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SPEAKER: THE HONOURABLE JAMES M. RUSSELL

The House met at 3:00 P.M.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

PETITIONS:

MR. P.S. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to present a petition on behalf of the residents of Burnside. The prayer of this petition is that the Community of Burnside be incorporated under The Community Councils Act, 1972.

Most of the communities in my district are incorporated under The Local Government Act and I believe if this one is incorporated it will only leave three communities that are not governed by a local government. I am sure that the Minister of Municipal Affairs will take this petition and I trust he will act upon it with all the speed and power within his ministry. Mr. Speaker, I ask that this petition be placed on the table of this House and referred to the Department to which it relates.

HON. H.R.V. EARLE, MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND SERVICES: Mr. Speaker, I ask leave to present a petition from the town councillors and residents of the Town of Bay L'Argent, Fortune Bay. The prayer of this petition is for a water and sewerage system. In my District of Fortune Bay where there are some twenty-one settlements, there are only two towns which have the facilities of water and sewerage systems, namely the Town of Belleoram, which is one of the oldest water systems in Newfoundland, secondly only to the larger centres such as St. John's, Corner Brook and the bigger settlements around the island. One of the newer incorporated towns namely Grand Le Pierre got water and sewerage about two years ago and incidentally I might say that that town had probably installed the most inexpensive water and sewerage system of any that has been put in. When I hear of the hundreds of thousands of dollars which certain places ask for, for water and sewerage, I think that a community this size who did the installation for somewhat less than \$100,000 should be congratulated.

MR. EARLE: In the case of Bay L'Argent, for which I present the petition today, it is a very prosperous, well-kept, tidy community where the people, most of whom go away to work either at deep sea fishing or to the mainland or on CNR boats, have exceptionally fine, clean, tidy homes, well looked after and well kept. Unfortunately that section of my district, in fact ninety per cent of the District of Fortune Bay has not come under any of the special area arrangements of DREE. In fact there is only one town in my district, namely Garnish, that does come within such an area. Therefore the people of all Fortune Bay District have been deprived of any special privileges such as have gone to many other sections of the country through being part of the DREE arrangements, the DREE special areas.

Bay L'Argent has proven its worth insofar as having had a town council for only a matter of about two years. They have done exceptionally good work in the collection of garbage and cleaning up the place. They are paying their taxes well and they are living up to their assessments. I feel that if they are given what in this day and age is the expected

convenience of proper water and sewerage system that they will most certainly live up to their obligations as they have proven in the past with all their other amenities.

I therefore ask that this petition be laid on the table of the House and be sent to the department to which it relates.

MR. SPEAKER: Is the honourable the member for Bell Island speaking on this petition?

MR. S.A. NEARY: Yes. It gives me great pleasure on behalf of my colleagues on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, to support the petition presented by the honourable member on behalf of town councils and residents of Bay L'Argent. I only hope, Sir, that the minister will convince his leader that we do not have enough infrastructure in Newfoundland as yet and that the Minister of Municipal Affairs will take action on this petition.

A suggestion, Sir, to the honourable minister - I understand that the Government of Canada have lent by the way of forgivable grants and loans \$8.4 million to create jobs in Newfoundland, to fund special make-work programmes and perhaps some of this money - I do not know why the government is procrastinating on this, Sir, when we have so much unemployment, but perhaps the minister may be able to convince his colleagues to funnel some of this money into Bay L'Argent to put in this badly needed water and sewerage system.

HON. G. W. DAWE: (MINISTER OF MANPOWER AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the residents of Holyrood and Country Path, Holyrood, I beg leave of this House to present a petition, the prayer of which calls for the upgrading and paving of that particular road. I have travelled this road many times, both summer and winter. In the summertime these residents have to put up with considerable dust. This time in the year the road condition is in a very deplorable state. It requires upgrading, paving and ditching is very, very necessary.

I would like to have this petition tabled and referred to the department to which it relates.

MR. EARL W. WINSOR: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleagues on this side of the House I take much pleasure in supporting the petition presented by the honourable member. In supporting this petition, Sir, I do not think it is necessary in this day and age for a community, such as the Community of Bay L'Argent and the community which the honourable member just referred to, to have to present petitions to this honourable House asking for upgrading and paving of roads and the installation of water and sewers. Those two are vital to our way of life in Newfoundland if we are going to improve the conditions which we suffered from generations to generations.

I can understand and sympathize with the honourable member when he referred to the dusty roads. God knows, Sir, in the Fogo District, from Gander Bay, north and south, there is nothing but a cloud of dust, as the hon. Minister for Communications and Transportation will recall.

So, Sir, I hope that the good minister, in his good judgment, will now start a programme of paving and upgrading all of the gravel roads, especially in Fogo District, after which he can go back to the honourable member's district and do his.

MR. A. DUNPHY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition on behalf of the citizens of Gallants. The prayer of the petition is the request for financial assistance to purchase a pickup truck for the Community of Gallants. Now the purpose of this truck is to get around in the event of fire. The pumping apparatus that they now have, this weights nearly 500 or 600 pounds, so it would be rather cumbersome to get this to a fire. So a truck for this purpose is necessary, if they are to take care of such an emergency.

I wholeheartedly support this request. It is signed by every responsible citizen of the Community of Gallants. I would like to have this tabled and referred

to the department to which it relates.

MR. F.R. STAGG: Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak in support of the petition so ably presented by the member for St. George's for the Community of Gallants. This is a community which is in the heartland of the woodlands between Corner Brook and Stephenville and a firetruck for that area would be a tremendous asset for the community but it also would serve as a precautionary measure against the outbreak of fire which could lead to vast destruction of very valuable timber in that area.

MR. P.S. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this rather somewhat unusual petition. The principle of the petition is good. On this side of the House we wholeheartedly support it. The fire protection for the Community of Gallants is in this day and age a must. In the past our communities have found favour with requests to government to supply firetrucks and many of the communities around our province today have up-to-date firetrucks which can take care of almost any emergency in the case of fire.

However I cannot at this moment recall any community that has a pickup truck for the purpose of fire fighting with the exception, of course, of the forestry department. However if this is the need of the community then we certainly support it. I am sure there should not be any need for the petition to this House for such an insignificant thing because a fire truck, a pickup truck would possibly cost only \$3,500 or something like that.

But all in all, Mr. Speaker, we wholeheartedly support the prayer of this petition.

MR. M. WOODWARD: Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak in support of the petition as presented by the hon. member for St. George's on behalf of the residents of Gallants. I think it is time that possibly our government should take a very serious look at fire fighting equipment in rural

communities or outport communities in this province. In my district this winter the Community of Nain had the very unfortunate circumstance of having the government store burnt and literally destroying all the food supplies and materials in that community. After the fire started there was no possible way of controlling it and consequently I feel that we were very fortunate that we did not have to evacuate that community of 800 people because of the fact that there were large storages of fuel in the community. It so happened that four fuel drums blew up and the houses clustered together, no snow cleared and with a storm of wind they just barely escaped losing the whole Community of Nain.

There are a number of communities distributed throughout this province, not only on the Labrador Coast, where we have no planning and no provisions made for fire fighting. I think that the government now, after having this situation and consequently costing our government as well as the Government of Ottawa a substantial sum of money to support that community by air lift over the winter, I feel that the time has come when we should call on, I do not know which department, if it is the Department of Justice which is responsible for fire fighting in this province, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER: Municipal affairs.

MR. WOODWARD: Municipal affairs, call on the Minister of Municipal Affairs to start an investigation and look at the equipment that is now available and which in lots of communities there is none, and see what type of equipment that is needed for a community that has no roads, where you have to use maybe water buckets and in areas where there is no water supply. I have known of a number of communities throughout the Arctic, in the Northwest Territories, that are equipped with snowmobiles and CO-2 fire extinguishers. Maybe this is the approach that we should take but I feel there is a great need for something of that nature to be done.

I wholeheartedly support the petition, Mr. Speaker.

NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave of the House to introduce a bill; 'An Act To Amend The Crown Corporations Local Taxation Act.'

MR. SPEAKER: Before we go to Orders of the Day: Yesterday the honourable member for Bell Island presented a resolution which I said I would take under advisement and rule on later. If it can be called a ruling, we took a look at the resolution and we did strike out a certain clause in that resolution and it is obvious on the Order Paper now in the form in which we accepted it.

ORDERS OF THE DAY:

MR. P.S.THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture. Has the government received the Cook Report on egg marketing? If not, in view of the chaotic conditions that exist in the poultry industry, when do the government expect to receive this report?

HON. E.MAYNARD (Minister of Forestry and Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I attempted to answer the question a couple of days ago but I was unable to do so. I made a release at that time which adequately answers the honourable gentleman's question.

MR. THOMS: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could I have a copy of that release?

MR. MAYNARD: Certainly.

MR. ROBERTS: If they are as ineffective there as they normally are...

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bell Island.

MR. S.A.NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question that is most urgent, to the Minister of Mines and Energy. Would the minister indicate to the House if he or the government have any knowledge of the Buchans mine phasing down in the next five years, as has been reported publicly recently? If so, would he tell the House what information he has or the government have on this matter?

It is true or is it false?

HON. L.D.BARRY (Minister of Mines and Energy): On such a serious matter, Mr. Speaker, I would like to have all my facts clear before answering, so I take the matter on notice. To date I am not aware of anything.

AN HON. MEMBER: Can we expect a release or statement on that?

MR. BARRY: Yes, definitely.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the honourable minister and I trust that he will give us an answer at the earliest date possible.

Now, Sir, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Labour or Manpower and Industrial Relations or whatever he is called now. I would like to ask the minister if he has received yet the Hattenhauer Royal Commission Report on health and safety hazards at the Erco Phosphorous Plant at Long Harbour? If not, would the minister indicate when he expects to receive this report.

MR. DAWE: It has been received and it has been indicated through the news media that it would be in our hands on February 15. I have not received anything official on it.

MR. ROBERTS: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister undertake to make public the report the moment it is received as the Premier has indicated all such reports will be made public?

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. ROBERTS: I do not know if you can read it or not. That is your problem.

MR. DAWE: We will have a look at it first before it is made public.

MR. ROBERTS: Would the minister care to indicate how long it might take him to have a look at it? The honourable gentleman, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, has been looking at a royal commission report for a number of weeks now, will it take the honourable gentleman as long?

AN HON. MEMBER: Just as soon as he gets it from the printers...

MR. ROBERTS: Just as soon as the honourable gentleman gets it from the printers. Would the Minister of, whatever he is, I guess he is still

legally the Minister of Labour, Mr. Speaker. No, I guess he is Minister of Manpower as the Act has been proclaimed. Would he undertake to give us some indication of how long it might take for him to read it. There is considerable public interest in the timeliness of this report, Mr. Speaker, that is why we are pressing the point.

MR. DAVE: I will not give you a time limit right now, but I will take it under advisement and see if we cannot calculate one for you.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture. Have the government offered to date any assistance to the farmers on the West Coast and I think in particular of the Cormack Area, who experienced a crop failure in 1972?

MR. MAYNARD: The government have been studying the crop failures on the West Coast, Mr. Speaker, and we will have statements in due course on the matter.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, in view of the representations which I have received from the people of Cormack, indicating that they were told weeks ago that there would be a statement in due course, could the minister indicate how due is due course? We are heading for another crop failure if there are no crops put in the ground this year.

MR. MAYNARD: I am sure, Mr. Speaker, we will do everything possible to alleviate any situations that may exist on the West Coast that may harm the farmers.

MR. H.W.C. GILLET: Mr. Speaker, I have a question which I would like to direct to the Minister of Transportation and Communications. This is concerning the causeway at Twillingate and I am very anxious to know whether or not the government have set a completion date and contracted for that completion date of the causeway? When I say

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completion, I mean completed — paved and ready for use.

HON. T.G.FARRELL (Minister of Transportation and Communications): Mr.

Speaker, I would like to inform the honourable gentleman that I am happy to report, as far as my knowledge at this time, that the causeway will be completed this summer or perhaps a little later this year.

Is that sufficient, Sir? Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. M. WOODWARD: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications. I would like to ask the minister if he has approached or his government has approached the government in Ottawa or have any negotiations taken place concerning the trans-Labrador Highway? If not, are they proposing to approach the government for assistance to build this particular highway that was promised or if the provincial government will take it on themselves to construct this highway and when do they plan on starting such a highway?

HON. DR. T. FARRELL: In answer to the hon. member from Labrador North, this is a very vast study, as he well knows, or in the process of some preliminary inquiries of this town. When full information is available I will be delighted to extend any information that I have to the hon. member. Thank you very much.

HON. EDWARD ROBERTS: (LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION): Mr. Speaker, would the hon. gentleman seem to be saying that (perhaps we could try to pin him down on this point) would he confirm that he has said that no presentations have been made by the Government of Newfoundland to the Government of Canada with respect to this matter at this time?

HON. DR. T. FARRELL: That is correct, Sir, at this time but some preliminary investigations have been done in some other areas up to the moment and it will be continuing.

CAPT. E. W. WINSOR: May I direct a question to the hon. Minister of Fisheries? Can he inform us whether the government paid any reimbursement to fishermen who suffered gear loss due to storm damage which took place late last fall?

HON. ROY CHEESEMAN: (MINISTER OF FISHERIES): Mr. Speaker, in answer: if the hon. member for Fogo is referring to the particular storm damage caused in early December, this matter is under investigation by both the federal and provincial departments. The information, I believe, is complete at this point or very nearly complete and it remains now to determine the course of action from there on but if the investigation is not entirely complete

it is very close to it.

MR. E. WINSOR: Did I understand the minister to say that there were negotiations between the federal department and the provincial?

MR. ROY CHEESEMAN: I am sorry, would you repeat that?

MR. E. WINSOR: Did you say that there were negotiations going between the federal and the provincial for reimbursement of the gear?

MR. ROY CHEESEMAN: What I said, Mr. Speaker, was that the investigation carried out on the storm damage was being conducted by both the federal and provincial in agreement prior to.

MR. W. ROWE: A question to the Minister without Portfolio or the gentleman who will shortly become the Minister of Mines and Energy if this bill passes the House. It is a general question, Sir, but I think a topical one. Would the minister indicate to the House what stage negotiations with BRINCO or any other parties have reached in respect of possible development of the Lower Churchill and more particularly what form is any such negotiations taking? Is the minister negotiating with the heads of BRINCO himself or are there teams of officials on both sides or are there say letters back and forth? Is that the only stage they have reached. Secondly the content of any such negotiations, Mr. Speaker, have positions been firmed up on both sides in the matter as yet?

HON. LEO D. BARRY: (MINISTER OF MINES AND ENERGY): There have been preliminary discussions with BRINCO by committee of cabinet. There will be a report given to the House of Assembly when the stage is reached where it is in the interest of the province to make such report as to the content of negotiations. I do not think it would be in the interest of the province to reveal the content of negotiations at this time.

MR. W. ROWE: If the minister does not consider it an unfair question, which he may well, could he indicate to the House and the public as to whether development of the lower churchill is likely to start in this calendar year? I mean, does he have enough information at the present time to give that type of information to the House?

MR. L. BARRY: Mr. Speaker, again it would I think merely cause unnecessary confusion if we were to speculate. This is a highly technical area involving much study and at this time it will be merely speculation to try and pin down the date when the project will get under way. You can be sure that our government is interested in seeing the development of this resource as soon as possible provided, of course, that we get the maximum return to the province. Until that point is reached our government

Mr. Barry.

feel that we will be getting the maximum return to the province, I cannot tell you the commencement date.

MR. W.N. ROWE: I thank the honourable minister, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the (Acting) Premier. Would the (Acting) Premier indicate to the House what transpired at yesterday's meeting with the Fish, Food and Allied Workers' representative delegation from Bonavista, who are on strike in that town; and if the government plan now to become more actively involved in this strike in Bonavista that is now eight months old?

HON. T. A. HICKMAN (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, there was a very, I thought, friendly meeting with a group of representatives of the plant workers from Bonavista, lead by Mr. Paul and Mr. Richard Cashin, when they reviewed the status of the stalemate at this time and at the conclusion of which the view was expressed by the parties in attendance that any statement at this time would be most premature and more than that would be undesirable from the point of view of those in attendance. I agree to their request that this would be the extent of any statement emanating at this time. They did not go away with any feeling other than (at least they told me) being satisfied with the meeting.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, is the minister aware that in a letter presented to the Premier and circulated to members of the House (I have a copy) that Mr. Paul, to whom the minister referred, said therefore in one paragraph, "in our mind the government cannot remain indifferent to this situation and has at its disposal, ways and means of helping to resolve this situation?"

MR. SPEAKER: Order!

MR. NEARY: So, Mr. Speaker, what I want to ask the minister or the Premier is what is the next step? Are the delegation gone back home to be forgotten or do the government intend to do anything about this strike? What is the next step, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: I think the honourable member's question is out of order. He is asking what the government intend to do and I think that question is not in order.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for my friend from Gander. The mailman just brought around this charming brochure with a picture of the honourable gentleman. (He sits there smiling). It is quite handsome. There does not seem to be a publisher's name on this. There may be some interesting legal ramifications there. Has it been published by the honourable gentleman's department?

AN HON. MEMBER: It says, Robinson-Blackmore on the top.

MR. ROBERTS: That is the printer. That is the p-r-i-n-t-e-r.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. ROBERTS: No, it is not. That is the imperative.

Would the honourable gentleman tell us, Mr. Speaker, if this has been published or if it is published by the Confederation of Municipalities? It does not say anything on it. I just want to know.

AN HON. MEMBER: Float charts.

MR. ROBERTS: The float chart looks like all the float charts, all it does not have are the brown spots. Would the honourable gentleman tell me?

MR. COLLINS: I will take it under advisement.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, in other words the honourable gentleman does not know whether his department published this or not. My God! of all the stupid things ever said. Was this published by the honourable gentleman's department or not, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Order!

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, the minister either can or cannot answer the question as he wishes. What he says is that he does not know.

MR. MARSHALL: Point of order, Mr. Speaker, this is an example: Under the rules of this House the minister may refuse to answer questions without giving reasons. This side being sympathetic to the opposition, does give reasons most times. The honourable minister has said that he has taken the matter under advisement and this is another example of the hon. Leader

Mr. Marshall.

of the Opposition abusing the question period.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, if I may -

MR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Leader of the Opposition is either blind or he refuses to see it because if he looks at the front of this he can see that it is published by the Federation of Municipalities.

MR. ROBERTS: If I make speak to the point of order, Sir, it being Valentine's Day, being filled with the milk of human kindness -

MR. COLLINS: That is your trouble.

MR. ROBERTS: and looking eagerly for the part where it says, published by the - I may add that if it is published by the Federation of Mayors and Municipalities perhaps, Mr. Speaker, could tell us why it is being distributed in this House?

MR. ROBERTS: Normally are the pages in the pay of the Federation of Mayors and Municipalities, where does it say?

AN HON. MEMBER: In the first sentence of the minister's remarks.

AN HON. MEMBER: Do not be wasting Private Members' Day like this.

MR. ROBERTS: Is this Private Members' Day, Mr. Speaker? It is, is it? My motion is coming on.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROBERTS: Yes I have heard of it. Has the honourable member ever heard of Gander? I was speaking to a Point of Order, Mr. Speaker, I think I made the point.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, could I direct another question to the honourable the Acting Premier? I would like to ask the Acting Premier if the government yet have answered a letter from United Steel Workers of America in Buchans, dated February 8, concerning a request to have the government intervene to have somebody from the American Mining and Refining and Smelting Company on the spot in Buchans during the current negotiations between the company and the union who can make on the spot decisions? Has the government taken any action on that request yet?

MR. HICKMAN: It was not addressed to me.

MR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, if I may, I gave an undertaking yesterday that today hopefully we would be able to make a statement with regard to the proposed downtown complex in St. John's and I have that statement here now. It is a short one but it is long enough.

The St. John's City Council is an autonomous body, duly elected and functions under The City of St. John's Act. With regard to the proposed complex downtown, the decision whether this goes ahead or not or whether a public hearing should be held falls within the jurisdiction of that council. There is no evidence that council is contravening the act. In view of this, government cannot and should not intervene. It is not government policy to intervene where legislation gives council

MR. COLLINS: the authority to act.

MR. ROBERTS: Did the honourable gentleman send a copy of that to Gander?

MR. COLLINS: That is a different story. The honourable Leader of the Opposition cannot have his cake and eat it too.

MR. WM. ROWE: Before Orders of the Day are called, I would like to direct a question to the Acting Premier or Deputy Premier, in his capacity as Minister of Justice, and I refer to a piece of lily white journalism, as against the yellow journalism we have heard talked about in this House in the past debate, "The Newfoundland Herald" of February 7, 1973, "Cabinet minister phones being tapped by the RCMP," I am sure the minister would welcome an opportunity to clarify that situation as to whether his department is giving any orders in that regard or whether he has heard of the federal government giving any orders in that regard, or whether he considers it a bunch of hogwash or what, Mr. Speaker?

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, to answer the question the way the honourable member for White Bay South, asked, would be, you know, have you stopped beating your wife? No, she is still beating me, with a great deal of success. So that there can be no mistake about this, never in the Province of Newfoundland since the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Force came to this province and assumed jurisdiction in certain areas has any telephone wire or any other wire ever been tapped by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Indeed, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police as a force, as of today, nowhere in Canada has ever tapped any wire of anyone, even people that have been under investigation. So let me assure the honourable member for White Bay South that, number (1), no cabinet ministers' telephone wires, no one else's telephone wires, no one's have ever been tapped by the police in this province. The rest of the question does not apply.

MR. WM. ROWE: Just a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, it is an interesting point, would the minister as a minister of the province, Mr. Justice of the Province, happen to know whether he would be advised if this were ordered to be done under some federal statute other than the criminal code?

MR. HICKMAN: I do not know. I cannot speak for the Securities Act nor the Narcotics. If it were under the Criminal Code my understanding is that I would. I also understand that there are two provinces in Canada that by provincial legislation, under their Telephone Acts, prohibit it. Honourable members will recall that the Trudeau Administration two or three years ago, through the Minister of Justice, the then Minister of Justice, gave notice of his intention to introduce a bill to amend the Criminal Code to permit wire-tapping with certain safeguards. This bill did not come on the Order Paper at that time. There is an indication that it is now forthcoming. But before this is done, I am told that there will be consultation with the provinces. Indeed one province in Canada already, through its Attorney General, has laid down certain rules under their Telephone Act which would, and I believe some municipal police are following it, in making application convincing the Attorney General of that province that it is essential to the investigation of an indictable offense. But that is a problem far removed from Newfoundland. I would not anticipate that it will not occur here and I cannot speak for what the proposed amendments will be to the Criminal Code.

MR. W. ROWE: Would the minister confirm that his early remarks in respect to the R.C.M.P. also apply to the Newfoundland Constabulary. That is that never in the history of the department.

MR. HICKMAN: I cannot say. I cannot go back all the way through the history of the Newfoundland Constabulary. All I can say is, since I have been in the portfolio, which is five years all told. I have never heard of the Newfoundland Constabulary ever doing this. At least, if they need my approval they have never asked for it and if they did ask for it I would not give it.

MR. ROBERTS: Which raises a further point - would they require the minister's approval as a matter of -

MR. HICKMAN: Our Telephone Act is silent on it. I would think that it is a matter of ordinary proof, Mr. Speaker, they would come and ask.

MR. ROBERTS: Could the minister undertake, Mr. Speaker, to inquire of the constabulary whether they have?

MR. HICKMAN: Sure.

MR. ROBERTS: I mean it is an interesting point.

MR. HICKMAN: It is an interesting point and I thank the honourable member for White Bay South for raising it. I do not want people to be under any misapprehension.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: Motion No. 20.

MR. ROBERTS: The motion which Your Honour has guessed so admirably stands in my name so I guess I will have to take the first bit at it. It is a fairly straightforward motion, Mr. Speaker, while I hope that members on both sides will debate it and debate it thoroughly and at length. I do not think, indeed I have very much hope that it is a sort of subject that will not arouse partisan comment. I do not think this is a sort of motion^{on} which one's stand is influenced or determined by the political party to which one belongs. There are other motions standing on the Order Paper. It may be that the one standing in the name of my colleague and friend from Bell Island may divide the House on more partisan lines. But the one which stands in my name at present, I submit and I hope, Mr. Speaker, it will be treated by this House in an unpartisan way. Certainly that is the spirit in which I proposed the motion, it is the spirit in which I advance it, unless gentlemen on the other side sort of debate with me as they sometimes do, is the way in which I shall attempt to present the motion now.

Let me say at the out set, Mr. Speaker, that I have met with the dentists or with a group of dentists of the province. I will not say they were representing the Dental Association as such but I did meet before I put the motion on the Order Paper. I did meet with a cross-section of the dentists who gave me their views. They did tell me then that they had hoped to or indeed are preparing a brief which will

come to us as members of the House a brief would set forth in some detail the position of the Dental Association with respect to this question, a brief based on the discussions and the conclusions which were reached at the meeting held in Gander last week, a meeting at which I believe almost all of the dentists in Newfoundland were present. They tell me that they hope to have this brief in the hands of the House, Mr. Speaker, by Thursday and they asked if I would be prepared to stand off the resolution until the brief had come in. I said that I thought that was an entirely reasonable request and that while I was not prepared for my part to give up the Private Members' Day, we get one afternoon a week, that I was quite willing and I am sure my colleagues on this side of the House were equally willing to agree if the government so wished to shift Private Members' Day and we would debate the motion for example on Friday instead of today because with the brief coming in tomorrow it would give us tomorrow evening and Friday morning to look at it and to see what points the dentists had to make.

Fortunately or unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, that is not the case. I was told second hand that my friend, the Minister of Health, has indicated that he would just as soon the resolution go ahead today. I assume that is speaking for the government and I may say that I have not had a conversation with my friend on it. The report comes to me second or third hand and if it is incorrect perhaps the hon. gentleman could correct me on it. I regret that we will not have the benefit of this brief however; apparently we are not to. It may or may not make a difference.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the facts on which I have based the resolution itself were set forth in the preamble, in the whereas clauses. I think they speak for themselves. It may interest hon. members though to have some of the figures, some of the statements I make in the whereas clauses while they are statements of fact they are not quantifiable they are not

readily reduced to statistical form but certainly the first whereas clause, "WHEREAS the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador has fewer dentists per capita than does any Province of Canada," that is a fact that is easily -

May I congratulate Your Honour. It is the first time Your Honour has occupied the Chair.

AN HON. MEMBER: No, no.

MR. ROBERTS: Is it not? The first time he has occupied it since he became Deputy Chairman.

AN HON. MEMBER: No, he was in there late yesterday.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, the first time I have seen him in the Chair then. We will put it that way. Welcome aboard, Sir.

The latest figures which I have been able to obtain across Canada are as of January 1, 1972, fourteen months old. They were obtained from the Canadian Dental Association and they show that at that time Canada had 7,664 dentists. If one divided that into the population of Canada as obtained from Statistics Canada and although the press are not officially present I may add if they are interested that I do have copies made of this for any honourable gentlemen who wish them, to stay up tonight and study them, they are welcome to them. But that gave a per capita population of 2,835 people for every dentist in Canada. The province with the best ratio, the province with the most dentists per population was British Columbia which had 1,044 dentists and that gave them a ratio of one to 2,133. Ontario which usually leads in these things, but Ontario is next, 3,241 dentists giving them 2,400 people to every dentist. Alberta, with 616 dentists, Mr. Speaker, at a ratio of one to 2,669 and Manitoba, with 315 dentists, had one to 3,140. Nova Scotia, with 238 dentists, had one to every 3,332. The province with the worst ratio, it goes without saying, was Newfoundland. At that stage we had one dentist to every 8,656 people.

The matter has improved somewhat since 1972 and the figures which I have been given by the Registrar of the Newfoundland Dental Board

show that as of today there are sixty-eight dentists in practice in this province and that gives us about one dentist per every 7,800 people. The Canadian average, interestingly enough, has also improved. It is now about 2,800 people per dentist.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think those are fairly significant figures. They show quite clearly that the total amount of dental services available to our people from dentists cannot be as great as available in any other Province of Canada. Our dentists work hard and they work very well but I think if any hon. member wishes to make a simple test he can find out for himself how great is the

MR. ROBERTS: need for more dental services in this province. All he has to do, Mr. Speaker, is leave the chamber, take the yellow pages of the St. John's telephone directory, pick up the telephone and start calling the offices of the various dentists in practice either here or across this province. Now let me say, if he says he has an emergency, I have no doubt he will be taken care of immediately, in a matter of hours at most.

Mr. Speaker, I submit that if any honourable member chooses to call around to the dentists and ask for a regular routine appointment for prophylactic work or for a check up or for any restorative work, he will have to wait two to three months at minimum, unless he knows the dentist. Obviously, and there is nothing wrong with that, a dentist may accommodate his friends. He may have a spare appointment coming up but the general rule is that a person will wait two to three months at least in St. John's, outside St. John's there are a number of dentists but in most of Newfoundland there are no dentists at all. I do not know where they now are. The Minister of Health perhaps could tell us and I hope he will speak in the debate and perhaps he could deal with this.

There are dentists in Conception Bay, one in Torbay, Placentia got one now, Gander, Clarenville, Bell Island, Grand Falls, Is the gentleman still up in Carmanville? I mentioned the north side of the bay, Lumsden, Dr. Manning is still there in Lumsden, is he? Grand Falls, Lewisporte, Dr. Porter in Lewisporte, Springdale; Sop's Arm, Dr. Pendleton. He also was in Deer Lake, Corner Brook; Port au Basques got one now, Dr. Camp; Baie Verte has a commuting dentist. St. Anthony, Stephenville, Goose Bay, Happy Valley and Labrador West, I assume Churchill is served by ITA dentists on a commuting basis. Twillingate also, at the hospital there, but the point is, even in those areas, dental care is hard to come by but in

MR. ROBERTS: large areas of our province, Mr. Speaker, dentists are just unavailable, because even that long list of communities that we have just arrived at here in the Chamber, Sir, even that long list of communities leaves out far more people, far more of our people in Newfoundland than it includes. Even within the area where there are dentists I would imagine my two to three month figure is as accurate in Harbour Grace, with Dr. Goodwin, as it would be here in St. John's with any of the dentists here.

I think that leads, Mr. Speaker, inevitably to the conclusion that we need in Newfoundland, auxiliary services, auxiliary dentists, auxiliary personnel. It is an old subject. The literature on it is vast. The proposals are numerous. I think the one thing on which there is agreement is that there is no common agreement. There is a dentist in Marystown as well, is there not, or Burin, Dr. Ramos is down on that part of the peninsula.

There were all sorts of proposals over the years, Mr. Speaker. There was a category called dental-assistants, people who have a degree of training work under the direct supervision of dentists. These people in my understanding do restorative work as well as making dentures and that sort of work. They do work which a dentist would do. There is the category used in the armed forces of so called dental technologists, I believe they are called. Then there is the New Zealand system and the present Minister of Health (and I think each of his predecessors have stumbled on this) is taken by it and hopes to make it work. I always felt that if one ever wanted a chance to go to New Zealand, it is a great opportunity to do so. New Zealand has a very good -

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, but not as attractive. Saskatchewan in February is just out of the question. It is out of the question most of the year.

MR. ROBERTS: They have a hill, do they not have a hill in Regina?

My colleague was out and opened a hill one day.

MR. WM. ROWE: It was about one hundred feet high.

MR. ROBERTS: It was about one hundred feet high but they have a hill.

They made it. It is a man-made one. They made a hill. God, Mr. Speaker, if we could only export some of the hills we have.

MR. WM. ROWE: They made a molehill out of a mountain.

MR. ROBERTS: Whereas around here we make mountains out of molehills.

The honourable gentleman on the other side knows, he is paid to make mountains out of molehills.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROBERTS: I said the honourable gentleman is over-paid. I know he is over-paid even though he is not getting anything for the work he is doing.

MR. PECKFORD: Now go back to your story.

MR. ROBERTS: Well if the honourable gentleman is getting paid, we will have some chatter about that too. Then I stand by my statement, he is being paid nothing and he is over-paid. It is simple. Well I will take a further bite out of the honourable gentleman from -

AN HON. MEMBER: Get our teeth into this, Sir.

MR. ROBERTS: I already used that analogy, Mr. Speaker, the honourable gentleman from Venezuela via Cambridge will have to come to terms with that. Was the honourable gentleman really in Venezuela by the way? I only know what I read in "The Evening Telegram."

AN HON. MEMBER: It was not on public expense.

MR. ROBERTS: I am not saying it was on public expense. I envy him having the private means to go to Venezuela. I envy him, I really do, Maracaibo, Caracas.

MR. WM. ROWE: What are the dentists like down there?

MR. ROBERTS: Tell us about the dentists in Venezuela.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, I think the -

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, what about Liechtenstein?

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. ROBERTS: I can believe that but I never have been. I wish the honourable gentleman would tell us about Liechtenstein. He keeps dragging this one in, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CROSBIE: I am going again this year.

MR. ROBERTS: I do hope he does. I do hope, Mr. Speaker, he tells us about it. If anybody has anything improper or done anything improper I hope that the honourable gentleman will see that they are brought before the proper courts and so forth.

MR. CROSBIE: Not at all.

MR. ROBERTS: No! I believe not at all. The Bank of Montreal have slithered off. The Royal Trust have slithered off. We will watch the honourable gentleman on his white horse.

MR. CROSBIE: Sir John!

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I do not blabber on as my hon. friend from St. John's West. I would like to get on with it, Mr. Speaker, if the honourable gentleman could control himself. I realize that it is a difficult job for him.

AN HON. MEMBER: How ironic!

MR. ROBERTS: How ironic? There is nothing ironic about the honourable gentleman not being able to control himself. He has never been able to control himself nor others.

Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, before we went by way of Valdez on a bit of a cruise, the need for dental assistants I think is admitted. It has been widely canvassed in the profession for a number of years. The one thing which has not emerged is any consensus at all as to what sort of assistants they are, who trains them, what categories there are, who governs them and who runs them. The dentists will tell you that they

Mr. Roberts.

should work as assistants to the dentists. There are categories all the way from - is it dentitions? - is there a category called dentitions? There are any number of categories. There are some girls -

AN HON. MEMBER: Dental hygienists.

MR. ROBERTS: That is the one - hygienists. There are some of them in Newfoundland. There is one in Corner Brook, I believe. There is a young lady who works up in the Squires Building. The dentists will say - I am sorry.

MR. CROSBIE: (Inaudible).

MR. ROBERTS: As the honourable gentleman I am sure will understand, my interest in that is only academic at this stage in time. It is all behind me, Sir. I only wish the honourable gentlemen were all behind me.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is obvious that the need for dental assistants is there. I think it is equally obvious that there is no consensus in the profession as to what type of dental assistants there should be. There is, however, one great dividing line that I have seen in the discussions of what sort of a system should be engaged to enable dentists to do more work; the dividing line is whether or not they work under the direct supervision of a dentist. I think that is one of the important points which this resolution raises. The denturists or that category of dental technologists called denturists, do not wish and maintain they do not need to work under the direct supervision of a dentist. The dental profession, the association, I think will take issue with that.

My resolution says, "I do not think the denturists need to work under the direct supervision of a dentist." I find it significant that in five provinces of Canada, indeed the five provinces with the best ratio

Mr. Roberts

of dentists to population, British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario and latterly Nova Scotia, denturists are allowed to practice. I am not clear on Ontario because they have redrafted the bill a number of times on the floor of the House. In Ontario, I am not sure of the category in Ontario. I believe they are or will be allowed to practice on their own. I believe in British Columbia, Alberta and Manitoba they are allowed to practice on their own. In Nova Scotia, I believe, they are to be allowed to practice on their own. I think this is one of the important dividing lines in the various types of assistant dentists or dental assistants that have evolved.

This resolution puts it clearly that denturists should be allowed to practice on their own. That does not mean, Mr. Speaker, that they should be allowed to practice either without supervision or without having attained certain standards. The resolution would require the government to set standards. The resolution would also require the government to put in the legislation provisions for governing the profession, the trade, the occupation or whatever one wants to call it.

Let me deal first with the standards. It will be a difficult business, Mr. Speaker. I do not envy the Minister of Health the job of trying to arrive at a definition of what is a denturist or what is the training level they attain or what is the standard they must maintain in practice. It will be difficult. It may be impossible to get agreements between all concerned. I understand that they are now going through that exercise in Nova Scotia. I understand that they have most emphatically not come to an agreement. The dentists are at loggerheads with the denturists and the government are in between.

Mr. Speaker, the mere fact that it is difficult should not either prevent one from trying or prevent one from succeeding. There are in Newfoundland any number of professional groups established by law.

Mr. Roberts.

They range all the way from the beauticians to the more traditional professional groups of architects, dentists, doctors, going right back to the original group, the lawyers. I believe the Law Society Act is about 1842, if my learned friends would tell me - about 1842.

AN HON. MEMBER: The second oldest profession.

MR. ROBERTS: It is the second oldest profession.

AN HON. MEMBER: What is the oldest profession?

AN HON. MEMBER: I do not know. I never did find out what the oldest one was.

MR. ROBERTS: We better have a select committee on what is the oldest profession. We should put that to a vote, Mr. Speaker, because the non-learned members say that the second, oldest profession has the same standard as the oldest profession. This may cross party lines, Mr. Speaker. Anyway, Mr. Speaker, standards can be set. All that the resolution would require is that they do be set. That would be the essential way of the public interest being protected. The public would know that if they went to a person, calling himself a denturist or a dental technologist, (the dentists do not like the phrase denturists. They think it should be a dental technologist) - a member of the public going into the office of a denturist, call him what you may, would know that that person had reached certain standards and that he had attained certain qualifications.

The board to supervise it, I suggest, would be appointed by the government under legislation, again not a new idea. The new Medical Act will require this. I understand that negotiations are coming on very well. It will require lay representation, a new feature in this province. It should have been done years ago. I would like to see it done here. It would allow the dentists to be represented, the denturists and a medical doctor. I suggest in the resolution, Mr. Speaker, no number but such a board would be five, seven or nine people.

Mr. Roberts.

They would have the responsibility for licencing and for discipline. I think that these two facts would give us reasonable protection. The fact that these would be governing bodies, at least as good as those governing any other profession in the province, I think would give some reassurance to people.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think the denturists have made a reasonable case. I do not agree with their letter. They have sent a letter around to all members of the House of Assembly. It is a copy of a letter addressed to the hon. Minister of Health, dated February 12. I do not agree with every thing in it by any means. I do think that the request that the practice of denturists be legalized in Newfoundland is a reasonable one. I think it will provide us with an improved service for our people. I think that service can be provided under adequate and sufficient safeguards for the health of our people. I do hope that the government will make it possible for this to go ahead. I am interested in it mainly because it would provide more dental service to our people. Even if we do succeed in getting a category of dental assistants along the New Zealand or Saskatchewan line, that still will not meet the need. It cannot meet the need. I was always told by my officials, when I was Minister of Health and I have every reason to think that my successor in that portfolio received the same advice, that the dental problems in Newfoundland are one of the great public health problems that we face today. The fact that most of our people have not had access to adequate dental services - by that I do not mean getting teeth pulled, because you can always get a tooth pulled - I mean the regular checkups, the prophylactic dentistry which the dental professionals will tell you is essential to good dental health.

I agree completely and

I am delighted that my friend the honourable gentleman has carried on the policy instituted by the government of which I was part while I was the Minister of Health. Well I hope they can improve it. It needs improvement. It certainly has not been noticeably successful during my tenure. I hope it is more successful. Fluoridation is essential as well. Indeed I would like to see the government order fluoridation. Order it. I realize it is a contentious issue. It is another subject. But my own personal wish would be to order it. The government of which I was apart did not take that view. We took a different position.

But, Mr. Speaker, the lack of dental care does extract a high price. Those of us who represent rural constituencies in particular, know that it is a crying shame, almost every child fifteen, sixteen or seventeen has either had teeth or has his or her teeth removed. It is bad in a health sense to be dentureless, it is bad in a cosmetic sense, it is bad in a social sense. It just does not make sense in any way at all. I believe that if we allow denturist to practice in this province under proper safeguards and with appropriate standards we would have helped to lessen that state. We will not remove it, Mr. Speaker. There will be people standing in this House fifty years from now and when they are talking about dentistry, I am sure they will be saying we do not have fully adequate dental services in Newfoundland. But I think we can have more adequate dental services by using denturists. That is why I moved the resolution.

Now let me, Mr. Speaker, mention merely two other things, first the question of raids or if you wish the R.C.M. Police carrying out their duties. My understanding of the situation is, of the 1968 Dental Act, and I guess the honourable gentleman for St. John's West was Health Minister at the time it was enacted, that Act gives the Dental Board which is made up of dentists a very great deal of power. I am told that the Dental Board says that they have received complaints about the quality of work denturists have been performing. I know nothing of the merit of the complaints or indeed

whether in fact there have been complaints, but I am told there have been such complaints and I am willing to accept that.

The Dental Board feel that they must follow up on these complaints and that is what lead to the request that they have made to the R.C.M. Police to carry out the raids, to seize evidence and to prepare for prosecution.

I would hope, Mr. Speaker, and I cannot see any act of that sort being mandatory, I cannot see it requiring that a prosecution must be laid. It would be a very unusual act if it left discretion with nobody. I would hope that the Dental Board would refrain from these prosecutions, this activity, until such time as this matter is disposed of by this House. Now it might be disposed of this day. The resolution may die here on the floor of this House, in which case we will go back to the status quo, we will go on as we have been.

I hope it will not be. I hope the House will accept this resolution. It merely directs the government to do something. It will obviously take the government an amount of time to do it. There are difficulties and the government have a lot of things to do. They have not done very much. But I would hope that if the resolution is accepted the Dental Board will refrain I think it is needlessly provocative of them. They may well have received complaints and they may well feel that these complaints are justified. But I would feel and I have not talked to the Minister of Health but I am sure that he could find a way to meet any reasonable complaints to ensure that the public interest is protected without the spectre of the Mounted Police raiding a man's home or a man's office, whether it be in the afternoon or the night that is beside the point.

Let us never forget that the only reason the Dental Board or any board have been given these powers by this House, the same as the medical profession has it or my own profession of law or the architectural profession or any profession, the only reason they have it, and all professional tend to forget this, Mr. Speaker, they tend to think that they have a God given right to a closed shop, but they do not. They have

that right to protect the public interest and for no other reason. To protect the public interest by setting standards and by maintaining them and by taking whatever disciplinary action is necessary. The Dental Board only have that power because this House gave it to them in a piece of legislation.

I suggest to them, as a member of this House, that if the House accept the resolution, they should take the hint. They should catch the breath of the wind. The winds of change will be blowing and they should refrain, the denturist, for their part, if they - I do not think they have provoked these things in this province, in other provinces they have, they deliberately sought a confrontation, I suppose they may say there was no other way they could get their case heard. But here in Newfoundland the case is being heard. The denturists, if they feel like provoking any further confrontation, I hope will also refrain.

I do hope the matter will be settled. I do not think the place to settle it is with R.C.M. Police raids or in the courts, not until this House has ruled.

Mr. Speaker, just one other point in closing; the denturists maintain and the evidence seems to support them on this although a dentist will quarrel with this, that the service they provide will reduce costs of dentures significantly. The dentist do quarrel with this. I am in no position to say who is right or who is wrong. If I had to make a judgment I would suspect as in most of these matters there is some right on each side and some wrong on each side. My experience has been that very much along these lines the honourable gentleman for St. John's South, who has been involved in this type of thing, is one who I suspect would find the same thing. There is usually right on both sides and usually wrong on both sides.

I hope the cost can be lowered. The original resolution that I had drafted required the government to take steps to lower the prices or to control the prices. I did not put that in the resolution in the House first of all because I have grave doubts as to whether it is constitutionally

possible for this House to undertake such acts. But even if it is possible to do that because I have very grave doubts whether that larger principle should be embodied in a resolution which really deals with another matter, another matter of substance nonetheless I think the fact of cost is one which should concern us. There are thousands of people in Newfoundland who need dentures today. For many of those people the cost of dentures is a very expensive item. I am told they are around \$200 or \$300, Is that the sort of charge that one gets into for a normal, an upper and lower plate, without complications?

AN HON. MEMBER: Including the surgery.

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, but I mean it is not that sort of think. You know it is not a five dollar charge, it is a couple of hundred. The denturists apparently produce what they say to be a similar service from \$100 to \$200. The dentist say it is not a similar service. The denturists say it is. I am not taking the position because I do not know. I think that is a significant fact and one which should be borne in mind in the debate.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, let me say again that I put this motion forward in a completely nonpartisan sense. I do not pretend to be nonpartisan because I am not most of the time. Indeed I think this House is a partisan body. This is why we have gentlemen sitting to your left, Mr. Speaker, and gentlemen sitting to your right. It is the very basis of the system of government which we have in Newfoundland or have in Canada or the so-called British system. Parties are the very life and stuff and essence of the democratic system as it exists in Newfoundland and in Canada.

But I put this forward not as a Liberal measure or as a Progressive Conservative measure or anything else, I put it forward as a measure which I believe should come to the floor of the House, which I believe is timely and which I believe is one that has benefits for all of our people. Without any hesitation at all I ask for the support of each and every honourable member for this resolution.

Thank you.

HON. DR. A. T. ROWE: (MINISTER OF HEALTH): I rise to speak to the motion proposed by the honourable Leader of the Opposition on the subject of dental technologist, sometimes referred to as denturists. I would like to attempt to place the whole matter in a proper perspective for the benefit of the members of the honourable House and for the public generally.

Before I get into my subject I would like to refer to some of the points made by the honourable Leader of the Opposition and certainly as far as I am concerned there are no political aspects in my presentation. I happened to be much more interested in the matter of health than in politics.

As far as the question he raised of waiting until after the brief from the dentist come, I think that in this direction that we are perhaps in a much safer position to speak before the dentists' brief arrives as we cannot then be considered to have based our presentation on the suggestions made by the dentists. So I feel in this regard

or we cannot be considered to have aligned ourselves with any suggestions made in their brief.

MR. ROBERTS: (Inaudible)

DR. ROWE: Well that will be available. No one would disagree with the statistics presented by the honourable member on the dental-patient-ratio and certainly everybody would certainly agree with the need for improved dental care.

As far as the question raised is concerned, at the present time, under the act, the denturists are practicing illegally and this is the question which we should discuss with the honourable Minister of Justice.

On Monday, February 12, I received a brief from the denturists a copy of which was at the same time passed to each of the members of this honourable House and this brief is now being studied by me and by officials of my department. However, I should like to make it clear that at no time have the denturists contacted me directly or requested an interview with me. Contact indeed was made with me only obliquely by several members of the House of Assembly to whom the denturists have brought their problems. I should state at the outset that the denturist, although he does not legally exist in this province at the present time or indeed in certain other provinces, is a dental technologist or a dental mechanic and the term denturist is itself really a self-appointed title.

In line with certain other provinces, I should state that the government will give serious consideration to the legislation for denturists and with this end in view we are at present studying the legislation which is in effect and the legislation which is proposed in other provinces, those who have legalized and are proposing to legalize.

The two main arguments put forth in favour of unsupervised denturists dealing directly with the public are; (1) Dentures will be provided at a much lower fee and (2) The denturists will be able to provide denture service to areas which do not have access to dental

services.

The experience in provinces where denturists have been licenced seems to indicate that this does not always in fact occur. For instance, reference is made in the 1970 Wells Report, presented to the Government of Ontario. It looked into the matter very carefully and made the following statement which is worth giving a quote. "The ad hoc committee on dental auxiliaries has been perturbed by the manner whereby a decision was made to licence dental mechanics in British Columbia and Alberta. It considers that it was most inappropriate for those provinces to licence persons, with dubious qualifications and a record of illegal practice, to perform their services directly with the public. The committee members submit that the claims that this step would reduce the cost of prosthetic services and would increase service in rural areas are largely unsupported. "

"There is evidence that after this legal decision was made, the great majority of dental mechanics practiced in the large cities and the cost of their services rose because they had to maintain practice establishments with higher overhead costs."

It would be interesting for the members of this honourable House to hear at this time some information regarding the situation in certain other provinces as it applies to the question of denturists or dental technologists.

The Leader of the Opposition said that there are provinces where they are allowed to practice. Let us just look at a few of them. In the Province of British Columbia these workers are classified as dental mechanics and they are permitted to make full dentures only when they receive a certificate of good oral health from a dentist concerning the customer about to receive the dentures. That is quite a stipulation. In British Columbia they are allowed to practice. The requirement to practice in British Columbia is two years in a vocational school giving a course in dental mechanics, followed by two years

apprenticeship under a certified dental mechanic. A very stringent rule, a very acceptable rule. No quarrels, that is British Columbia's stand.

In the Province of Manitoba, they are also called dental mechanics. They are at present developing a training programme. I understand the regulative requirements will be similar to those of the Province of British Columbia, but I think in Manitoba, the possibility of the grandfather clause may operate with suitable reservations. Two provinces with very stringent requirements.

In the Province of Alberta they are referred to in the act as certified dental mechanics and they require as in British Columbia, two years vocational school training in a dental course and two years apprenticeship under a certified dental mechanic.

In the Province of Saskatchewan no act has been passed. As far as I can establish, authorization exists only for dental mechanics to repair dentures. This can be done without supervision by a dentist.

The Province of Ontario, the bill has passed third reading but it is important to note that the act has not been gazetted. In the Province of Ontario they are called dental therapists and they are required to work under the supervision of a dentist. Of course in Ontario with the act not being gazetted, and until it is gazetted, there is no authorization for people to perform work in this capacity.

I note that in Ontario, the penalty for practicing in this capacity outside the law, is a two thousand dollar fine or six months in jail.

Nearer home, in the Province of Nova Scotia, the bill has passed second reading. I have a copy of the act here with me and in Nova Scotia this act relates to the formation of a board and does not include regulations or standards for people to operate as dental technologists. Information from senior health officials in Nova Scotia tells me that they are endeavouring at this time to develop a set of

regulations, looking closely at British Columbia, Manitoba, Alberta and Ontario.

Let us consider; these are areas where these people are allowed to practice, but remember the stringent standards that have been laid down in these provinces.

In the Province of New Brunswick no act at the moment. In the Province of Quebec, I have not been able to obtain any recent information. As far as I can find out, the Province of Prince Edward Island has no act.

Let us forget Canada. I went through some research with my officials to consider what is happening elsewhere in the world. In the United States there is no jurisdiction allowing dental mechanics to deal directly with the public. In Great Britain, the position of the dentist is specified by legislation. The subject arose at the introduction of the great British National Health Act, but the government refused to consider sanctioning practice for the public by dental mechanics. A dental Bill enacted by the British House of Commons in 1955 stated: "No Auxiliary worker may be authorized to fit, insert or fix dentures or artificial teeth." This bill drastically increases fines for those who attempt to do so.

A few other countries, if you are not bored: Germany, this country was the first to introduce health insurance. Due to a shortage of trained personnel in 1914, (way back) dental mechanics were permitted to work directly for the public. In a short time, dental mechanics were performing all types of dental service directly for the public. Dental service was so badly depreciated that the public demanded only qualified personnel be permitted to practice. In March 1952, the German Government enacted legislation very carefully confining the practice of dentistry, including prosthetic dentistry, to fully qualified dentists.

Sweden, the government passed a law in 1957, limiting the

practice of dentistry entirely to fully qualified dentists, with a severe penalty of a heavy fine for a first offence and prison without option for a second offence for technicians and those who attempted to practice dentistry.

One last one, Japan. The law prohibits dental technicians from working directly with the public. Independent studies dealing with the denturist question were carried out, not for the benefit of the dental mechanics or the dentists, but for the benefit of the public. All these studies concluded that

denturists should not be legalized to work directly for the public. These studies were undertaken by the World Health Organization, the Health Committee Board of Health in New Zealand 1961, the Special Committee of the Legislative Assembly in Manitoba 1966, the Wells Report in Ontario 1970, Committee of the Healing Arts in Ontario 1970, the Ontario Council of Health Task Force on Dental Technicians in March, 1972. Number one, above referred to, is a technical report of the World Health Organization prepared by an expert committee discussing the role of auxiliary dental personnel. They made the following observations on the function, training and education of dental laboratory technicians: "The dental technician whose main function is the fabrication of appliances should work according to the prescription and under the supervision of a fully qualified dentist."

Therefore in view of the information I have given pertaining to other provinces and certain other countries throughout the world this indicates that these workers are strictly controlled from the point of view of training required and from the point of view of the work which can be performed and the supervision of this work once the necessary qualifications have been received. However to revert to our own province and our own problems, there are some very important points with regard to proposed legislation which have to be studied and these cannot be decided in haste.

Now one great concern which I have is that in all the public statements and discussions which have occurred recently regarding denturists nobody has deeply questioned, if indeed they have questioned at all, the qualifications or the standards of those who are performing this work albeit illegal at the present time in this and certain other provinces. In my opinion the legalization of denturists or dental technologists is not in itself an important issue but rather the standards that the legislation prescribes. Legislation is easily obtainable. For example, Nova Scotia legislates but no regulations or standards are included.

The important issue is then having as our first concern the

health of our people and secondly the cost to our people. It must be accepted that people who are to be allowed to work in this or any other health area must have acceptable standards of qualifications in training. For example, physiotherapists, X-Ray and lab technicians, other paramedical workers have first to obtain certain standards and have to meet certain requirements before practicing. This point appears to have been overlooked in the public discussions, in the announcements and the emotional issues which have now developed around this subject.

Indeed when I was approached obliquely by the denturists through the two members of the hon. House of Assembly, I asked that they prepare and forward to me a brief. Indeed I asked to see them but they wished not to come to see me. I asked specifically that this brief should contain particularly details of the numbers of denturists now operating in the province and the details of the qualifications of the people who are operating. In the brief which was submitted to you at the same time it was submitted to me, no such information regarding individuals was given to me. I would like them to come out into the open, identify their numbers and identify to me their qualifications and their standards. I do not know and I cannot find out the number who are involved in this type of work within the province nor do I have any idea of the qualifications of these people. Therefore, as the safeguard of health must be my first consideration, I would surely expect that the full information which I requested would be given to me before they could expect any decision to be given in any direction.

Now I understand that the training which was given in this category by the Canadian Armed Forces Dental Corp is possibly of an acceptable standard. If this is indeed the case and similar types of training might meet the criteria of acceptable standards for allowances to practice, if I could be informed about the individuals at present operating, it would help in developing some idea of the type of training

which might be required before anybody can undertake this occupation within the law.

Finally the main object of any bill concerning denturists would be to provide a safe and economical service of making available dentures to the Newfoundland citizens. Whether they should be under supervision and what type of supervision would have to be very seriously considered. They would have to go on an acceptable course of training. They would have to provide evidence of having completed an acceptable course which would ensure that all have reached a satisfactory level. One should remember though that the making of dentures is essentially a part of the service of a dentist, part of the training of a dentist and that dental training is itself a seven years duration after high school. So obviously it is an exacting task requiring skill, knowledge and training.

But to finish I would say that I am not alone concerned about denturists but about the whole matter of providing dental services to our people. We are investigating the practical possibilities of developing other kinds of dental auxiliaries especially in regard to the children's dental services. All of these things are interrelated and need careful thought. Finally I would say that we should not be stampeded into hasty and not well considered action without regard for the problem as a whole.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, in the interest of the dental health of the people of this province I wish to place before this hon. House an amendment to the motion placed by the hon. the Leader of the Opposition. The amendment, that a select committee of this hon. House be appointed to inquire into and to hear evidence on all matters touching upon the work of dental technologists, sometimes referred to as denturists, and to inquire into all matters pertaining to the practice of dental technologists and to hear evidence from all interested persons and to report to this hon.

House. This will be seconded by my colleague, the hon. member for St. John's South.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman has read the amendment. Does the amendment replace the motion? How will the motion as amended read if the amendment is accepted?

DR. ROWE: I told you, Mr. Speaker, in my statement on this afternoon that the House would consider the amendment which I have brought in but in what direction the Speaker will have to decide.

MR. ROBERTS: What I am asking, Mr. Speaker, is assuming the House is to accept the amendment, and probably it will, how would the motion as amended read? An amendment normally drops certain words or adds. Maybe the gentleman from St. John's South, he knows what I am getting at so maybe he could -

MR. WELLS: Mr. Speaker, yes the intent, I think, of the hon. minister's amendment is that when you come to the main part of the motion, "Now therefore be it resolved that the government be directed immediately to introduce legislation," that the remainder of the motion be stricken, as it were, and that the subject or the substance of the amendment proposed by the hon. minister be substituted for it and that it carry on from that point. That I believe is the hon. minister's intention in suggesting the amendment.

On the subject itself, Mr. Speaker, we have heard from the hon. Leader of the Opposition who has spoken at some length on this and I must say I agree with a lot of what he has said. The hon. the Minister of Health has spoken at some length and given the laymen like myself a great deal of detail upon which quite honestly I am not competent even to comment. The thing that concerns me is the principle of what is going on here. Now we know that denturists or dental technologists, as they are called, have not been allowed to practice their trade or profession or whatever it might be in the Province of Newfoundland and the

Dental Act has governed that matter. There have been a lot of public outcry, a lot of outcry from the denturists and there have been prosecutions mounted and various raids taken by the RCMP.

It is not, of course, for the RCMP to determine the goodness or badness of a law and, of course, when they are asked to take action they take it. I do not blame them for raiding the denturists, not for a moment but I do agree with the hon. the Leader of the Opposition that it is time that this was taken a look at. Now he has resolved that the government be directed immediately to introduce legislation etc. I think that is all very well but I think that this is such an important matter involving this group and involving more than this group but involving the dentists also and involving the general public of Newfoundland that I have no hesitation in supporting the amendment put by the hon. the Minister of Health that a select committee of this House be appointed which would hear evidence not only from denturists and not only from dentists but from members of the public, indeed as he puts it from all interested persons who have something to say and something to contribute to this whole question. Because it is only I feel that after hearing this sort of evidence and weighing the thing that a select committee can report to the House and it is only then I feel that this House is in a position to make a decision. I would agree with the hon. the Leader of the Opposition that this is not a partisan or a political matter. Whatever side of the House we are on we have a responsibility to the public of Newfoundland. In this case we have a responsibility to them to see not only that they get dental care insofar as we are concerned in that but also we are concerned to see that groups or individuals who want to practice a certain profession or trade in this society have a right to do so under proper safeguards.

So I think the suggestion of a select committee has a great deal of merit, Mr. Speaker, particularly it has a great deal of merit

because I feel that this House should have a greater role than it has had in the past in the use of the select committee to examine matters, to get people's views and feelings, to go into the whole matter in this case of the denturists or dental technologists whether they ought to be allowed to practice, how they ought to be allowed to practice. I think this is one of the duties of the House of Assembly which in recent years it has not fulfilled to some extent and I would like to see it fulfill a great role in this sort of thing.

I do not know myself whether denturists should be entitled to practice or under what conditions but it is something which I hope as a member of this House to learn and to have the guidance of all sorts of people who would be prepared to give evidence and in due course the guidance of the select committee as we will all receive if it is appointed.

So, Mr. Speaker, I have no hesitancy at all in supporting the motion of the hon. the Minister of Health or the amendment to

the motion that a select committee of this House be appointed.

MR. J. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the amendment presented by the hon. Minister of Health because I feel there are many questions to be answered regarding this rather involved and important question of legalizing denturists in the province. The three most important questions that stand out in my mind are qualifications, standards and number three regulations or supervision. According to the brief submitted by the denturists or the letter from the President of The Denturists Association they point out that the majority of the denturists are trained or previously were trained in the Canadian Forces Dental Corps and they were trained on three different aspects of dental technology.

(1) was to take impressions or bite registrations

(2) was the fitting of a denture and

(3) was the making or manufacturing of denture plates

Now, the question mark that stands out as well, are the dental technicians today working under supervision of a dentist? what qualifications do these dental technicians or dental mechanics have? I would be willing to state that some of the denturists, so called denturists, are dental technicians working underground. In other words, a dental technician is working in a dentists office during the daytime under the supervision of a dentist but is also working after hours, if you wish, as a so-called denturist. The question is, where were these dental mechanics, technicians trained? Were they trained merely under the guidance of a dentist or did they receive some formal training in some kind of a technical course? As we know, there is not any technical training in this province under the technical schools. So, it seems that the only qualified manufacturing or fabrication of denture plates today is these dental technicians that are trained strictly by dentists.

A dentist, as we see a dentist today, is working mainly on live teeth and, as the hon. Leader of the Opposition pointed out and hon. Minister of Health, that with one dentist per seven thousand people, I think it is

very important that these dentists be made available to work on live teeth, to work on mouth diseases etc. and mouth extraction and not for the fabrication of denture plates. So, I think, it is very important that either denturists or dental technicians be allowed to work on their own under some kind of supervision to give the dentists more time to work in the medical field.

So, I would like to see all aspects of this important question investigated and I think it is very important that what this honourable House is doing is going out for consultation. A select committee will be getting the views of the dentists, the denturists, the dental technicians or dental mechanics and the general public and this is very important; the views of all concerned. It is only after receiving the view of all concerned and bringing it back to this hon. House that I feel my government would be in a position to bring in legislation because as the motion previously put by the Leader of the Opposition wanted to direct immediately to introduce legislation. I think it would be impossible to do that without answering all this questions.

I would like to see a training programme for the denturists as they presently operate mainly to detect abnormal mouths, diseases of the mouth so as if anything is found abnormal they could refer that client to a dentist and having it work vice-versa if you wish where a dentist, rather than take up his time in the manufacturing or fabrication of a denture plate, had his client after extractions and after a full examination of the mouth referred to a denturist. We would have both dentists and denturists working in co-ordination. That is what I would like to see in this province, the two parties working together. As it stands today it is practically impossible to get an appointment with a dentist and this is important to the general public. The other factor important to the general public is the cost of the denture plates. I think the main reason for the cost being so high by the dentists today is because of the fact that they are charging for their services. For example, if a client

went to a dentist to get a denture plate there would be at least three visits to that dentist.

(1) there would be a visit for examination of the mouth and for an impression to be taken.

(2) there would be a visit to the dentist again for the examination of the size of the teeth required for the denture plate.

(3) the final visit, if you wish, to a dentist would be for fitting of that plate which means that the client would have to make three visits to the dentist's office. Three separate fees and this will mean a cost to the client over and above the actual manufacturing cost of that denture plate.

So, this could be one reason why the dentist or the plate manufactured through a dental office costs more than going into a denturists office. The denturists claim that they can manufacture a plate, a full plate, for the cost of approximately fifty dollars whereas the same plate in working through a dentists office would cost approximately one hundred and fifty dollars. Now this would mean a substantial saving to those people who are on lower incomes and indeed people who are on welfare, in receipt of social assistance and this is very important. If we can find a system where the two groups can work together and it means the lowering of the cost of denture plates for those people who presently can not afford them, I feel it is a very, very important issue.

So, after the questions of qualifications are resolved and are understood and the question of what kind of standards to be set down and the regulations and who will make these regulations, I like the idea were it is now being brought before the legislature in Nova Scotia where a board consisting of representation from the dentists, from the dental association, from the denturists association and from the medical profession as well as of general public, I think that kind of a board will be a good kind of a board to regulate the operation, if you wish, of all

dental technology in the province. So, Mr. Speaker, before legislature can be brought in, we must have consultation, we must have the views of all the parties concerned. Therefore that is the reason why I support the amendment brought in by the hon. Minister of Health.

MR. W. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I rise just to make a few general remarks on the resolutions brought before the House. I rise to support the amendment or the resolution, to me it does not make much difference, legislation could be drafted by the government and then public hearings held on it or there can be a select

MR. WM. ROWE: Committee of the House and certain informational input can be made in that way. I think the important thing, and the honourable member for Bonavista South has touched on this, the important thing is that as a House we should no longer tolerate any professions whether they be lawyers, doctors, dentists, denturists, architects, barbers, beauticians, you name it, Mr. Speaker, making use of this House to get their own little profession governed by their own set of rules without anyone else really having an opportunity to look into the merits or demerits of what they are proposing to be passed by this House. The important thing, Sir, is that other members of the public who may be interested, have an opportunity to put their views forward and try to change the projected legislation to the benefit of the public generally.

Now, Sir, I do not profess to know much about denturists or the dental technicians or what they propose or what the dentists position is on it. I do know however, Sir, that I suppose inertia and overcoming inertia is one of the hardest things to do when it comes to any profession in our society or any other society in the world. The dentists or the lawyers or the doctors of any profession have a certain sphere of interest, a certain sphere of influence and they will fight as hard as anyone, I would say, to try to keep any encroachment from being made on their practice or into their profession. Luckily such inertia has been overcome in the past, Sir, because if it had not been I would submit that medicine, for example, would still be practiced by barbers. I would say that the dentists themselves are an offshoot of the medical profession historically. So the inertia has been overcome by the efforts of certain interested groups in society. I think that this type of thing should go on. The categories of professions should not be closed by fiat and they should certainly not be closed by the orders of any interested profession themselves. If there are going to be any offshoots of professions, if professions are going to be broken down further then everybody in society certainly has an interest in looking

MR. ROWE: into that situation and trying to see whether that is in fact in the best interest of all concerned.

For my own part, Sir, as the member of the second oldest profession mentioned here today, I do not fear these auxiliary groups or these paragroups whether they are paramedical, paradental, paralegal, para-architectural. These auxiliary groups making encroachments on the traditional professions, as a matter of fact I welcome it. I think it is a good thing. How often have I heard in the practice of law that lawyers do not have time to practice law. They are too busy. They are too taken up with other mundane and sometimes often clerical duties which could be looked after by other people who could be trained to do it.

The same thing applies to the medical profession. I think that the practice of medicine could be done better and cheaper if greater attention, I do not think it is an easy question or an easy problem to overcome and nobody is being a laggard in it but I think the practice of medicine can be done better and cheaper by the use of all other auxiliary groups or paramedical groups. The same thing applies to dentistry. I think in this House we should welcome any attempt to cheapen or make less expensive the services being provided by professions to members of the public. For that reason I do not fear it, I welcome such a resolution such as is before the House today, not only with regard to the dentists or the dental technicians but also with regard to other professions which are presently practicing in the province, as long as there are adequate quality controls on these paragroups, these paradental groups or any other groups or these auxiliary group, quality controls on the work to do, as long as there is no lessening, no diminution of the qualities which traditional professions have been giving over the years.

So I have a great deal of pleasure in supporting the amendment as it stands. We have no objection over here to the amendment; that was

MR. ROWE: one way the private members' resolution could have been worded. I think perhaps what the honourable Leader of the Opposition had in mind was the government drafting some legislation so that we could see where we stand. The government could use some expert services to see what has been going on in other provinces in Canada, other states in the United States, come up with a piece of draft legislation, submit that to public scrutiny and see what comes of it and make whatever additions or deletions are necessary. This is another way to go at it, have a select committee of this honourable House and have some public informational input put into our discussions in that way.

I am happy to see, Sir, that there appears to be general agreement throughout the House of Assembly that something should be done about it. I think that in the past few weeks we have seen some things which we should not see in our society. We should not see the strong arm of the law being used as a bludgeon for any group which is trying to get ahead, especially when the law in that case, as applies to the legal profession or the medical profession or any other profession, the law in that case is really a law which is drafted by the profession concerned, in this case the dental profession, but I do not blame them entirely, is drafted by them and more or less pushed through this House without adequate scrutiny in most cases being given to it.

I think again as I have said before, in the future we should not be used in the House as a tool of any profession. If there should be public hearings, people should have an opportunity to make their views known. I have great pleasure, Sir, in supporting the amendment or the resolution, I do not care which one passes but I support the principle inherent in the resolution before the House.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I indicated first that I wanted to speak.

MR. PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the amendment presented by the Minister of Health and I do so for a number of reasons and one of which was touched upon by the member for White Bay South. Several weeks ago, as a representative of the Premier, I entertained the President and other members of The Denturists Association and at that time I suggested to him that they prepare a brief to be presented to the Minister of Health and that I would arrange, with the health officials and with the Minister of Health, a meeting at which time they could present a brief to him.

Subsequent to that the denturists went away and prepared a brief but did not contact me in order to have the meeting that we had talked about earlier and hence it was left then for the opposition or for somebody else to bring in a resolution on the floor of the House and so it came about this way. Hence what the member for White Bay South suggested, that perhaps it could have been done through the Department of Health, preparing some preliminary legislation and having public hearings and whatever could have been the way to do the thing, but the denturists did not see fit at that time to have a meeting with the Minister of Health and go about it in the way that we had suggested earlier. Hence it came upon the floor of the House and now we have that resolution from the opposition and the amendment as proposed by the Minister of Health. Therefore, because it happened this way, in this procedure, I have no hesitation at all in supporting the amendment as proposed.

Throughout all the districts in Newfoundland it is a known fact that dentistry and dental hygiene and whatever need far more people in the field than at present. Because we have a group of individuals, although practicing illegally, I think their problem should be looked at and perhaps this might be now the best way to do it.

MR. PECKFORD: As the member for St. John's South mentioned in his few remarks, it is a way in which we can make perhaps better use of the various members of the House on a select committee and do a full-scale investigation of it and bring in their report and recommendations. We ask the denturists a few weeks ago

to supply the information from the various provinces and I think the Minister of Health himself since got that information from British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Manitoba and in Nova Scotia and one can see that in the public mind, very often, such a perhaps legitimate complaint is made by a group such as the denturists and everybody gets carried away with the justice of thing that such people should be recognized. They are not fully cognizant of all the ramifications involved therein. So hence I think it is very important that we look seriously at the matter and get at the root of it and entertain the denturists. This is the thing we wanted several weeks ago, to have the denturists come in and give us here some of the problems with their qualifications right now

What of kind of rules, if we are dealing with twenty, twenty-five, thirty, forty, fifty individuals? We will have some guidance as to what kind of qualifications procedure we should set up if we know exactly where these people stand in relation to their qualifications which we do not know at the present time which perhaps through the Legislature or the House we shall now know. So, it is a big problem and it is a problem that now the House is going to deal with. I am very happy, as a matter of fact, that it came up as a resolution from the opposition so that we could get a chance to discuss it, but the problem is far more involved than many of the public realize.

The business of the RCMP attacking or going to people's homes and taking their equipment and so on because their not legally recognized is a serious problem and of course this is blown up in the media and in the press and people reading it tend to think that the establishment is out to get another group of people or are legitimately trying to do the thing.

Well, as the law now exists, you know, what you do, the hon. member for Bonavista North, if you were in a position where the law, you know, let us face it, there is not much else we can do and if somebody

complains about it. I think now denturists should recognize that the elected representatives of the people of this province are going to do something about their problem, that all the facts have to be taken into consideration and that they are going to have to come out as a group, say who they are and what the qualifications are and then hopefully some desired result can be attained. So, I have no hesitation at all in supporting the amendment as brought forward by the Minister of Health and the quicker we get on with the select committee and get all our reports in from all the qualified people concerned the quicker the whole problem of the denturists will be resolved.

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I must forgive your honor but I would like to remind your honour that there are two sides to this House.

I just want to take a few moments, Mr. Speaker, to say that I support the resolution and the amendment whichever comes first. I was interested in the remarks of the hon. Minister of Health and I think he was pretty fair. I think probably he was a little bit naive though in his remark about the denturists not giving a list of the names of those who are actually practising in Newfoundland at the present time or what qualifications they had. I think probably the minister made that statement with tongue in cheek because what guarantee, Mr. Speaker, would the denturists have if they supplied the hon. minister with a list that next the RCMP would not be out and raid all these practising denturists. The minister could not give them a guarantee and I can appreciate that. Well, Mr. Speaker, the hon. minister asked, "well how can you legislate if you do not know what the qualifications are or how many there are?" I would say, in order to get at what the minister is trying to get at, that you would have to guarantee these people that they would not be raided, that action would not be taken.

How would the denturists know, Mr. Speaker, but the Minister of Health would pass the list over to the RCMP, which I do not think he would do, but how would he know that some official in his department who is sympathetic with the dentists, and there are people down in the minister's

department who are sympathetic with the denturists? How would he know that they would not take the list and pass it over to the RCMP? So, I think that is a little bit of an unfair criticism of the denturists. I do not blame them. If I were in their position I would do the same thing but I think that they have made their point.

It does not matter to me whether the resolution passes or the amendment but one thing for sure, Sir, that we do need a service in this province and I found this out when I was Minister of Social Services and Rehabilitation. I can speak from some experience and I imagine the Minister of Social Assistance is finding it out, that people in this province are in a desperate state when it comes to having the facilities to chew up their food. They can not afford to buy uppers and lowers, Sir, and the government does not provide them. I have a letter here from the Minister of Health on a case that I brought to his attention on February the ninth, and the minister himself states in his reply to me, "you are aware of the regulations for supplying of dentures, I am sure that you would appreciate that although we can be very sympathetic to this need, there is nothing in the present regulations that allow us to supply the dentures in this particular case" and the reason the dentures could not be supplied, Sir, was because the man did not have a peptic ulcer.

The minister says, "I have now received the report of the medical condition of this man and I find that in the man the diagnosis is related to anxiety and chronic depression. There is not any evidence of peptic ulcer which if it were present would give me some grounds then, Sir, on which to authorize dentures," and then the minister winds up by saying, "I realize that the supply of dentures is a major problem and I hope that I will be able to work out some practical way of helping our citizens in this matter." Well, Sir, that is the under statement of the year. We have people in this province today who are sick, who have been told by the doctors that they have to be able to chew

up their food, diabetics, people with cancer and they can not get a set of dentures, Sir.

Sir, the stories that I could tell you would make the member's hair stand up on his head and so, Sir, I think it is about time that we took this step. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for White Bay South reminded me in his remark when he referred to the legal profession. Well, Sir, I would say this that if there is a public body established to regulate denturists then I would say, Sir, that this recipe should be copied for other professional groups especially the lawyers to regulate legal fees in this province.

I am sure that these are not lawyers who are supporting me from the other side, Sir. So, Mr. Speaker, up to now the denturists have been driven underground but they have been advertising, they have been delivering their dentures. Not only that, Mr. Speaker, but the denturists deliver dentures to your home, you do not have to go to the office. Why, I was on the boat one day about a year ago and here was a denturist on his way to Bell Island to deliver a set of uppers and lowers to a poor, little lady

over on Bell Island and I think he gave them to her at bargain price \$25. or \$30, \$25. or \$30. If she had to go to a dentist it would cost her a couple of hundred or \$300. Maybe an advertising scheme, look I have a pack of matches in my hand, let us make you smile. Here it is and you have a set of dentures on it. They are not second hand. It says, "service while you wait."

MR. MURPHY: Are these plates reflectorized?

MR. NEARY: That is another story. We will deal with that later, Mr. Speaker.

So I am all for this, Mr. Speaker, but I hope and I think the minister is sincere. I hope that this is not the six month hoist that this House is giving this particular matter because it happens to be a bone of contention at the present time. Controversy is raging over it. The public are demanding this service so I hope it is not the six month hoist that it is getting, Sir. I hope that this select committee if it is set up will not only meet while the House is sitting but will meet all throughout the summer, if necessary, and that if training is necessary that it will commence over here in the College of Trades and Technology this September coming, and not a year from now, Sir. This is an urgent matter. I hope the committee will deal with it quickly and that this September coming a course can be started over here at the College of Trades and Technology to train denturists or dental technologists or whatever you want to call them, Sir.

MR. M. WOODWARD: I would like first to say that I support the resolution and again the amendment I suppose the resolution came first. There has to be a resolution before it is amended. I am not so concerned about the professions in the Province of Newfoundland whether we certify denturists or whether we certify lawyers or people of other professions. But I think the thing that should be done and when we bring in legislation into this province we should see that the province is properly serviced. We should not certify denturists to work in St. John's and Corner Brook and in Grand Falls and forget about the rural areas of our province. I think there

should be legislation brought in, in all professions that we certify. It should be said that they have to work in the whole of the province and not in particular designated or viable areas so that they can make a fortune.

In the particular area where I am thinking about denturists, I do not recall in my day of living in Labrador having a dentist from the Island of Newfoundland. We do have a number of dentists who come in on a rotation basis from the United Kingdom, coming in and working with their patients for a period of five to six months and then going back to the United Kingdom. There is no continuity in the service.

AN HON. MEMBER: IGA.

MR. WOODWARD: IGA, yes. There is no continuity in the service.

I think this applies to all of the professions in Newfoundland. The rural areas are not hearing of the professions. Fine. I think the dental work that is done for Labrador most of it is done in Halifax. If you want to get specialists care then you have to travel this great distance to St. John's or Corner Brook to see a dentist to get some expert work done, as the case may be. I think those are the areas.

I do not want to speak on the denturists or certifying the denturists as such. But I think we should take into consideration when we are from here on in, in this particular House, certifying any particular profession that we must have the understanding that they are going to service the whole of the province and not just a small portion of it.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. T.A. HICKMAN: Firstly, to deal with the rather unusual point raised by the honourable member for Labrador North, I cannot conceive any kind of legislation that could ever be passed to certify anyone, be it a profession or a trade or anything else, that could specify in the legislation that you must serve in a particular part of Newfoundland.

The point he makes that rural Newfoundland has not received the attention from the professions that one would like to see is a very valid

one. But it would be a very sorry day if we ever try to legislate the people as to where they should practice or where they should reside.

My main purpose for rising or maybe it is a twofold one, is (1) I want to clear up this matter of comments that have been made with respect to the R.C.M.P. raiding the offices of the dental technicians. This has not been the case, Mr. Speaker. I will say this slowly so that there can be no misunderstanding. The law is very clear that under the Dental Act which was unanimously passed in this House, in 1969 I think it was or it might have been 1968, there is a provision that authorizes the Newfoundland Dental Association to make by-laws prohibiting any person not registered as a dental technician to practice. It is also provided under section (44) of the act and this is an unusual provision that it gives representatives of the Newfoundland Dental Board the right to enter and inspect laboratories of dental technicians. The act is silent as to who is to lay the information or to prosecute it. Any action that has been taken to enforce the Dental Act or regulations made thereunder.

AN HON. MEMBER: Who was the Minister of Health then?

MR. HICKMAN: I was the Minister of Health.

AN HON. MEMBER: No wonder it back-fired.

MR. HICKMAN: I was Minister of Health and I was very proud to bring in that. It is a good piece of legislation.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. HICKMAN: Pardon?

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. HICKMAN: But I say it was an act, as I recall very vividly, the only person who had any questions at all as to the soundness of the act was the then honourable Dr. Frecker who was rather concerned because there was a prohibition against dentists who were graduates of the schools in France practicing here and we had to postpone it for a while. Other than that

there was a unanimity. It did come in as a government bill. It was not a private members bill. It was a government bill at that time.

But the act is silent as to who is to lay the information or to prosecute that whatever action has been taken in the enforcement of the law as it exists and I do respectfully submit, Mr. Speaker, that it would be a very sorry day indeed if the police in this province or any other place were placed in a position where they would only enforce laws that they felt were good. That is not their prerogative. If this House pass a law and a complaint comes to the police and the same applies to a bingo game, if a complaint comes the police cannot question nor do they, whether they think that bingo is a game that should be pursued or not they have no discretion insofar as the enforcement of the law is concerned. Because, give them that discretion and you are on the road to chaos.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. HICKMAN: We are turning society into no such thing.

Now, Mr. Speaker, because these things and I want it clear do not come to the Department of Justice. because the Department of Justice becomes only aware of what is seen in the paper with respect to these private prosecutions. I did make it my business when I read this to find out what had happened in St. John's. I think it is relevant to note that the two searches that were made in St. John's were made as a result of complaints laid by two residents of this province who had received work from dental technicians, one living just north of here, outside of St. John's, and the other a resident of the south coast. These people went to the Newfoundland Dental Association filed a complaint, asked them to take the necessary action.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. HICKMAN: The Newfoundland Dental Association -

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. HICKMAN: Let me finish what I am saying and I just want to make the fact so that there can be no mistake about it.

The Newfoundland Dental Association, so I am advised, acting upon the complaints of these two Newfoundlanders, then informed the R.C.M.P. that under section (44) of the act which gives the Dental Board the right to enter and inspect that they were to do this and they asked the R.C.M.P. to accompany them, not for the purpose of making a raid, not for the purpose of conducting the inspection but because if they are entering upon premises under a particular act to be there to maintain the peace should there be any difficulty, this is the total involvement of the R.C.M. P.

Now, Mr. Speaker, may I repeat that I would hope that we will never reach a stage in this province or anywhere else where a discretion is given to the law enforcement agencies to decide on whether they believe a law is good or bad. I do say that there is significance, Mr. Speaker, in the fact that these complaints were laid

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by two residents of Newfoundland. The route they followed apparently was through the Newfoundland Dental Board. The act as I say is silent. It was not necessary for them to do that. They could have laid the complaints themselves, if they had so desired. That is the total sum knowledge of the facts as they come to my department.

Now, Mr. Speaker, on a far more or just as important a position - I think that we are very prudent to follow the course that is recommended in the amendment put by the hon. Minister of Health. I would not like to be placed in a position where I would have to make up my mind, simply upon receiving a brief from one group or the other, as to whether the Newfoundland Dental Act should remain as is or whether there should be legislation providing for the practice of technicians, dental technicians. I simply do not know whether dental technicians are competent to give the kind of health care. No one should confuse or should think that this is simply manufacturing a denture. It falls into the category of health care. I do not know whether they should be given the right to do this on their own or whether there should be supervision. I want to hear - I notice from looking at the Nova Scotia Act that they have not precluded the right of supervision but rather they have given the right to make regulations.

My concern, too, Mr. Speaker, is that when this select committee sits, if the House so desires, that it not only take into account the qualifications of dental technicians. I would hope that there would be no suggestion that there be grandfather clauses. There could be nothing more dangerous than saying a man has been doing this for three or four years and nobody has died yet so, therefore, he should be allowed to continue. If he has not the qualifications, if he cannot meet the test, if he cannot pass the examinations that are set by a board or created under any legislation, then he has no right to practice

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and we, as a House, must make abundantly sure that he does not. But over and above that, Mr. Speaker, we should also bear in mind what this may do to the practice of dentistry in Newfoundland. I do not know how many dental technicians are practicing on their own today or, as the hon. member for Bell Island said (I have forgotten the word) moonlighting or behind closed doors; I have no idea.

AN HON. MEMBER: Underground.

MR. HICKMAN: Underground. But any cases I have read of in the press have been confined to the City of St. John's and the City of Corner Brook. There may be others, I do not know. I do know that government have had great difficulty over the years in keeping practicing dentists in the smaller communities and in rural Newfoundland. I am told for instance that this year there are four or five Newfoundlanders graduating from dental schools. My understanding is that under the agreement with the government or with the Minister of Health, the agreement that has been in force for a number of years, that they are obliged to come back and practice in Newfoundland but the Minister of Health does not have the same control of selection of practice as he does or tries to have or thinks he has over practicing doctors. Rather they can insist on practicing in an area where they will make the income that they believe that a dentist with having completed eight years of university is entitled to make or that they can make in other parts of Canada.

I am told that of the four who are coming back this year, two of them have decided to go into partnership and to practice dentistry in the Bonavista-Trinity North Area, somewhere in Catalina, Bonavista. I am also told that for a dentist to practice in rural Newfoundland, in an area of say ten or fifteen thousand population or twenty thousand, that if he loses the right or if he does not get the work to make dentures that we will not be able to retain the dentist in the rural areas.

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I am told that in one area, not too far removed from Gander, where there is at this time no competition from a dental technician, that great difficulty is being experienced in keeping a dentist in the area. I know on the Peninsula of Burin, where there are thirty thousand people to serve, not including Fortune Bay, we have real difficulty in keeping a dentist there beyond a year or more. I know too that a few years ago a dentist was persuaded by the then Minister of Health to set up shop in Conception Bay, sort of halfway between, in the District of Harbour Main, toward Conception Bay North and at the end of the first year he left and went to Labrador City. The reason he gave was simply that he was not able to make the income that he felt, as a dentist, he could make in other parts of Newfoundland.

AN HON. MEMBER: He is greedy.

MR. HICKMAN: Whether he is greedy is not relevant. What is relevant and very relevant is that we must have good dental health care in the Province of Newfoundland. This surely falls into two categories, Mr. Speaker: (1) persuading our own Newfoundland graduates to come back to Newfoundland; and (that has been difficult at times) (2) that we can convince people, our people, that dental health, that good dental practice, particularly amongst their children, is just as essential if not more essential, far more essential than going in for extractions or going in and having a set of dentures. This message has not been getting through. Any dentist practicing throughout Newfoundland will tell you that he is spending far too much time on the manufacture of fitting of plates than he should be or wants to be but simply because our people are not yet dental-health conscious.

There is no province in Canada, and the statistics that have been submitted by the hon. the Leader of the Opposition prove this beyond all reasonable doubt, where there is a more desperate need for

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professional people generally and I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that in arriving at a decision of setting up or appointing a select committee of this House to hear all of the evidence, rather than to unilaterally decide to proceed or direct the government to bring in legislation, that we will convey to Newfoundlanders and others the impression that the climate is not unfriendly in this province for dentists. We desperately need to create that image. I can recall, when I occupied the portfolio of Minister of Health, getting the list of the four dentists who were due to come back to Newfoundland that year to practice and I saw one name there and his home town was an area where there was a need for a dentist and at that time there was a vacancy; I said; " well that cures one problem. We will direct him or ask him, invite him to go to his home town to practice and we will not have this recurring problem in that town any more. He will stay there for good.

He was written at McGill just by the time he graduated and said, "You are to go in practice in this place." His reply was a cheque for the amount that was owing to the government and that he was not coming back to the Province of Newfoundland. This is why I say, Mr. Speaker, that in considering this and in considering it dispassionately that we have to do it in the firm belief that Newfoundlanders and others be left with the clear understanding that this province is a satisfactory place for a man or woman to practice their profession.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would hope that the select committee will pay particular attention to the kind of regulations that are required on any practitioner in the field of dental technology as to the type of surroundings. They have to be clean, the same sort of provisions that you would find in a medical doctor's surgery or in a hospital. There can be no suggestion I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that any dental technician be allowed to practice in basements underground, in surroundings that cause great risk of damage to the health of any person who may go to visit him.

These are the reasons, Mr. Speaker, why I support the motion of the hon. the Minister of Health and why I feel that the appointment of a select committee will go a long ways in placing this House in a position where we can make a meaningful decision as to what is the best approach and what legislation, if any, is required to guarantee Newfoundlanders good dental health care.

MR. H.W.C. GILLET: Mr. Speaker, I would speak very briefly and first of all to get a clarification in view of the remarks that the hon. Minister of Justice has just made and that was that the legislation should be such as to disallow a denturist to practice anywhere without that place being subject to, let us say, inspection for cleanliness and what not. Now that leaves me to wonder whether or not the duties of a denturist would be to extract teeth. In other words the patient would not be subjected to

bacteria or any other such thing. He would just fit dentures, take impressions and fit dentures.

Well I speak from many years of experience with the hospital in Twillingate. We have been very fortunate there for many, many years in having the services of a dentist, good dentists from time to time. We have also been privileged with the services of a dental assistant, a dental technician, a dental mechanic or whatever terminology you might choose to use for him. The patients naturally never see the dental technician. The dentist takes the impression and the dentist fits the teeth. He is responsible.

However in supporting the amendment which I think is a very sound one and I am sure that all my colleagues on this side have already spoken in support of the amendment, I feel that the government should take into account every aspect and of course they have a vast knowledge from which to draw having the report presented this evening so ably by the hon. Minister of Health. They have the legislation

from some of the great Provinces of Canada and from there they can draw conclusions and make something that will suit this province.

I have a feeling somehow that denturists are supported or patronized only by friends. To tell you the truth, Mr. Speaker, I cannot see anybody in this day and age going to a dental technologist or a denturist without having first gone to a dentist to have him take the impression. Even if he did go to a denturist, to go back to the dentist again. This of course is going to bring up the problem that the Minister of Justice has already mentioned. What is it going to do to the dentists' practice in this province?

I agree wholeheartedly that this is something that cannot be gone into immediately. It is something which has to have very serious consideration. I am wondering also, whether or not it is, to use a Newfoundland expression, the thin edge of the wedge. In other words, when legislation is brought down, standards are set and whatnot, I think the legislation should be such as to bind the denturists to the very first paragraph and that is, that the cost, which seems to be paramount in our thinking today, that the cost should at all times remain less than one-third that of the fee of the Dental Association. Otherwise, once having been licenced and certified, it is just an open door to that price creeping up, up, up. They could use the reason; "We are giving the same service as a dentist would give. Are not your teeth just as good? Are you not satisfied with them?" So on and so forth.

I think we all know that just taking an impression and having the upper teeth meet the lower teeth at a point is just not sufficient. There is the bite for the jaw and believe me, I have heard a lot of complaints. We get them, even with a full-fledged dentist and well qualified denturist or dental mechanic, (whatever you want to call him) in our hospital in Twillingate.

I agree with the speakers on both sides when I say, that

this is something that the government cannot go into and legislate immediately. although our Leader of the Opposition has used that word I think. I feel sure that our honourable member from White Bay South has made it quite clear that that word did not mean exactly as it might appear to mean.

Mr. Speaker, I have much pleasure in supporting the amendment for this proposition put forward this evening. I trust that it will receive the whole support of the entire House.

MR. BARRY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few comments on ...

AN HON. MEMBER: Offshore drilling?

MR. BARRY: No, not on offshore drilling, but the experience I picked up in the last couple of months in the various extractive industries which may prove somewhat relevant.

My learned friends on the other side of the House have some experience in other aspects of dentistry, I see, with the verbal anesthetics that are coming across the House.

With the respect to the question of denturists, I would like to point out first of all, declare that I at one stage when I was still practicing law, prior to the invitation by the Premier for me to join the cabinet, that I was involved truthfully, in a legal case. My firm, one of my partners defended one of the denturists so I just want to reveal this at this time rather than be accused at some later date of being in conflict of interest or using my position to further a client. I have no intention of doing that.

AN HON. MEMBER: You would not dream of it.

MR. BARRY: The objective as I see it, the objective the government must have, is to ensure the best possible dental care to the people of this province that we can afford. If this can be done by amending existing legislation or enacting new legislation to enable dental technologists to carry on their trade, then I am prepared to support legislation to make this possible. But, Mr. Speaker, I see a danger in jumping too hastily

to hasty conclusions. I see a danger of permitting emotion to take over. I see a danger of not looking at both sides of the question before enacting legislation. There has already been discussion here of the things necessary in order to ensure that the best possible dental care is provided, the need to ensure that the dental technologists have the proper qualifications, the need to ensure that there is proper supervision and you need to have certain standards set which must be adhered to.

If this were done, and all other things being equal, I cannot see any reason why dental technologists should not be permitted to do the work which should be of benefit to the people of Newfoundland. However, I also had note made of the point just raised by the honourable the Minister of Justice with respect to the economics of this matter. As much as I hate to sound like a right wing conservative, in raising that dirty subject of economics, this is something that this government and any responsible government cannot ignore. The honourable member for Labrador North has already given us some of his views on the economics of the situation. He mentioned that we probably should ensure that dental technologists are required to go into certain areas of the province, while it came to mind as he was speaking, that the honourable is quite a successful businessman and from all reports that I have he appears to be providing adequate employment to the people of his district in his own private capacity.

There are other areas of the province that could use employment and I would suggest to my honourable friend that maybe he could consider whether or not we should enact legislation to ensure that the practices be spread in other parts of the island to ensure employment in less qualified districts. I say this of course with some tongue in cheek but just to point out that you cannot automatically move people around like pawns. You can have certain regulations. You can

provide certain incentives to direct people, whether they be dentists, lawyers, doctors, dental technologists, what have you, to try and influence where they will end up doing business.

But while we still have the present system, the free enterprise system, where you still have people being able to make their own decisions as to what profession they go into or as to where they carry on that profession, you cannot move people around like

pawns. The free enterprise system is based on the premise that the economics of the profession will govern. Now unfortunately the economics of the situation that we have in Newfoundland are that it is really a seller's market as far as dentists are concerned. We do not have enough dentists. We have the fact that they can make a better living in some areas than they can in others. Now I am not prepared to stand here in this House and point my finger at people who to provide certain things for themselves and their families, are going to a particular area of the province to practice because they feel that they will get a greater remuneration there. I say that they should not think only in terms of remuneration, they should think in terms of dedication to the public as well. I believe that we have dedicated professionals although the hon. member for Bell Island might disagree with me there. I say I think we do still have some dedicated professionals in dentistry, in medicine and in law.

AN HON. MEMBER: Dedicated to what?

MR. BARRY: Dedicated to the interests of the people of Newfoundland and to their own self-serving interest. What I am interested in, as a member representing a rural district, I am interested in exactly the same thing as my hon. friend from Labrador North is interested in and that is to see that people in rural areas can take advantage of the dental services available in other areas of the province. Now my fear is that the economics of the situation may be that to take away a certain monopoly, we face up to it, from the dentists, the certain right to exclusively provide services for the provision of dental plates, to take away this revenue, this additional revenue that they earn in addition to revenue from fillings, extractions and other methods of dental care, if that revenue is taken away it may mean that the economics of the situation dictate against their staying in rural areas.

Now I have made a point of speaking to a few of my dental

friends on this matter. I have spoken with some of the denturists and I have spoken with some of the dentists because I think it is important to get both sides of the question in any situation such as this. The dentists say that the people who are practicing in St. John's are not all that interested in doing the denture work. Now I may be wrong here or they may be wrong but they tell me that the majority of dentists practicing in urban areas are not too interested in keeping the work involved in providing dentures. But they say that it is absolutely imperative that dentists moving into rural areas be able to get in this and be able to have sufficient business in this area, the provision of dentures, because if they do not then they will not be making enough money to justify their going into rural areas.

So as hard as it may be or as unsatisfactory as it may be, in

looking at the hard, cold economic facts of life, these are things that we have to keep in mind when we decide something like this

I for one would not like to see this government make a decision or this House enact legislation that would have the effect of driving dentists away from our rural areas or indeed have the effect of driving dentists away from the Province of Newfoundland generally. We only have so much control and only so much influence over where dentists will practice. We do not have captive clientele here where we can dictate to the dentists where they are going to practice. We have to make it attractive enough for dentists to come back to Newfoundland and to practice in rural areas. I am afraid, I am not an economist, it may be that this point, when properly analysed, carries no weight. If so, fine. But I am concerned that hasty legislation would mean that our rural areas would have less adequate dental care than they have now instead of more or better dental care.

With respect briefly to the traditional rights of professions to govern themselves, the rights of self-discipline which is a very great right which has been given to them, there is absolutely no doubt that the reason this was given was for the interest of the public at large, not the selfish interest of any profession. This applies to doctors, dentists, lawyers, what have you, engineers. They have been given the right, by this Legislature and by other legislatures, to discipline themselves, to regulate their own professions because it has been recognized that this is the way to best ensure that the public interest is looked after.

I am not prepared to be as hasty as some of the honourable members on the other side of the House to say that this right should be interfered with. I agree that times change. I agree that conditions change. I agree that the professions must change to adapt to changing times. I agree that the professions must remain receptive

to new ideas, that the idea of paralegal help, paramedical help and so on is something that has come to the fore and it appears that the professions by using this help will be able to provide a better public service. But, Mr. Speaker, I am not prepared to say that the professions right now are acting irresponsibly in the way they are regulating themselves, and I refer to dentists, I refer to lawyers, I refer to doctors. I do say that at times their decisions are not completely in the public interest, indeed at times I am prepared to say that some of their decisions are selfish ones.

But, Mr. Speaker, I see that public pressure is available, that continual scrutiny, continual criticism, continual discussion and debate concerning the activities of professions is, in my opinion - as of now I am prepared to say this, in my opinion sufficient to ensure that the decisions of the professions are the decisions made in the public interest and not in their own selfish interest.

Now, as I said before, there will be some decisions where we can go and say to them, "that decision is not in the public interest, that decision is done merely to preserve your own monopoly or a decision merely to improve your own fortunes." If that is the case, Mr. Speaker, I say that the members of these professions are intelligent enough to realize that unless they make decisions in the public interest, their right of self-discipline and self-regulation will be taken away from them. There is no question about that. As a member of a profession I am aware of this.

AN HON. MEMBER: That is left-wing thinking.

MR. BARRY: That is left-wing thinking. But the question of the regulation of professional bodies, Mr. Speaker, like the question of what exclusive rights should be given to professions, is not something about which hasty decisions should be made because these are matters, the right of self-regulation is something that we have had for, I do not know, three hundred, four hundred, five hundred years.

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Tape No. 97

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AN HON. MEMBER: As long as you had the power.

MR. BARRY: It is not simply a matter of power. The power came from the people. Where did the enactment of The Law Society Act come from?

I am afraid, Mr. Speaker, that I am not cynical enough yet, I may reach that stage to say that the people can not influence decisions in this House of Assembly or that they have not been able to intrigue this House of Assembly although, I must say, in fact, that I had some concern prior to last March but I am prepared to say, Mr Speaker, that when the people want something, the people will get it and this government is prepared to remain responsive to the needs and wishes of the people.

This government is aware of the need to act responsible, not to jump to hasty conclusions, not to act on emotion but to act on reason and this is why, Mr. Speaker, only by the approach that is provided in the amendment of my colleague the hon. Minister of Health, only by the provision of a select committee of this hon. House, only by this method will we be able to get both sides of the present dispute, to properly analyze it, to apply our reason, to get the best decisions for the people of Newfoundland.

DR. T. FARRELL: I would like to address a few brief remarks concerning this matter. I think every other speaker that got up here today said they were going to be rather brief. Well, I have not too much experience in the House as most of you know so I will be brief but I would like to say at the onset that I strongly endorse the resolution of the hon. Leader of the Opposition and the amendment by my hon. colleague, the Minister of Health in this matter. When the hon. Leader of the Opposition remarked at the onset that this he hoped would be a nonpartisan debate, I think you will agree now that it has been and it will remain so. I wonder if he realize, I am sure he does, that this is Saint Valentine's Day, a day of sweetness and light I hope that Saint Valentine's ideals will permeate a little bit around this hon. House. I beg your pardon? Would you not think it would be a very good idea?

I would just like to make a few brief points, Mr. Speaker, and I will say that our Newfoundland dentists are highly trained professionals who have spent seven hard years in university to come out to practice their

profession and I think it is a real problem when they are faced with what I consider at the present time possibly unfair competition. That, as my hon. colleague from Placentia West has expressed a view and I know it is a very valid one, that this may affect the livelihoods of many of our dentists in rural areas. I know there are not many but may prevent, as he has expressed, their homecoming back to the province to practice their profession, because this is a very real fear. As far as I know, I think that approximately thirty percent of the business of dentists outside of urban areas is in denture work and I believe, as has been described, the urban dentists, a great many of them, prefer to practice modern dentistry, prophylactic dentistry, prevention of cavities, etc. rather than the making of dentures, but the principle is there at the scene, that he must be protected by us in any legislation that is enacted here today.

There are two main concerns here. (1) the health of our people as the main one, and provision of such health care as dentistry at the lowest possible cost compatible with adequate safeguards. I think this is a very important point. I feel that prior to any legislation that a close look should be taken at the qualifications. As the Leader of the Opposition announced at the onset, the highest possible standards must be met

before this legislation is enacted. I do not agree with the honourable the Leader of the Opposition when he says that denturists should be allowed to practice, until this present situation is clarified and the setting of these standards. However,

AN HON. MEMBER: That is not exactly...

HON. DR. FARRELL: Yes.

MR. ROBERTS: I am not in disagreement because the Resolution clearly states that the standard must be set before they do practice.

DR. FARRELL: Thank you. Anyway, I think that this subject has been covered very adequately this afternoon and as I said at the onset, I have no hesitation in supporting the motion that a select committee of the House be appointed to enquire into these matters. I certainly hope that we will come up with an adequate and fair decision for all parties concerned.

Would Mr. Speaker like at this time to make one small announcement? It is the birthday of one of the members of our honourable House, one of our more popular members. I am sure that this will be seconded by the honourable the member from Bell Island. It is the birthday of the honourable member for St. John's East Extern. Thank you very much.

MR. NEARY: I wonder if the honourable member will tell us how old he is today. Is he seven or eight?

AN HON. MEMBER: The honourable member over there is two.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please! It now being 6:00 p.m. I do now leave the Chair until tomorrow Thursday, February 15, at 3:00 p.m.

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