by three or four days, making some announcements or giving some facts to this House which I had intended to give on tomorrow, with my estimates.

The honourable member's comments concerning the increase of the minimum limits is a very valid one, sufficiently valid that the government of the day has decided to implement them. This came as a result of the present administration arriving at the conclusion that the cost of accidents, and Mr. Speaker, this may - well I suppose it is relevant because if you are talking about safety on the highways, you are talking about the damage that flows from lack of proper driving skills or failure to take care. One of the reasons, one of the facts that have driven the cost of automobile insurance and the cost of making the limits today for property damage and liability somewhat unrealistic, has been the tremendous cost in effecting repairs to motor vehicles. That is just as costly as the increased cost in awards for personal injuries that have been coming from our courts.

This House might be interested to know that as a result of the studies that government initiated before deciding to increase the

limits, that some very interesting figures came up. Sometimes you hear people speak and you would almost think that we were away away behind everyone else in arriving at these decisions, but let me give to the House the statutory limits of the various provinces as they exist today, April 4, 1973.

Newfoundland, the statutory limit at this time is \$35,000, Nova Scotia is \$35,000; New Brunswick \$35,000; Prince Edward Island \$35,000; Quebec, which I think has the worst or one of the worst motor vehicle accident records in Canada, \$35,000; British Columbia \$50,000 plus accident benefits; Alberta \$35,000 plus accident benefits; Ontario \$50,000 plus accident benefits; Manitoba \$50,000 plus accident benefits and Saskatchewan \$50,000.

I was a bit surprised when I saw some of these statutory limits, particularly from the heavily populated Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, where the awards of courts are substantially higher than in this province and where I am sure the property damage costs are considerably higher too. This is what they have done. I was equally surprised when in the two provinces that have New Democratic Party Administrations, where they have a form of socialized insurance, that they too have not yet gotten around to increasing substantially the limits.

I think that this House would also be interested in learning of the actual cost of increasing the limits. Again I am advised by the insurance industry that when the Bill that we bring before the House this year is passed, it will not result in the increase being paid that day but when you get your next insurance bill. Costs are not inconsequential, Mr. Speaker, to increase the liability and property damage coverage from \$35,000 inclusive to \$50,000 will result in a nine percent increase in the cost of an automobile insurance on the average. I realize that some companies are broad companies and some are not and maybe for package deals you would get something less but on the average it is nine percent. From \$35,000 to \$75,000 inclusive will result in an increase in the

automobile insurance premium of twelve per cent in the premium and to increase it from \$35,000 inclusive to \$100,000 inclusive the cost in an increased premium on automobile insurance premium will be fifteen per cent. These things have to be weighed. We have I believe one of the highest rates of automobile insurance you will find anywhere in Canada today. This is caused by many factors not the least of which, I repeat, not the least of which is the high cost of repairing motor vehicles that are repaired under insurance policies in the coverage provided.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, I simply want to indicate to this House that this government have been very decisive, had taken the necessary action and has taken it in the light not only of the need of protecting the motorist and the public but in the light of what the experience has been in other provinces.

Government have also made a decision, Mr. Speaker, which I am sure will commend itself to the people of this province and will indicate that we are not only concerned about the rising cost of insurance. Some people may argue that a nationalized insurance scheme is the answer. The experience so far has certainly not indicated that at all. The experience in the two provinces where they have it has been that whilst the rates are that much below that provided by the private industry, the rates are governed by cost the same as everywhere else and then there is a whopping big sum of money taken out of the public treasury to subsidize one group of society, namely the motorists.

The in thing, Mr. Speaker, appears to be, and it is something that has come to North America only recently, the concept of no fault insurance. Indeed I was at a Canadian Bar Convention less than ten years ago when the then Dean of Alberta Law School, out of a clear blue sky, came out with this theory. It was totally unheard of at that time in North America. Most people thought that there was something wrong with the fellow and it was a revolutionary idea. But the concept behind no fault insurance is that within certain limits, as I understand

and I should point out that we have a member in this House who amongst the legal profession of Canada is considered as probably the authority on no fault insurance, the honourable the Minister of Mines and Energy, who is the only Newfoundlander I think who has a Master of Laws Degree, when he was doing his postgraduate work at Yale, his thesis, I believe, was on no fault insurance.

But as I understand the concept that following an accident upon the highway, the question of fault is not relevant, up to specified limits. This does not mean that if the injuries sustained and the damages flowing are in excess of this that any person is deprived of the right to go for more. It works somewhat on the same scheme as the principle of workmen's compensation.

What this government have done, it has appointed a committee of cabinet, consisting of the Minister of Provincial Affairs, who is the minister responsible for the administration of the Insurance Act or at least the Superintendent of Insurance reports to him; the honourable the Minister of Mines and Energy, whose expertise we are certainly going to avail of, and myself as chairman of the committee. We have been charged by cabinet between now and the next sitting session of the House to work in conjunction with the insurance industry, who incidentally favour no fault insurance, as I am told; to take a look.

This will not mean any royal commissions or any great travelling or anything, to take a look at the one or two jurisdictions in North America where no fault insurance has been implemented, to see how it is functioning from a safety factor, and this is where it is relevant to this resolution, Mr. Speaker, that when no fault insurance is being debated in some jurisdictions there has been fear expressed that when everyone realizes, when all motorists realize that they no longer have to concern themselves or they may not have to concern themselves with respect to their own negligent actions, that they may be somewhat more reckless.

The State of Massachusetts implemented no-fault insurance, They went from I think compulsory insurance to no-fault insurance this past

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year. The records that will be available from their Superintendent of Insurance before the end of this summer, as to what affect this has had on the behaviour of motorist on the

MR. HICKMAN: highway, will be very significant.

Mr. Speaker, when we have completed our work as a cabinet committee and reported to cabinet, cabinet has made its decision, I would hope that as a result of that, that there will be further extended coverage, further protection to those that are using the highway. I cannot anticipate what the findings are going to be but the main factor, the guiding factor will be what effect this has had on the motoring public in the areas where we now have no-fault insurance and obviously, we also have to take into account the cost.

Thirdly, we should always bear in mind, Mr. Speaker, I submit, that if private industry is prepared to do it, that it is an awful lot better than the kind of subsidized insurance we have seen in force in a couple of jurisdictions in Canada.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there is also at work within the administration at this time, again in the interest of highway safety, and I suppose there should have been a press conference on it and I suppose it should have been shouted to the house tops, but there is an organization here, and I am trying to remember the name of it but it is a women's institute or one of these similar organizations, headed by a lady, I think from Mount Pearl, who came to see me last spring or this spring, anyway came to see me, and asked if we would be prepared, as a government, to look into and if I would, in particular along with the Minister of Highways, from the safety point of view, look into the idea of changing the penalties imposed or enlarging or extending the penalties imposed upon those convicted of drunken or impaired driving.

Apparently the Province of Alberta, they are in the process of implementing a scheme that a driver who has his licence suspended as a result of a conviction for impaired driving must, during the period of suspension, attend a number of defensive driving courses given by the police and safety officials, must write an examination at the end of that period to indicate that the instruction that he has

MR. HICKMAN: received from competent instructors in defensive driving and at the same time, he is exposed to a fair amount of film strip and that sort of thing showing what flows from accidents on the highway arising out of intoxicated drivers. That report is submitted to the magistrate and then the suspension is lifted.

Some of the provinces, apparently, have decided against this. I think that on occasion you will hear people quoting the infringement of the liberty of the subject, if you make a man take that kind of course.

But, Mr. Speaker, we as an administration feel that we have an obligation to see the effectiveness of the approach that is being used in one of our sister provinces.

The honourable the Minister of Communications and Transportation has already indicated the steps we are taking as an administration to move toward the point system. Why I refer to these things at

this time, Mr. Speaker, is to indicate to this House that it has been demonstrated very clearly indeed that this administration and the present minister responsible for highways and safety have been doing a great deal during the past year in the interest of highway safety. This administration is very cognizant indeed of the aspects of highway safety that require our attention and are getting our attention.

It is rather regrettable that the debate on highway safety became involved as well in the question of reflectorized plates. I saw a programme on television concerning reflectorized plates. I understand from the honourable minister that this programme was a film strip prepared by the manufacturers of this plate. Apparently it was a franchise deal; I do not know. I wish that at the time that I was looking at it I had known in advance from where it emanated. There is nothing at all wrong with any manufacturing company trying to sell his product. I looked at it very carefully thinking that it was coming from the safety council or some similar organization but apparently was not. This does not detract from some of the features and some of the facts that were shown on that film but at the same time the public had the right to know that it may not have been a totally unbiased presentation.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen coming to the fore in this province, within the past few years, more and more courses in defensive driving. This is being encouraged, I am told, by the insurance industry. I understand that if a young person about to obtain a motor vehicle licence, a driving licence, should take this course in defensive driving and successfully passes it, that this results in not a considerable reduction in the insurance premium.

The question of the enforcement of the Highway Traffic Act by the police - well I suppose you can talk forever on numbers. No one should ever assume that because he drives from here to Whitbourne and is not overtaken by a police car, that the police presence is not around. The approach that is used by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police - I suggest that their effectiveness as highway police has been very amply demonstrated throughout Canada - they have certain formulae and I have seen the way their graphs work, that their presence and their enforcement in a particular area is very intense - down will go the accident rate. When they move to another area, down will go that accident rate. Part of the game, if it is a game, part of the action is to make sure that no areas in the province are without police presence for any sufficient time. The results have been pretty astounding, Mr. Speaker.

This year there was something accomplished by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police which was totally beyond the financial resources of this province. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, without any cost to us, and I believe we were the first province to be blessed with it, bought a very modernly equipped helicopter which they are using for enforcing the Highway Traffic Act, the Criminal Code and safety on the highway. The cost was just about \$1 million almost, close to it. It did not cost this province a cent. This piece of equipment has already been proven to be a very effective law enforcement instrument along our highways. I was aware the first day that it went into operation (I think it was the Labour Day weekend, some holiday weekend anyway) of where it was going to be. That helicopter need not be in sight, as far as the motorist is concerned, to have his car under total surveillance. No one should ever think that the man up in the air through certain means cannot very quickly and effectively determine (1) whether you are exceeding the speed limit; and (2) whether you are driving on the wrong side of the highway or committing any other breaches of

highway safety rules.

Mr. Speaker, I simply bring these things to the attention of this honourable House because I believe in this kind of debate (with the exception of the chit-chat on the purchasing and the method of purchasing of the reflectorized licence plates) which was a rather sane, responsible debate. It accomplishes a purpose in that it indicates that all members of this House have a concern for highway safety, and this certainly is not peculiar to members of the House. It also gives us an opportunity or the government, Mr. Speaker, to indicate to the people of this province that there has been some very positive action in the way of highway safety taken by this administration.

It indicates and this is most pertinent to the resolution because the resolution asked that there be a commission of enquiry to examine and enquire into and investigate all aspects of highway safety. Whether we, as an administration, have taken all of the steps that we should have to take can always be the subject matter of debate. As driving habits change more action will be taken. No one will ever reach the ideal position where we have the best safety records and the best safety rules imaginable. But what I do hope, Mr. Speaker, in indicating the positive approach that this administration have taken, that the very things that a commission of enquiry would have to investigate and would investigate, if so appointed, have already been investigated by this administration during our term of office, under the leadership of the hon. Minister of Transportation and Highways and that we, as an administration, feel that a great deal more progress will be made, that the motoring public and the public generally in this province will find a great deal more security and a great deal more confidence in the enforcement of regulations or the bringing in

of new regulations than in making public exchanges and public controversy and endless debate about the colour of licence plates or whether they are reflectorized. That kind of debate I submit, Mr. Speaker, raises a question in the minds of the public as to whether the interest in safety is as good or as strong or as keen as it might be. I prefer the approach of my colleague, the hon. Minister of Transportation and Highways, who has gone about his business efficiently and quietly and who has made his investigations, who has implemented his investigative procedures.

I am very proud that our administration have shown a concern for the protection of the motorist in the insurance fields that does it a great deal of credit and shows a great deal of concern. The debate, Mr. Speaker, as I say, is good to generate interest and good to give us the opportunity to show our concern. The resolution, in my opinion, is not the kind that would commend itself or should commend itself to this House.

DR. ROWE: I would like to add a few words to this debate.

MR. SPEAKER (STAGG): If the honourable minister would permit me?

DR. ROWE: Yes.

MR. SPEAKER: Last Friday the honourable the Leader of the Opposition raised a Point of Privilege and debated the Point of Privilege yesterday and I undertook to give a decision on it tomorrow and tomorrow has arrived. The decision is as follows:

With regard to the Point of Privilege raised by the honourable the Leader of the Opposition, it is alleged that the honourable the Premier grossly misrepresented the proceedings of the House and I was referred to Beauchesne for support that the matter if proven would be a breach of privilege of the House.

I must therefore presume that the breach of privilege referred to would be of the general type mentioned in Beauchesne, page 101, citation III, sub-section 1. I would draw honourable members' attention to the wording of this as it refers to willful misrepresentation. I do not believe that the statement made by the honourable the Premier with reference to comments in the House was a willful misrepresentation of the proceedings of the House.

It appears that the Premier was giving a precis of comments passed in the House and whether this precis is one which all members will accept as correct is obviously doubtful, but such a dispute hardly fulfills the condition of a Question of Privilege.

I note that the honourable the Leader of the Opposition when raising the Point of Privilege stated (quoting from Hansard) "He misrepresented either deliberately or carelessly. I am in no position to say which," and that in closing his comments the Leader of the Opposition further said of the Premier's remarks, "I am prepared to believe that he made the statements carelessly."

I would, therefore, rule that the matter is not a breach of privilege and that it was not either alleged or proven that the Premier was willfully misrepresenting the proceedings of the House. I would draw honourable members' attention to page 102 of Beauchesne

concerning Questions of Privilege. As stated there a Question of Privilege ought rarely to come up in parliament. Libels upon members and aspersions upon them in relation to parliament are breaches of the privileges of members, but a dispute arising between two members, as to allegations, does not fulfill the conditions of parliamentary privilege.

"An attack in a newspaper is not a breach of privilege unless it comes within the definition of privileges given above." This is a quotation from Beauchesne.

I would further observe that an attack or so-called attack made at a news conference or subsequently reported in a newspaper article must fall within the strict definitions of breach of privilege.

I would also like to remind honourable members that when they raise a Point of Privilege or refer to a statement reported in various papers, the member is bound to lay on the Table the newspaper in which an article or statement complained of has appeared.

I would observe that this was not done in this particular instant, but I have not made my ruling on this technicality. The honourable the Minister of Health.

DR. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I would wish to add a few words to the debate. I would like to thank the honourable member for White Bay South for bringing this subject to public notice. I think that prevention should be the theme. But it seems to me if 108 persons had died of some infectious disease instead of dying on the highways there would be a tremendous public outcry against the medical profession, health service generally, but unfortunately the figures of tragedy are accepted with apparent complacency by the general public.

Anyone who looks at the figures looks at the statistics, anyone who has seen the results of accidents has to be concerned. I certainly am concerned in about three directions, I am concerned

as a citizen, I am concerned as a doctor and I am concerned as a member of the government.

It seems to me that the public seem to forget that a car is a very lethal weapon and very few people who drive cars seem to bear this fact in mind. It is merely pious platitude to state that traffic accidents lead to suffering, to disability, loss of man-hours, loss of breadwinners, the cost is great in suffering, the cost is great in repairs and health and the cost to families is inestimable.

But surely we know what the problems are. The question at the moment is to try and provide some reasonable answers. I think that first of all we require a much stricter driving test. Even for the experience driver who has been driving for some years, I am not sure that he should now be retested. Experience can often be defined as just repeating the same mistake over and over. I am sure that many of us who are so-called experience drivers by virtue of time alone are not necessarily so.

It may be administratively difficult but I think to increase the difficulty of obtaining a drivers licence, to have a review of your drivers licence and your ability every several years would be very worthwhile in itself.

I think the institution of driver education course must certainly be commended. I think it should be encouraged. As a practitioner there are often many problems associated with drivers of cars, perhaps they are not apparent to the public. What should a doctor do about a patient who has had a heart attack? A patient who has a coronary? Should they be given a licence to drive again? The person who has had a stroke, who has recovered, should he be given a licence to drive again? One never knows the moment there is going to be a recurrence. The person who is an epileptic, should our law say that he cannot have a driver's licence? A person who is a diabetic who has associated with it giddiness and fainting spells, should that person be provided with a driver's licence? The patient who for some reasons, nervous conditions, is on

fairly high drug dosage, should that patient have a driver's licence during the time of treatment? A person who is an alcoholic, a known alcoholic, should that person be permitted to hold a driver's licence?

Another important category of the public are the over-age. The insurance companies insist that a doctor provide a medical certificate before they will renew their insurance. This imposes a tremendous onus on the doctor to decide whether this person is physically fit to drive. If you have high blood pressure, one never knows when the complications of this may arise, so should that person have a driver's licence? These are questions that are not easily answered. But I think somewhere along the lines we are going to have to set up some rather stringent ideas, some rather stringent regulations on who is permitted to drive and at what times they are permitted to drive.

I think it would be inane to talk about reducing the speed limits but I think there is a category of traffic for which it should be reduced and that is the heavy transport trucks that drive along the Trans Canada Highway. I am sure most members, like myself, have experienced at sometime one of these coming towards you, the road is slightly wet, you have not got your wipers on, a large transport truck goes passed, and you are blinded with the splash on the windshield perhaps for thirty or forty seconds. So perhaps the speed of transport trucks should be lowered. I am not sure why we need such a high speed limit. I myself am guilty perhaps of breaking it as much as anybody else, but at one time it used to take three hours to drive in from Carbonear to St. John's, now it takes about a hour and a-quarter or one hour and twenty minutes, but what I do with the hour and a quarter that I save I just do not know. Why there is this madness for speed, I do not know. Perhaps there is no point in discussing speed limits.

But I think that anybody who reads the resolution which is today presented by our friend for White Bay South, looking at the tragic numbers of 108 Newfoundlanders killed and the numbers injured, I think 800 being killed and 60,000 accidents, personal injury to over 25,000 people, 800 people being killed, I mean these statistics are dreadful as one stops for a moment and just ponders about them. But, as I said at the beginning, it

would appear that most of the public accept these with complete complacency. One does not need to talk about the cost to the province in health care, in the repair of trauma, the prolonged period of hospitalization, but they all play a part. I think, as I said in the beginning, the answer is in prevention. We know all the facts and I agree with my colleague from St. John's South and the hon. Minister of Justice that we know the facts. The time has come not for enquiry but to apply the answers and in this regard I would also congratulate my colleague, the hon. member for Humber East. As a practitioner, he is aware of the carnage, the trauma and the problems caused by highway accidents and I feel is competent to assist us in providing the answers.

Thank you!

MR. ROWE (W.N.): Mr. Speaker, I have already had an agreement with the House Leader that if I rose to speak at this late hour that we would adjourn the House. It has been a dreary afternoon and I have another twenty minutes or half an hour of remarks that I would like to make, but before sitting down, Sir, I would like to say that at this time, before summing up, that I am extremely disappointed at the attitude which the government has assumed on this grave issue. The reason that my resolution asked for a royal commission or a commission of enquiry is that I hoped, Mr. Speaker, that we could be able to consolidate, get together -

MR. MARSHALL: I wonder does the hon. member wish to adjourn -

MR. ROWE (W.N.): Yes, I will adjourn, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to make this brief comment or I can go on until six o'clock, it does not make any difference -

MR. MARSHALL: (Inaudible).

MR. ROWE (W.N.): Well, the hon. House Leader is showing his usual unreasonableness. Sir, I will carry on and speak until six o'clock on the matter. He is afraid that perhaps a statement might be made in the House that might counteract some of the trivial nonsense

already uttered by his own colleagues. Well, if he is afraid of that, I am afraid he is going to have to put up with it for the next ten minutes, Mr. Speaker.

I am extremely disappointed, as I said, at the attitude which this administration has assumed in the whole matter of a royal commission to investigate traffic, safety, the carnage, the injuries, the fatalities on the highways of our province.

MR. CROSBIE: To a point of order, Mr. Speaker, has the hon. gentleman not spoken in this debate already?

MR. ROWE(W.N.): I am closing the debate.

MR. CROSBIE: You are closing it. Are we going to be given a chance to speak? We had no warning -

MR. ROWE(W.N.): Listen to him. Tell him to sit down, please, Mr. Speaker, so that I can continue. The Speaker, for the hon. minister's information, said when I rose that if the hon. member speaks he closes the debate. Now perhaps -

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. ROWE(W.N.): Well, he did. Mr. Speaker, -

MR. SPEAKER: It is quite possible that the Speaker should have said that if the hon. member speaks he closes the debate, however the words were not uttered and maybe a vote of censure is in order. It maybe that there are members on my left who wish to speak, and it has to be done with the concurrence of the member for White Bay South who is speaking at this point.

MR. ROWE(W.N.): Mr. Speaker, I have the floor. I have a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I am sorry I have the floor and I have been speaking for five minutes and, Sir, I do not intend to yield. I intend to keep on speaking. The hon. Minister of -

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, I have a point of order -

MR. ROWE(W.N.): I am speaking to a point of order, Sir, if Your Honour will permit.

MR. CROSBIE: What point of order? Are you raising one yourself?

MR. ROWE(W.N.): I am raising a point of order.

MR. CROSBIE: No, I have raised a point of order.

MR. ROWE(W.N.): Now if the hon. minister thinks there are rules for forty-one and rules for himself, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CROSBIE: Do not be childish.

MR. ROWE(W.N.): Do not be childish. Who is childish? That lout over there, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, my point of order is that I have spoken for the past five or ten minutes. If the hon. Minister of Finance is so incircumspect that he does not know what is going on in the House, who brings in resolutions and what not, and then raises a point of order on it ten minutes after I have begun speaking, Sir, then I would submit that he has rested on his rights and that I would be permitted to continue speaking.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to address myself to the point of order. The hon. gentleman rose and it was approximately ten to six and got on with a minute or two of talk about how he had agreed with the House Leader that he would adjourn the debate and speak next week. There was no caution given the House that the hon. gentleman was closing the debate and therefore we have every right, if we wish to speak in the debate, to speak before the hon. gentleman closes the debate. It is a common parliamentary practice to state that if the hon. gentleman speaks now he will close the debate, to give everybody a chance who wants to speak to stand up and speak on it. I simply say that I have a contribution I hope to make to the debate and I therefore ask permission of the House now to speak before the hon. gentleman closes the debate.

MR. ROWE(W.N.): Well, in that case, Sir, the hon. Minister of Finance has shown a notable lack of interest in the past three private members' days, but if he wants to speak to this debate and make some contribution

I will gladly yield and let him speak. It did not appear from his comments that he wanted to speak, Sir. Speak!

MR. CROSBIE: Well, there maybe somebody else. I am quite happy if somebody else should want to speak.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please! I was consulting with the leader of the House. Am I to understand that the member for White Bay South has relinquished -

MR. ROWE(W.N.): As I have an opportunity to clue up the debate. Let us clearly understand that because we are dealing with unreasonable people in this House I am yielding my right to speak, to the Hon. Minister of Finance, because he has such earth-shaking contributions to make. Now when he finishes and all other members have finished, I am to receive an undertaking from Your Honour that I be permitted to clue up the debate; that is all I ask.

MR. SPEAKER: I think the fault may lie with the Chair in that the customary warning was not given and that probably the neophyte in the Chair may have perpetrated this upon the House.

MR. AYLWARD: Any member can speak on this. I do not think just the Minister of Finance but anyone else who wishes to speak on it.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. gentleman for conceding the point with his usual good grace. We had not been given the precautionary warning and of course, we realize that apparently he was mover of the motion. I had forgotten that because the original motion got moved about three weeks ago and since then there have been a lot of supervening events, a lot of debate in the House and a lot of speaking, even by the hon. gentlemen opposite, and I had forgotten that he had moved the motion. I know, Mr. Speaker, that he above all others would not deny to any member of this House the democratic right to participate in a debate of such

importance and consequence as the motion now before the House.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the motion concerns highway traffic safety or at least there has been some conversation along those lines during the past two or three Wednesday afternoons. This is a subject certainly that deserves detail, concentrated consideration by every member of this House. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I would say that every member of this House should speak on this resolution, not a member who should not rise in his place to make a contribution, no matter how limited or how small, on this subject which concerns us all. I am sure, Mr. Speaker, as I stand here before you now, that every member of this House, with the possible exception of the hon. member for St. John's Centre, is a driver of a motor vehicle and if, Mr. Speaker, there is any member of this House who does not drive a motor vehicle, he has at least ridden in a motor vehicle and therefore should be interested in this subject.

Now I thought, Mr. Speaker, when I was listening here today, with quiet, soulful, prayerful attention, that what we heard from the hon. Minister of Justice was indeed a reasoned disposition on the steps already taken by this government to allay the fears of those who might be injured on the public highways, prodded as he was, not by the opposition who had nothing relevant to say about this matter, but by the fearless, outspoken member, the member for St. John's South, who pointed out and illustrated one of the essential facts that the opposition had ignored in their political comments because, Mr. Speaker, quite obviously this resolution arises out of some controversy that has resulted between the Newfoundland and Labrador Safety Council and the hon. Minister of Transportation and Communication. It did not come out of thin air. It did not come out of thick air. It did not come out of

medium air but it came out of newspaper reports of a controversy between the Minister of Transportation and Communication, who was attempting to do the job to which the Premier in his wisdom appointed him, namely to look after transportation and communication in this province, and in the course of that job he has had a little difference of opinion with

the Newfoundland and Labrador Safety Council. Well, Mr. Speaker, are we to assume that whenever the Newfoundland and Labrador Safety Council speak they are right and our minister is wrong or that the government is wrong? Is the only voice that can be right in highway safety or license plate manufacturing in this province that of the Newfoundland and Labrador Safety Council? Are they the repositories of all wisdom on this subject in this province? Does not the minister have in his department people who are expert in these fields, people who have been expert while the past administration was in, where expert to spite of them, are still expert in this field? Are we to assume that they are wrong and the honourable safety council is right, that because they criticize and differ with the minister, that he must be wrong and they must be right? Is that the attitude the honourable opposition wants us to adopt in this House? Well, Mr. Speaker, in all fairness and justice -

MR. SPEAKER: It being 6:00 pm. I do now leave the Chair until 3:00 pm. tomorrow afternoon.