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**VERBATIM REPORT**

Wednesday, April 11, 1973

**SPEAKER: THE HONOURABLE JAMES M. RUSSELL**

The House met at 3.00 P.M.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable the Minister of Provincial Affairs and Environment.

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

Speaker, the matter I raised last night while in committee I would just like to briefly deal with. A point of personal privilege to correct a statement made by the member for Bell Island in connection with the use of government aircraft. The member corrected a previous statement that he had made and in making his most recent one he included me with some others who used the government aircraft. I would just like to correct that statement and say that my use of the government aircraft from Goose Bay to St. John's was returning from a trip on government business having toured Northern Labrador. My one day and a-half in Labrador South I used a private aircraft and the rest of my stay in Labrador, something like seven or eight days, was on government business.

#### QUESTIONS

HON. DR. A.T. ROWE: (MINISTER OF HEALTH): This refers to the question asked yesterday by the honourable member for Labrador South regarding the rumour of the Forteau Nursing Station. This has been checked out by my officials with the IGA and with Dr. Thomas. The rumour is completely unfounded and without truth. There is nothing suggesting to our knowledge that the Forteau Nursing Station is likely to close.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, I have the answer to question 233 as asked by member for St. Barbes North. The member directed his question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The rent control board is under my department so I have the information for him. Also the question 238, as asked by the honourable member for Twillingate, in connection with the Nomenclature Board. I have the information on that, I would like to table.

HON. LEO. D. BARRY: (MINISTER OF MINES AND ENERGY): Mr. Speaker, I have the answer to question 212, asked by the honourable member for White Bay South, which was originally directed to the honourable the Minister of Economic Development.

Question (1), "What are the names of those persons who as of a current date are Members of the Newfoundland and Labrador Power Commission, showing in each case:

- (a) the date on which he was so appointed;
- (b) the term of his appointment;
- (c) the title of the position held. "

The answer to the names of the persons on the commission is: G.P. Hobbs, W.S. Reid, C.A. Sheppard, C.H. Ballam, P.J. Canning, W.P. Saunders. Appointment on January 2, 1964, for Mr. Hobbs; May 18, 1968, for Mr. Reid; August 1, 1964, for Mr. Sheppard; November 18, 1966, for Mr. Ballam; September 16, 1965, for Mr. Canning; June 1, 1969 for Mr. Saunders. There is no term stated in any of the above appointments.

The positions are: Mr. Hobbs, chairman. Mr. Reid, chief executive officer, Mr. Sheppard, deputy chairman and deputy chief executive officer and the other gentlemen members respectively.

Second question: "What is the value of any amounts payable to a Member of the Newfoundland and Labrador Power Commission in respect of:

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

Answer to (a) and (b), as per the standard policy; it is published by the Treasury Board for public servants. A copy is attached. That is for Mr. Hobbs and Mr. Reid.

As per the annual salary; it is nil for Mr. Hobbs and Mr. Reid or Mr. Sheppard and \$6,540 each for Mr. Canning, Mr. Ballam and Mr. Saunders. I said \$6,500 before. I do not know where

the other forty dollars came from. It must be a raise. Merit bonus.

Question (3) "What is the value of any amounts payable to the the Chairman of the Newfoundland and Labrador Power Commission in respect of:

- (a) per diem allowances;
- (b) travel, etc.
- (c) annual salaries?"

Per diem and travel as per the Treasury Board travel policy and annual salary; the person holding the position of Chairman is paid as the chief executive office of the commission and not as a member of the commission.

"What is the value of amounts payable the Vice-chairman?"

On the same basis. Basically the same answer.

A member while in the position of deputy chairman is paid as the deputy chief executive officer.

Next question: "What is the value of any amounts payable a person being a member of said body for per diem allowance, travel and annual salary."

Again as per the standard policy published by the Treasury Board for public servants. The salary of the chief executive officer is \$35,540. The deputy chief executive officer, \$25,000 and the manager of services, \$18,500. None of the above officers receive any remuneration as members of the board. They are paid in those capacities.

Next question: "For each Member, Chairman, Vice-Chairman or otherwise of said body and for the fiscal year which began April 1, 1972, as of a current date, what is the total value of amounts that have been paid him in respect of:

- (a) per diem allowances: ✓
- (b) travel and
- (c) annual salary? "

Answer to (a), nil. (b), nil. (c), nil for Hobbs, Reid and Sheppard and again \$6,540 for Ballam, Canning and Saunders

" For the fiscal year which began April 1, 1972:

(a) the total value of amounts that have been paid in respect of salaries and wages for part-time and full-time staff employed in the service of said body; and

(b) the number of persons that have been so employed at any time within that period of time? "

The answer is \$5,533,307.35 and (b), 1667 the number of persons employed for the calendar year of 1972 not the fiscal year. The figures for the fiscal year, 1972-1973 are not presently available. There would be some expense involved in making a special computer run in order to get them. If the honourable members will wait, they can be supplied in due course.

Question: "For the fiscal year which began April 1, 1972 as of a current date, what is the total number of occasions on which meetings of the said body have been held?"

The answer, three.

Question: "For each member, chairman, vice-chairman or otherwise of said body and for the fiscal year which began April 1, 1972, as of a current date, what is the number of meetings which he attended and in which he participated during the said period of time?"

Answer; Mr. Hobbs, three. Mr. Reid, three. Mr. Sheppard, three. Mr. Ballam, three. Mr. Canning, two and Mr. Saunders, three.

Question: "To what Vote of Votes and under what Heading is the cost of the amounts referred to in paragraphs (2) through (7) chargeable?"

The answer: "Part of the cost of the amounts is shown under head 15, Department of Economic Development, subheads 15-13, 15-14, 15-15. These amounts as designated are paid into the separate operating budgets of, first, Rural Electricity Authority and secondly,

the commission. The main costs are paid out of revenue received by the commission from its sales of electricity. I am sorry they did not supply me with any copies. We will get some copies for the honourable members and we will table them.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. NEARY: I would like to direct a question to the honourable the Premier. Would the honourable the Premier inform the House of the details of a

transportation policy presented to the Government of Canada the day before yesterday that is suppose to affect the cost of living in Newfoundland, as outlined by the Premier in reply to two questions that I put to him in this House.

HON. F. D. MOORES (PREMIER): Mr. Speaker, when the final details have been put together I shall only be too glad to make it available to the House. The situation is now that the federal and provincial assistants are still in Ottawa meeting and as soon as the final details have been arrived at I shall be only too glad to make the information available.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question, could the Premier then just give us a general outline of the province's presentation?

MR. MOORES: First of all, Mr. Speaker, it was not the province's presentation it was the area presentation of the Atlantic Canada Area. There were representations made by the four Premiers of that area together with Mr. Marchand, Mr. Jamieson, at a meeting in Ottawa, on Monday morning I guess it was.

The general gist of it is manifold and I would rather wait until I get all the details of it so that it could be answered properly and in depth rather than just go at it piecemeal with impressions as would have to be the case right now.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary question, perhaps the Premier could answer this specific question. Would the Premier confirm or deny that the four Premiers in the Atlantic Provinces have agreed to drop the fifteen and a-half per cent freight rate subsidy for freight moving points within the Atlantic Region.

MR. MOORES: I will not confirm or deny anything until — I have said I will table the total report on the meetings, Mr. Speaker.

MR. W. WOODWARD: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the honourable Minister of Transportation and Communications. I wonder if he could inform the House of the negotiations that have taken place between the Province of Newfoundland, Quebec and Ottawa

concerning the Trans-Labrador Highway and if the road from Churchill Falls to Goose Bay will be upgraded and made passable this summer?

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

Mr. Speaker, as for the honourable the member I would direct his question to the honourable the Premier, on the Labrador Highway, Sir.

MR. MOOPES: What was the question again?

MR. WOODWARD: The Labrador Highway, the negotiations that are now taking place and the details.

MR. MOORES: I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that the Trans-Labrador Highway, which is a discussion together with Quebec and ourselves, actually is the Trans-Canada Highway, the northern section, will be something where Quebec and ourselves can make a joint presentation to the federal government and also some thing that will be a part of any negotiations we have with BRINCO. This was very much a real issue with us and it is very much followed through with.

MR. WOODWARD: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, according to the "Daily News" today there is a meeting taking place with the Minister of Transportation and Communications and the Quebec Government and Ottawa, within one month, concerning the proposed Trans-Labrador Highway. I was wondering if possibly the Premier or the minister can tell us what negotiations have taken place to date on that highway?

MR. MOORES: Mr. Speaker, I have met with Mr. Levesque, the Deputy Premier of Quebec, in Ottawa on this subject. The two Ministers of Transportation will be getting together very shortly and the officials as well, to start to draw up a firm proposal to present to the federal government.

MR. E. WINSOR: Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the honourable the Premier in his acting now as Minister of Fisheries? When can we expect a deputy minister of Fisheries to be appointed. I know it is his prerogative to appoint both ministers and deputy ministers. If there is not going to be one soon, who is acting as deputy minister?



MR. MOORES: It will be done very shortly, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Today being Private Members Day, we are dealing with Motion (7) moved by the honourable member for White Bay South. When we rose last day the honourable the Minister of Finance was speaking. The honourable the Minister of Finance.

HON. J. C. CROSBIE (MINISTER OF FINANCE): Mr. Speaker, I only had a chance to speak briefly on this very important motion last week. I know that all members of the House are pleased and delighted that the honourable gentleman has brought this subject up for particular debate in the House and for particular consideration. I had not spoken earlier in the debate because, of course, I wished to listen to all points of view and to hear what every honourable gentleman had to say on this topic and in particular, of course, the contribution from members across. Now having done that and having researched the subject extensively since last week, I thought that I might attempt to speak for a few brief moments at least on this topic, although it is not one with which any particular department is concerned, but one which we all as citizens of this great country should concern ourselves, whether from Wabana, from Labrador, from the South of Newfoundland, from the East of Newfoundland, from the West of Newfoundland or the North of Newfoundland.

Now having said that, Mr. Speaker, and I know that all members are now endeavouring to ascertain what meaning lurks behind those few introductory sentences, I would like to examine the resolution. Now the resolution, Mr. Speaker, is one calculated to strike alarm into the hearts of all members of this honourable House because indeed and indeed and indeed and INDEED it sounds like a very serious situation.

"Whereas during the past ten years-" (Mr. Speaker, the honourable gentleman has to lurch back ten years to get statistics that might frighten us enough) "Whereas during the past ten years over 60,000 accidents have occurred on our highways, and

"Whereas these accidents have resulted in personal injury to

over 25,000 people"(that is over the ten years and indeed that is a large number of people.)

"Whereas those accidents have resulted in 800 people being killed (this is over the ten years still the 800 people) and,

"Whereas records for the year 1972 indicate an increase in traffic accidents and injuries of between twenty-five and thirty per cent over year 1971, the highest in our history." I will dispute that in a moment because 1971 was not the highest in our history and one wonders why the preamble says, "Whereas records for the year 1972 indicate an increase." Either the records show that there is an increase, Mr. Speaker, or they do not show there is an increase. How can they just indicate an increase?

My own research has revealed that there are no complete statistics available for the year 1972 as yet.

MR. FARRELL: Up to June, Sir.

MR. CROSBIE: There are statistics up to June but the final statistics for the whole year are not yet available. Why an increase of between twenty-five and thirty per cent? Either it is an increase of twenty-five per cent or it is an increase of thirty per cent or it is an increase of twenty-nine point six per cent or it is an increase of twenty-four point eight five per cent or it is an increase of some percentage, Why between twenty-five and thirty per cent over the year 1971?

The honourable gentleman, when he concludes this debate in a week or two weeks time, should indicate to us why he used that phraseology in his preamble, preambulation to his resolution?

Then he goes on to say, "Whereas records show that 108 Newfoundlanders were killed in traffic accidents during 1972, the highest number of fatalities in our history - " That indeed is a serious number, 108 Newfoundlanders. I presume they are all Newfoundlanders. Some might have been mainlanders but there were 108 persons killed, apparently, on our roads in 1972.

"And whereas the Newfoundland Safety Council has submitted a brief to the government supported by a petition of nearly 10,000 licenced drivers requesting among other things a royal commission to be set up to examine all aspects of this problem," Now there we get to the meat of it, Mr. Speaker, apparently the Newfoundland Safety Council submits a brief; there is something wrong with the government if it does not immediately do everything that is in the brief if it comes from the Newfoundland Safety Council. They want a royal commission set up. Well I am going to come back to royal commissions, I will advert to royal commissions, I will enumerate the discourse on, give some statistics in connection with the disease of royal commissionitis before I finish this afternoon.

Then the honourable gentleman went on to get into the real meat of the matter. "Now therefore be it resolved" - indeed a formidable set of words, "Now therefore be it resolved" gives an immediate aura of great gravity to the words that follow, The words that follow say that this House direct the government to establish immediately, without a seconds delay, without hesitation, without momentarily consideration a commission of enquiry to examine and enquire into and investigate all aspects of highway safety and that such a commission be directed to report back to the government their findings and recommendations without undue delay.

Well, of course, Mr. Speaker, you can direct a royal commission to report without undue delay but royal commissioners' definitions of undue delay and honourable gentleman's definition of undue delay can be quite different. As the House remember, there was a royal commission appointed in December 1965 to examine into and to report on the revenue sources of the City of St. John's, Mr. Frazer was the commissioner, (without undue delay) As a matter of fact, when it was appointed the honourable the Premier of that day, I believe it was the gentleman who just visited the province again last week, said that

there would be legislation introduced in the House in the coming session of 1966 and that this royal commission was going to consider the matter and report back and there would be legislation before the House in the session of 1966. That is how quickly that royal commission was to act. There was to be no fooling around with that commission. no delay, certainly no undue delay, because there was going to be legislation in 1966. What happened?

There was no legislation in 1966. There was no report. There was no legislation in 1967 and there was no report. There was no legislation in 1968 and there was no report. There was no legislation in 1969 and there was no report. There was no legislation in 1970 and there was no report. There was no legislation in 1971 and there was no report.

MR. NEARY: That does not sound like Joey.

MR. CROSBIE: I believe that now the honourable gentleman has discovered the secret.

The royal commission finally reported, I believe in the early days of 1972 - that would be six years. It took six years. Would the honourable gentleman when he closed the debate let us know whether he considers six years to be an undue delay. Because if we could get assurance that royal commission would take six years, we would have to consider appointing them. Does the honourable gentleman consider six year an undue delay?

But in any event that was a royal commission that was to report within a couple of months and it lasted six years. What could the government do about it? The government could do nothing except cancel the commission, it could cancel the commission but that is an extraordinary thing to do.

So I do not believe, Mr. Speaker, that the quick way to do anything about highway safety is to appoint a royal commission, in fact it might be exactly the opposite. And in any event, why appoint a royal commission when we have a brilliant, capable minister

in charge of a Department of Transportation and Communication. By the way, Mr. Speaker, just because you have a royal commission, does that mean that the government of the day is going to carry out its recommendations? Does it? It does not. Do honourable gentlemen realize, do they appreciate, do they understand the significance?

Can they comprehend what happened to the report of the Royal Commission on Transportation appointed in 1964 by the then Liberal Administration? The Chairman was the honourable P.J. Lewis, O.C. A group of brilliant Newfoundlanders composed the membership. They were all brilliant in those days. There was a host of royal commissions, a veritable covey of royal commissions. There was a pride of royal commissions, there was a gaggle of royal commissions appointed. They went on a royal commission rampage and one of them was the Royal Commission on Transportation. That commission reported in 1966. Do you know, Mr. Speaker, that they reported that there should be a Department of Transportation. That is what they reported in 1966. And you know when it was done? It was done in 1973, under the aegis and the leadership and with the initiative of the honourable the Premier and the honourable minister. How is that for royal commissions?

For six years the honourable gentlemen opposite diddled along. They did not know whether they could make that big, gigantic decision, should it stay the Department of Highways or should there be a reorganization. I remember the Leader of the Opposition a few months ago, in his usual jovial, carefree, humorous way, saying that he could have thought up the whole restructuring of the government, all of it, in a jolly weekend with a couple of his buddies and civil servants, that they could have come up with the whole restructuring of the government over one weekend.

Yet we learn that the honourable gentleman was in the cabinet in 1969, 1970, 1971 and eighteen days in 1972 when he was clinging there and his cohorts clinging to power. Despite their rejection by the people of Newfoundland, they were clinging there. Remember how they clung, and still the honourable gentleman could not restructure the Department of Highways. They could not decide whether there should be a Department of Transportation or not. It took the Liberal Government six years to consider that question and still they did nothing. Yet they have the gall to suggest in the media that they could have restructured the whole government in a weekend. Well their track record does not disclose that and their next chance, Mr. Speaker, to restructure is going to be around the year 2001, and we hope that they make a better fist of it then than they did in the twentieth century.

MR. NEARY: To a point of order, Mr. Speaker, is the rule of relevancy being observed now, Sir, in the House?

MR. CROSBIE: I do not want to -

MR. NEARY: Sir, I made a point of order.

MR. CROSBIE: I see.

MR. SPEAKER: With regard to the point just made, the point is my understanding of the honourable the minister's speech is that he is speaking about the Department of Highways and the Department of Transportation, which appears to be completely in order with regard to anything concerning highway safety.

MR. NEARY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to make sure.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, we have had to endure for long, these many days, the affusions, the diffusion, negatious, gaseous emissions from honourable gentlemen opposite. On private members' day at least we should be able to stand in this House and speak from the heart and give our own opinion on matters that come up, without being interrupted on silly points of order.

AN HON. MEMBER: Do not make a mockery out of it though.

MR. CROSBIE: There will be no mockery here. When the honourable

gentleman hears the statistics I have he will see - no he will never see. I take that back, he will not see, he will refuse to see. He will blindly refuse to see what should be seen by anyone who sees what I saw when I saw these statistics.

Now where was I? Yes on gaseous emissions. Yes, so the Department of Transportation and Communication is now set up. Do honourable gentlemen want to give it a chance to get into these issues? No, immediately they race in with a resolution indicating we should have a royal commission. Let us have our department first. Let us have our little department sit for the next year or two to do something about highway safety and not have a royal commission to delay it.

Now let us look at these statistics, Mr. Speaker, because surely the implication of this resolution is that Newfoundland is far outstepping all other Canadian provinces in the seriousness of the highway safety situation. That is the implication of this resolution that things are in Newfoundland particularly bad with respect to highway safety. That is the impression I had when I first read that resolution. I quailed when I read it first. I thought, my heavens is this province so much worse than the other nine that we must have a royal commission to investigate highway safety? I have not gone outside the city in my car since the resolution was tabled in this House. That is how seriously it struck me because I gathered from the resolution that this province indeed was a much more dangerous place to drive than Ontario or Quebec or New Brunswick or Prince Edward Island or British Columbia or Manitoba or Saskatchewan, (I think I left out one or two) than any of the others and the North West Territories.

So having been very alarmed by this and with the help of those we have in this building to help us - they could not help the last government as they were beyond help but they are helping where they can, they are helping us, I looked up the

statistics and what did we find? Is this province so far behind, such a dangerous place to drive compared to the other provinces? Now the complete highway accident statistics for 1971 and 1972 are not available from Statistics Canada so the statistics I am giving were assembled by the Canadian Safety Council for 1970 and 1971. We will deal with 1970 first.

In 1970, and I am going to speak slowly so that all those listening can get the full import of these figures. In 1970 there were 8,090 accidents in Newfoundland, highway accidents and in Canada in the same year, 1970, there were 556,427 in Canada as a whole, in our great dominion, in the whole nation, in all ten provinces and the North West Territories. Well, now it immediately cropped in my mind how does the number in Newfoundland compare with the other provinces when you compare our population to the population of Canada as a whole? What was the answer? I am quite a mathematician in my own right, a little quick doodling and I came up with this, that 8,090 accidents in Newfoundland as compared to 556,427 in Canada meant that we had 1.5 per cent of all of the accidents in Canada in 1970 on the highways. This little province, this one of the ten, this smallest one of the ten, this second island one of the ten, had 1.5 per cent of all these accidents in the Dominion of Canada on the highways. Well, then I thought to myself, what percentage of the population?

MR. NEARY: What percentage of the population is the population of Newfoundland?

MR. CROSBIE: The honourable gentleman anticipates, he has a rapierlike mind. It is like the speed of light from one brain cell to the other. The question occurred to him just as it occurred to me. Now what percentage of the total Canadian population is the population of Newfoundland? 2.4 per cent, we have 2.4 per cent of the population of Canada. So if we have 1.5 per cent of the accidents and we have 2.4 per cent of the population that means that we do not even have the same number of accidents in comparison



to the rest of Canada as we do population to the rest of Canada, which would indicate that the safety in Newfoundland must be a bit better than it is in the rest of Canada.

MR. NEARY: (Inaudible).

MR. CROSBIE: It means that, yes. The honourable gentleman when he speaks can completely make a fool of himself but that is what it means.

MR. NEARY: I intended to speak after the honourable minister, but I have already spoken.

MR. CROSBIE: Well, in that case I am going to give you an opportunity. I will merely move an amendment so that we can hear from you again. Now that is 1.5 per cent.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in 1971 what was the situation? In 1971 there were 8,106 accidents on the highways in Newfoundland. In Canada as a whole there were 554,230. What percentage of the total accidents were in Newfoundland? 1.5 per cent again. What percentage of the population do we have? 2.4 per cent again. So in 1970 we were better than the rest of Canada and in 1971 we were better than the rest of Canada and I venture, Sir, to predict that when the statistics are in for 1972 we will still be in the same ratio and better than the rest of Canada. Now that is accidents.

What about personal injuries? In 1970 there were 2,492 personal injuries in Newfoundland as a result of these accidents. In Canada there were 177,930 personal injuries. What percentage then of personal injuries were in Newfoundland compared to the rest of Canada? 1.4 per cent, a little less than the accidents. What about 1971? In 1971 there were 2,500 personal injuries in Newfoundland caused on the highways. What was the total for Canada? 191,472. What was the percentage of personal injuries in Newfoundland as compared to Canada as a whole? 1.3 per cent, even less than 1970 and better than the accident rate itself. So does that indicate that Newfoundland is a more dangerous place for highway safety than

the rest of Canada? No, it does not but it indicates the opposite.

All right then let us look at deaths. In 1970 the total deaths in Newfoundland connected with highway accidents, sixty-nine in Newfoundland. Canada as a whole 5,030 and that meant that deaths in Newfoundland were 1.4 per cent of the total in Canada. Again much less than our population as a total of the Canadian population. What about 1971? In 1971 the total deaths in Newfoundland were eighty-seven while in Canada they were 5,440. What was the percentage? The percentage in 1971 was 1.6 per cent still not equivalent to our population as compared to the rest of the Canadian population. Was Newfoundland a more dangerous place to drive in in 1971 than the other provinces of Canada? The answer is no, not at all.

Now there was an increase, apparently, last year. We do not have the statistics for the whole year but we know that there were 108 fatalities. I do not have the figures to show what the number of fatal fatalities were across Canada but I do not think those proportions are going to change very much.

MR. NEARY: Fatalities.

MR. CROSBIE: Fatalities. The honourable gentleman has to get on to the language. Some say fatalities and some say (fa-til-it-ies).

MR. NEARY: A new word, aye?

MR. CROSBIE: Right, keep listening and there will be a few more before we are finished. Now last year there were apparently 108 deaths as a result of highway accidents and that is 108 too many. But no matter what you do in life you take a chance of an accident, accidents in the home, an accident at work, all kinds of accidents. You may be in the House of Assembly here and be overcome and collapse as a result of having to listen to the gentlemen opposite hour after hour, and that is just the chance you take in life. But there were 108. Well, why might they be up last year? What you really need to know, Mr. Speaker, if you are going to have accurate statistics, is what is

the number of vehicle miles driven in the province in 1972 as compared to the number of vehicle miles driven in 1971. Unfortunately we do not have the statistics, as they are not available. But to see whether the rate of highway accidents was increasing or decreasing that is the kind of information that you need.

Now why might there be some more accidents in 1972 than there were in 1971? One reason is that there are more paved roads. Have honourable gentlemen ever thought of that? If the roads are paved you drive at a higher speed and it seems that there is a tendency to increased accidents. In 1971 this province had 1307.2 miles of paved roads. It took twenty-three years for the Liberals to lay that little bit of pavement, 1307.2 miles. At the beginning of 1972 there were 1684.2 miles, an increase of 377 miles, twenty-nine per cent increase so we had twenty-nine per cent more paved roads. At the beginning of 1973 we had 1911.1 miles of paved road, an increase of 226.9 miles of paved road, an increase of thirteen per cent in our first year. We laid 226.9 miles of pavement and you have not seen anything yet. By the time we get to our fourth or fifth year we will be slashing down a couple of thousand miles in that particular year. The asphalt machines will be going berserk, the spuds and cabbage and turnips will have to be hidden again as they were in the fall of 1971. But in any event there was an increase in pavement of thirteen per cent last year and twenty-nine per cent the year before. This has a tendency to lead to more accidents, because people drive faster.

Now what other statistic might we look at to explain why the number of deaths increased last year? We do not know whether the number of accidents increased, at least we have not heard the statistics or we do not have the final statistics yet. What else might one look at? Well, you can see what returns there are perhaps from the gasoline tax, because if there is more gasoline being sold then there is likely to be more vehicle miles being driven.

MR. NEARY: How much more liquor is sold?

MR. CROSBIE: I do not know. I do not like to get into that.

MR. NEARY: (Inaudible).

MR. CROSBIE: Candy is dandy but liquor is quicker. There is note after note here, extensive research, day after day, night after night spent getting ready for this. In 1970-1971 the gasoline tax revenues were \$21,271,000 (I will give it in round numbers). In 1971-1972 the gasoline tax revenues went up to \$23,668,000, an increase of 11.3 per cent. Last year, the year that ended March 31, 1973, the gasoline tax revenue went to \$26,824,000, an increase again over the previous year of 11.1 per cent. So that in two years the amount of gasoline tax taken in has gone up 22.4 per cent. Well, Mr. Speaker, there was no change in the gasoline tax rate in those years, so we can take it that the number of vehicle miles travelled in the province must have gone up somewhere between twenty and twenty-five per cent, because of the extra gasoline that was sold. People do not buy gasoline just to pour it out on the ground. They buy gasoline to put it in their motor vehicles to drive along the highway or the city streets or to use in their skidoos. Some of us are

MR. CROSSBIE: using ski-doo's. So we can assume then that the vehicle miles travel has gone up twenty per cent in those two years. Well the fact that more people are travelling in their vehicles on the highways means that there are going to be more accidents, more injuries and more fatalities.

So, Mr. Speaker, when you look at that, when you look at the background, when you look at the environment, when you look at what you should look at before you move a resolution like this, you discover that the situation is not as alarming, not as frightening, not as terrifying as the resolution would have us believe. Now why appoint a royal commission if this indeed is the situation? There is no dramatic increase at all in the number of fatalities, injuries or accidents, so why have a royal commission?

We already have a department that is functioning well, functioning as it never functioned before. Since 1949 that department has not functioned as it is today functioning under its chief functionary, our colleague, the Minister of Transportation and Communications, who has this matter well in hand you may be sure.

Now what else will we look at in this background of this? All right, what were the number of motor vehicles registered in 1971? Anybody who can give me the answer will get a prize. In 1971 the total number of vehicle - I would have thought that this is information the honourable member for White Bay South would have given the House before asking us to consider this resolution.

Why did not his friends in the Newfoundland Safety Council give him these figures? Where were they when he was being prepared for this great debate? Were they gazing at their reflectorized plates? Were they so dazzled by the reflectorization of their plates that they forgot to get together some pertinent statistics?

MR. CROSBIE: In 1971 the total number of motor vehicles registered was 139,119. The number of new vehicles registered in 1972 was 19,967. The total increase in new vehicles registered in 1972, the total registered became 148,798. So in 1972 we have 148,798 vehicles registered and only 139,000 the year before, a seven per cent increase in the number of motor vehicles registered.

That would also be a reason, Mr. Speaker, for any increase in accidents if there have been an increase. We do not know that yet, whether there has actually been an increase. The number of new motor vehicles registered has increased.

Now you might say that 19,000 and 139,000 add up to more than 148,000 and if you said that you would be perfectly correct unless you use the new math. The honourable gentleman from St. Barbe North uses the new math; I do not know what he would get if he added those figures together but I say you are right, you are one hundred per cent right, you are correct, you are perfect in your conclusions if you say that 139,000 plus 19,000 is not 148,000 and you would be right to question me and say you have made a mistake. You have rushed in where fools would fear to tread. What is the explanation?

The explanation I assume, Mr. Speaker, is that during the year while new motor vehicles got registered, some defunct, defective, degenerated, unusable motor vehicles got disregistered. Therefore we ended up with 148,000 or a seven per cent increase.

Now the only figures we were able to get in 1972 are figures that relate just to the first six months and are just about useless because they do not include Ontario or Manitoba. These figures are all that I have been able to get. We have not got the final figures for 1972 and we do not know whether the minister's resolution - well we know pretty well by now that his resolution was not necessary, but we do not know whether there has actually been an increase or not in 1972.

MR. CROSBIE: Well The resolution says, Mr. Speaker, let us check the accuracy here, let us just check it out, let us see does it total up, let us see does it make sense, let us see is it logical, let us see if it is rational, let us see if it is reasonable. Now whereas records (wait now, where are we here) I am so dazzled by this resolution, whereas this and whereas that and resulted and records indicated, the highest - this is it, this is the very point. This is the very point I wanted to make. This is the point I was looking for, I hope. Yes it is. Yes. Right again. For a moment I had a slight bit of doubt. I thought, my gosh, I might have made a mistake! The honourable gentleman will jump me. He will thrash me. He will row and he will denounce me when he concludes the debate, if I have slipped. I do not think I have slipped so now we will just look at this.

He said, "Whereas records for the year 1972 indicate an increase in traffic accidents and injuries of between twenty-five and thirty per cent over the year 1971, the highest in our history." So his resolution says that 1971 was the highest year in our history. Now was 1971 the highest year in our history for traffic accidents and injuries? Was it verily? And verily does research indicate that it was? Or can that unsubstantiated statement be substantiated? It cannot.

Now let us look at the figures. I will not look at every year. I have them from the year 1960 onward but I will not give them unless the House demands it.

AN HON. MEMBER: I demand it.

MR. CROSBIE: Well I am limiting my time. I have only one and one-half hours to speak. I will come back to this if I have not covered what I should cover in my allotted hour and a-half, of which I used up five minutes last Wednesday. We must watch the clock because honourable gentlemen opposite me

MR. CROSBIE: have a tendency to try to get me counted out before I have made some of the major points that I would like to make, because this, Mr. Speaker, is only warming up. It is only getting warm on this unsubstantiated resolution put before the House. Now what are the figures?

In 1969, Mr. Speaker, we had 74 fatal accidents, the number of victims were 94. The non-fatal injury accidents totalled 1,823. The number of persons injured was 2,754. The number of accidents involving property damage was 5,951. The total accidents was 7,848. 7,848 total accidents in 1969.

Well the honourable gentleman's resolution says that 1971 was the highest in our history. Therefore, if that statement is to be found correct, 1971 should show more. What in fact does 1971 show? Here is what 1971 shows:

In 1969 there were 1,823 non-fatal injury accidents. In 1971 there were 1,699. Now I have not subtracted there but that is 124 less, so in 1971 there were 124 less non-fatal injury accidents than in 1969.

Then let us look at the number of persons injured. In 1969 - 2,754 persons were injured on the highway. In 1971, 2,500. Now 2,500 in my reckoning is less than 2,754, unless the new maths indicate that I am incorrect. I say 2,500 is 254 less than 2,754. So 1971 was a better year than 1969.

Then let us look at property damage: In 1969 - 5,951 accidents involving property damage. In 1971- 5,527, less than 1969. The number less, 424 less, not more, less.

Now the honourable gentlemen in the opposition have been making this mistake constantly during the session because the honourable member for St. Barbe North the other day got up and he said that more was less, more money in education was less. New think, new speak, George Orwell described it all in his book "1984" But it is only 1973 and still we have the new think and



MR. CROSBIE: the new speak. "More is less." That is what he said the other day.

Now the honourable gentleman from White Bay South, verily his younger brother has caught the same disease, new think. "Less is more." His resolution says the highest in our history - if we discover that 1969 was the highest in our history.

Now let us look at total accidents. In 1969 total accidents were 7,848. In 1971, the total number of accidents was 7,303, less - 7,303 from 7,848, that is 545. We had 545 less accidents in 1971 than we did in 1969, therefore and verily I say that 1969 was a higher year than 1971, and we have not got the final statistics for 1972.

So, Mr. Speaker, I say that the resolution is incorrect. I do not say deliberately incorrect. I believe the honourable gentleman really thought that he was being correct when he made this resolution up or when he followed the highway council's brief for records, so it should be: "Whereas records for the year 1972 indicate an increase in traffic accidents and injury as between 7.25 per cent and 30 per cent over the year 1971 the highest in our history," he should have said the year 1969; the highest in our history, not 1971. 1969 was the highest in our history. I have not got all the records for 1972 so I do not know.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. CROSBIE: Yes Sir.

MR. WM. ROWE: There is room certainly for misunderstanding in that but rather than wait until I get a chance to speak myself, I should point out that the intention was, and it is clear from reading this that the highest in our history refers to the rate of increase rather than 1971, Mr. Speaker. That point should be made before the honourable minister confuses it any more

MR. WM. ROWE: "Whereas records for the year 1972 indicate -"  
All the records are not in but the indications are an increase in traffic accidents and injuries of between twenty-five and thirty per cent over the year 1971, the highest in our history, The highest should relate to the rate and in my mind it did relate to the rate. I can see where there is an opportunity there at least for ambiguity but the intention was that "highest in our history" refers to the actual rate of increase in highway traffic accidents and injuries.

MR. CROSBIE: Well I am glad to be asked that question, Mr. Speaker. I do not know what answer to give it. But I am glad the honourable gentleman sees that there is some room here for clarification but I think that when all the statistics are in, I do not think that this increase will be the highest in our history and I doubt that 1972, as a year, will be the highest in our history for all of these.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. CROSBIE: It is a very dim indication.

So the fact is, Mr. Speaker, that rather than, as the resolution appears to indicate, 1971 was not the highest year, We do not know about 1972 yet. 1970 was not the highest year. 1969 was the highest year for all of these matters, except for traffic deaths, in our history.

Another peculiar thing that the statistics seem to show, Mr. Speaker, is that the number of fatal accidents for example or the number of victims varies from year to year. There is no way of correlating it. For example in 1963, 69 persons died on the highway and in 1964, 63 persons died. There was a decrease of nine per cent and in 1965, 64 died and in 1966, 78 died, a twenty-two per cent increase. Well a twenty-two per cent increase is only fourteen people. Then in 1966, there was 78, it dropped down to 73 in 1967 and 61 in 1968 and then went to 74 in 1969 and 61 in 1970 and 77 in 1971.

MR. CROSBIE: Now none of this indicates any kind of a trend and if we had 108 in 1972, that does not indicate a trend either. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, all of these statistics do not show that there is any out of the ordinary danger in driving in Newfoundland, that highway safety is less in Newfoundland than it is in the other nine provinces.

It is just not so. In fact the statistics show it is safer to drive here in Newfoundland than it is to drive in Ontario or some of these other provinces. So, why have a Royal Commission? Are there Royal Commissions on highway traffic safety in the other nine provinces?

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Yes.

MR. CROSBIE: How many of them? The honourable gentleman does not know. That is as precise as his information usually is. No, there is not, Mr. Speaker. Why should we have one in Newfoundland? Why indeed?

Now here is another fact. The number of new drivers' licenses issued in Newfoundland last year was 18,364. There were 18,364 new drivers' licenses issued. Well of course that is another reason, Mr. Speaker, why you might have your accident rate up a bit. Every year you have more new drivers, you have more cars, you have more paved roads, more miles driven and therefore, one would expect more accidents proportionately, more injuries, more fatal accidents, and it is a serious problem that is being dealt with. It does not require emergency treatment. It does not require panic and it does not require the resolution that is now before the House.

The roads are still the same size except that more are paved. When the honourable minister really gets going on his paving programme - you know, he is working up to it, this year so much, the year after, the year after that quite extensively more and the year after that look out. There will be pavement going out into the bays when he really gets going.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. CROSBIE: The honourable member should know.

Unfortunately the 1972 figures do not add much so I cannot say any more on them. Gasoline tax? No, that is all right. We are

just warming up to it gradually here. We have got to discuss this deliberately. We have to take our time. This is a matter I think, Mr. Speaker, that should engage the attention of this House for several weeks yet. I would not like to see honourable gentlemen vote on this hastily without considering the issues raised and giving full effect to what we have heard in the House.

Now, I am going to come to royal commissions, Mr. Speaker. What about royal commission? Would honourable gentlemen like to know what royal commissions have cost the people of this province since the year 1966? Would anyone like to know? Does anyone want to know?

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Yes.

MR. CROSBIE: Good. The member for St. John's Center wants to know. Well, Sir, in that case you shall know, the truth shall be out, facts will be placed before you.

The honourable gentleman says, "Milch cows for the lawyers". Well, he is on a lawyer's hinder at the moment. He is glad enough to have a lawyer acting for him at the moment and we are glad to see him get the best assistance there is.

Now, this is interesting, Mr. Speaker. This is interesting indeed. Indeed and indeed and verily this is interesting. I have only gone back to 1966. In February of 1966 there was a royal commission on the practice of accountancy. What do honourable gentlemen think that cost?

MR. NEARY: When was that, when the minister was in the Cabinet?

MR. CROSBIE: It sure was and he was responsible and it did a marvelous job. What did it cost? Only \$16,362.64. That was the Royal Commission on Accountancy. That was appointed on February of 1966.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Where you in the Cabinet?

MR. CROSBIE: No I was not in the Cabinet. I did not go into the Cabinet until July of 1966. I take it back. I was responsible

but I was representing the accountants and the government appointed a royal commission, \$16,362.64.

Then on March 3, 1966 women of Newfoundland "Hear ye! Hear ye! Ding dong", you used to have on that open line. They were worried about food and drug prices. Why? That Liberal administration looked after food and drug prices. They had nothing to worry about, those food and drug prices that they worry about today. It is ridiculous. There was a royal commission on that appointed by the Liberal administration.

March 3, 1966, Royal Commission on Food and Drug Prices chaired by his Worship, Mayor W.C. Adams. What did it cost? Well, they sat during the two years there. What did it cost? \$136,068.98. That was the Royal Commission on Food and Drug Prices. Despite the report of that very valuable royal commission food prices continued to go up. Drug prices continued to go up. The world did not change. The province was no better off. It was just a device by the government of the day to quieten down expressions of discontent about food and drug prices. That was March 3, 1966.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Members of the commission, would they have been better off?

MR. CROSBIE: Well, they had certain prices which the government paid them. So, they were satisfied with the food and drug prices and doubtless they did their best and did all that they could do and more besides.

Now, on April 20, 1966 there was a Royal Commission on Pensions for Civil Servants and Teachers. That royal commission cost \$40,943.89. As a matter of fact I was briefly secretary of it. When I forsook private life to go into public life - it was the worse mistake that I ever made when I did that.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Resign.

MR. CROSBIE: I just cannot. I am too stubborn. If the honourable

gentleman did not want me to go, I would go. Only my conscience and the public duty persuades me to stay on in the face of what I have to listen to in this House.

Now, what is that Royal Commission on Pensions? \$40,943.89. They reported. They made a report. It did not do much good but they made a report.

Now, February, 1966 there was a Royal Commission on Minimum Wage Rates. Why would you need a Royal Commission on Minimum Wage Rates? You would need a Royal Commission on Minimum Wage Rates if you did not want to raise the minimum wage. They did not want to raise the minimum wage so they appointed a royal commission, because that would put off any increase in the minimum wage for a year or two. So, that royal commission was paid altogether \$18,450.63. Did the Progressive Conservative Government, did this administration, did the Premier request a royal commission last winter when we raised the minimum wage? Not likely. We just said that the minimum wage is too low, \$1.10 per hour, too low. It should be \$1.50 and the same minimum wage for men as well as for women. It was done. When it was done, it was done quickly. There was no royal commission. We did not want to stall it off for a year or two years and honourable gentlemen opposite talk about the governments of the rich and all that drivel and trifles and nauseating nonsensical effusions we have to listen to. We needed no royal commission on our minimum wage.

Now, I do not want to occupy the time of this House any longer than I have to. The last commission was \$18,450.63.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let us come to how much for legal fees. I do not know. For lawyers (God bless them), they get little enough. We do not know what they are going to charge to defend the honourable gentleman but it will be quite a bit.

Now, August 9, 1966 - it will be little enough, one hundred

dollars an hour. It will be a mere nothing to defend the honourable gentleman. I would request a retainer of \$5,000 an hour to put up with it. I heard that the sleeve is gone off an honourable lawyer's coat from the honourable gentleman tugging his sleeve. The worse client a lawyer can have is a sleeve-tugger. You know, you are in court and you are trying to question the witnesses and your client is there tugging your sleeve asking this and asking that. The honourable gentleman is a "tug-sleever". I do not know what monthly check that is. If he wants to get me to represent him, he is going to pay for it. He cannot get me now because the public has me on a retainer and little enough it is as honourable gentlemen know, but we are glad enough to do it.

Now, on August 9, 1966 a royal commission was appointed on the Charter of the City of St. John's. What was the total cost of that? \$44,987.45. Well, little enough for the work that they did. It did not all get enacted but some of it did. That was \$44,987.45.

Then we come to the one that I have mentioned already. December 28, 1965, City of St. John's Taxation and Revenue Commission. What did that cost, the Frazer Commission on Revenue Sources in the City of St. John's? I know some honourable gentlemen will say \$10,000. Some will say \$5,000. Others will say \$50,000. Some will say \$79,000. A few odd balls, a few crackpots, a few nuts will say it cost over \$100,000 and we will all pooh, pooh them, say, "Not at all! How could it?". Well, what did it cost? It did not cost that much. It only cost \$88,386.06. A mere \$88,386.06. How long did it sit? One, two, three, four, five, six years it sat, The Commission on the Revenue Sources in the City of St. John's. There is one bill still unpaid, for \$23,557.96, but I have included that. The total cost, \$88,386.06. That was the commission that was going to report and the legislation which would be enacted by March, 1966.



Next commission, March 6, 1967, on the St. Lawrence Mine. Now, there was a place where a royal commission was needed. There a royal commission could do a job and there a Royal Commission did a job. It certainly did a job. The cost of that royal commission -

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I am just checking to see if we are still relevant.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member wants a ruling on this. The honourable member is dealing with the practicality of appointing a commission. It is relevant.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, we know that the honourable gentleman has a tendency toward foolishness. So, we will not chastise him. There is a new atmosphere in this House, Mr. Speaker. After watching "Here and Now" last night three honourable members of this House discussed decorum and by golly the soul of decorum was the honourable member for Bell Island, so he said. He hurt my feelings by making jibes at me and accusing me of disrupting the House, but the people of Newfoundland know better.

Now that one cost \$103,789.52. It was worthwhile because they dug into the situation that required study and made an independent report. One of the members, the chairman, was a member of this honourable House, the member for Placentia West. It was a magnificent job, well done, worth the money. So, not every royal commission is useless. That one was useful.

Then we had a commission on August 8, 1967, the Royal Commission on Forestry appointed by the Liberal administration. That was a dismal flop. What a report it put in. It was pitiful the report that that commission eventually put in. Appointed on August 8, 1967, they were a year that year. They were a year the next year. They were a year the year after. That is four years. I believe they were something like three or four years before they submitted their final report and the total cost was \$62,481.88

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Who was on the commission?

MR. CROSBIE: I forget..The chairman was somebody from the Mainland. Rousseau was it? Some gentleman Rousseau from the Mainland, not the honourable gentleman from Labrador West. That gentleman, if we do not put the clamps on him, try to control him, he is going to outspend every other member of the honourable House, every other minister. Every day he is hopping up with a new request. Subsidize this, subsidize that, freight here, freight there. Well, he has got to be moved. He has got to go.

The one on the forestry was \$62,481.88.

Then we had a commission on September 19, 1967, on family law. A valuable commission, a lot of useful work done. The honourable Minister of Justice of today is seeing that some of it gets implemented. That royal commission cost \$140,939.87.

Well, was that enough commissions for the honourable gentleman opposite? No, that was not enough commissions for the honourable gentlemen opposite because they went on to put in more commissions.

AN HONOURABLE MINISTER: Who was in the cabinet at this time?

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Smallwood. Every side you looked was Mr. Smallwood. We were surrounded by him.

You gentlemen should not interrupt me, it gets me all confused. April 4, 1968, Royal Commission on Housing. Mr. Kostaszek was appointed to study the thorny question of housing. What did that cost, Mr. Speaker? One hundred and five thousand and sixty-eight dollars and sixty-seven cents. Mr. Kostaszek's report is a very good report. I do not think much of it has ever been implemented but he has done a good job. He did a good job but little action taken on it. So that was the Housing Royal Commission, \$105,000.

Then in 1968 we had a Royal Commission on Labour Legislation and that sat for four year. First it was Chief Justice Rand then it was Professor Cohen. What did that end up costing? One hundred and twenty-seven thousand three hundred and forty-three dollars and eighty-eight cents. I think, Mr. Speaker, that a royal commission on that subject really was not necessary. What is necessary is a couple of people in government service to sit down and revise our labour legislation and look at what they have in other provinces and receive submissions. Anyway there it is, that was done, \$127,343.

Well then we had to have another royal commission, this one had a good purpose, October 28, 1970, a royal commission into the situation in Bay Roberts. Mayor Adams was appointed to look into the Bay Roberts situation. That only cost \$3,757.45 and it did not take too long to do, and it got into the situation of the Municipality of Bay Roberts.

Then we had, in 1971, a Royal Commission on the St. John's Arterial Road. Gentlemen and members of the House will remember how gentlemen opposite started this arterial road that goes from the Trans-Canada and up and down the Southside Hills. tremendous, it ends nowhere at the moment, \$7,199.40 was the cost of that royal commission.

Well the honourable gentlemen opposite must have thought when they got the bills for those two commissions, there is something wrong here boy we are not lashing out enough in royal commissions. That is what they must have thought. Sure these two are only \$10,000 between them. What will we do to correct it? Then they got a good

idea. they appointed one on Blackhead Road Urban Renewal. That was the next commission. October 1, 1971, and that cost \$181,220.72. Also a good study, chaired by Mr. Kostaszek, did an excellent job going into that thorny situation on the Blackhead Road. It cost \$181 000. The situation should have never arisen if there had been proper planning in carrying out of that project in the first place.

Then on February 9, 1972, the honourable gentlemen, you know they were in power then illegally, they had been rejected by the Newfoundland people -

AN HON. MEMBER: February 1972?

MR. CROSBIE: Yes.

AN HON. MEMBER: No, that is wrong.

MR. CROSBIE: In January of 1972.

This commission was appointed by honourable gentlemen opposite and it had to be confirmed by us on February 9, 1972, the Royal Commission on Nursing.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. CROSBIE: Ah, but look at how reasonable the cost of this one is, \$1,020 to date.

Now we get down to another royal commission, on the Ruth Thompson case.

AN HON. MEMBER: How much?

MR. CROSBIE: This is very, very reasonable, \$948.00 to date. We are not finished with it yet.

Now we get to a royal commission and a subject that deserves a royal commission, that cried for a royal commission and it is worthy of a royal commission, it affects the whole province, the Royal Commission on Labrador, now underway, headed by Mr. Snowdon from the University, with three residents of Labrador on it. The cost to date \$26,528. That is a royal commission which should be reporting by the fall on an immensely important subject to the whole province. It is a subject that deserves a royal commission.

The structure of municipal government, there is a royal commission on that July 12 -

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. CROSBIE: Ah, we are coming to that.

MR. NEAPY: I am afraid we will not hear about that one.

MR. CROSBIE: Getting to know you.

MR. NEAPY: Inaudible.

MR. CROSBIE: The structure of municipal government, a subject that deserves a royal commission, one of the most important, one of the most tangled, one of the most knotty problems in the island to date, the cost to date \$7,853.

The Royal Commission on the Magistracy appointed I believe by the honourable gentleman opposite. The cost to date \$1,000.

Now a very pertinent royal commission, appointed on July 31, 1973, Bell Island Enquiry. the cost to date \$10,587.00 -

HON. MEMBERS: Shame! Shame!

MR. CROSBIE: A Royal Commission on Legal Work Stoppages, a very pertinent and topical subject, the cost to date \$1,000. On Workmen's Compensation, well it is not really a royal commission on Workmen's Compensation it is a commission of enquiry, the cost to date \$522. And a Royal Commission on Liquor Store Leases, a royal commission that got to the bottom of that situation, that we could not get to the bottom of in two or three years of trying in this House, that cost \$44,407. It proved who owned them. It exposed the whole situation, and anybody who reads it, sees it, the evidence is there.

So the total of all of those, Mr. Speaker is \$1, 170,865.56 as the total of those royal commissions to which we should add royal commissions that were paid since 1966, although they started before then. So just to top it all off, so that we can properly survey the whole scenery of royal commissions. the Royal Commission on Transportation that the honourable gentleman hurried, that cost \$25, 501.71. It was appointed in December 1964. Then in December 1964, the Royal Commission on Education and Youth, \$81,550.92

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. CROSBIE: Yes, I am coming to that one. Another royal commission that did good work, that had a subject worthy of it, education.

A Royal Commission on Electrical Energy, appointed December 8, 1964; the cost was \$2,091.83. Thank heavens it did not cost very much. It was a spavined, measly little document, it was buried quickly and -

AN HON. MEMBER: It must have had a short circuit.

MR. CROSBIE: It must have gotten short circuited. Right! Short circuit! It got the quick circuit.

Then a royal commission that was a good royal commission, an important royal commission that told things as they were, which displeased the past administration immeasurably, the Royal Commission on Economic Prospects, chaired by Gordon Pushie. It was not a bad job at all. They told things as they were and as a result of their report there had to be another bunch appointed to report on the report, Bonnie, Watson and Jason.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. CROSBIE: If the honourable gentlemen do not like the facts, the honourable gentleman do not like debate in this House, they only like getting in here day after day in the estimates and getting on with maw-mouths, mawing away, jaw-maw, the same point after the same point, standing up wasting the time of the House, when it comes to debating in depth the resolution they do not like it. The honourable gentlemen do not like it.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. CROSBIE: An excellent suggestion.

Economic Prospects \$298,966.50. What was it that was said about it? That this was -

AN HON. MEMBER: Trash.

MR. CROSBIE: Trash. Ninety per cent trash! Ninety per cent trash, the leader of the last administration said. But anyway the trash

cost \$298,000.

We had a Royal Commission on Health which I guess was Lord Brains, in 1965. The last bills were paid in the period that I am going over, \$28,557.42.

So that the total paid out for royal commissions from 1966 to date is \$1,607,533.94. Now that is royal commissions. The honourable gentleman wanted to appoint another royal commission. What are we to appoint the royal commission for? Well we are to appoint it because the Newfoundland Safety Council thought we should appoint it. The honourable gentleman jumped to align themselves behind the Newfoundland Safety Council without any thought of whether a royal commission is needed in highway safety. Without any thought at all, they hurriedly put together a resolution when they received a copy of a brief that all members of the House were sent.

MR. ROWE, W.N. A précis.

MR. CROSBIE: A précis of a brief giving the results of over ten years, ten years there was this, and ten years there was that, and making it all sound big and like an emergency, like we were all in danger, like you could not put your tootsy on the highway without you would be knocked down and assassinated, and therefore, they want us to appoint a royal commission.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I know it is going to surprise honourable gentlemen but members on this side do not feel that we should have a royal commission on this. They think it would be a waste of time. They think the resolution is misdirected, is misguided. The honourable gentlemen opposite just did not have the facts, and now they have the facts we are fully expecting honourable gentlemen opposite to vote with us against this silly resolution.

Mind you we still congratulate them for bringing up the topic because the topic itself is worth discussing.

Now I cleared away several preliminary issues. I have cleared away the underbrush with a machete, with a verbal machete I cleared

away the underbrush. Now let us look at some other things that were said in this debate where honourable gentlemen were misguided, misdirected. Licence plates - do honourable gentlemen remember the licence plate issue? A hurricane that went on about licence plates and reflectorized licence plates and everything there last fall, the abuse that the honourable the member for Humber West had to endure, television, radio, newspapers, a hurricane of abuse and criticism about reflectorized licence plates. All the honourable gentleman was doing was carrying out a policy adopted by the Liberal Administration. That is all he was doing, carrying it out because we thought it was the right policy, carrying out a policy decided by the very gentlemen across the House who were in the provincial cabinet at that time. The hon. member for White Bay South, the honourable the member for White Bay North, the honourable the member for Bell Island, all three in the cabinet, this was their policy. This was being carried out to do away with reflectorized plates because the policy was sensible and yet there was a tirade of abuse about it. One hesitates to mention it but still it is worth mentioning.

Now I want to quote to you, Mr. Speaker, "Neither Nova Scotia nor Ontario uses reflectorized plates. There is no technical information available to show that reflectorized plates are an effective safety feature

"For these reasons and because of the appreciable saving in cost it is recommended that three year non-reflectorized plates be ordered for the years 1972, 1973, 1974" (for these reasons it is recommended that three year non reflectorized plates be ordered) "It is further recommended that the order be placed with Waldale Limited of Amherst, Nova Scotia, at a cost of approximately \$61,000, as compared with Robert Neal's tender of \$180,000 for a two year reflectorized plate, Robert Neal did not quote on any non-reflectorized plates." Whose recommendation is this?

AN HON. MEMBER: Harold Starkes.

MR. CROSBIE: Harold Starkes, the Minister of Highways. That is his recommendation, the public recommendation, an order-in-council to carry it out. The decision, Mr. Speaker, was, ordered that the proposal of



the honourable Minister of Highways "to terminate the issue of annual motor vehicle licence plates and commencing in 1971 to substitute therefor a multi-year plate system, three year plates, unreflectorized, be, as it is hereby approved, ordered, further that tenders be sought from Robert Neal Limited, St. John's for the supply of such plates."

So his policy was to do away with reflectorized plates and to get unreflectorized plates.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. CROSBIE: Three year multi-year plates. That was the policy. No matter what the details, Mr. Speaker, the details are unimportant. The point was that the past administration had decided reflectorized plates were not worth it, that they did not do the job, that they were not what they were said to be and that they cost a lot more. There is no technical information available to show that reflectorized plates are an effective safety feature.

AN HON. MEMBER: What date is on that?

MR. CROSBIE: August 1970.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. CROSBIE: That is right. Here is a policy, The honourable gentleman can squirm, they can squiggle, they can wiggle, they can turn this way and that way, that was the policy and a sensible policy that was carried on by the present administration and to our surprise the honourable gentleman for Bell Island and others opposite attacked it

They attacked it, they attacked it like savage, mad dogs. If you looked at T.V. or listened to the radio or read the paper, you thought; "My God, what are the government doing? Are we all going to risk our lives if we go on the highway at night without these great reflectorized plates?" Then we had the C.B.C. showing a film on "Here and Now" about reflectorized plates and how good reflectorized plates were. What a job they did. Who made the film? It was not George McLean.

MR. NEARY: That is right.

MR. CROSBIE: No, the film was made by the 3M Company, the company whose process was used by Robert Neal Limited. That is whose film they showed on C.B.C., without saying it. They never said on the programme; "What we have to show you now is an advertising film from the 3M Company that sells material that goes into reflectorized plates." They showed this film.

Now they showed it a second time, The second time they may have said it had something to do with 3M but they certainly did not the first time, the first dramatic night on "Here and Now" when that film was shown. It was a film prepared by the manufacturer who wants to see reflectorized plates but honourable gentlemen opposite, so anxious to attack the government, so anxious not to give it a chance, foaming, foaming at the mouth wanting to get back into power, they are only out a year and three months yet still they are foaming. One of the honourable gentlemen said that he did not mind being out of power because he wanted to consider the future. What was his word? He wanted to draw up, conceptualize, he wanted to conceptualize. There was no conceptualizing in that mad-dog attack on the Minister of Highways over reflectorized plates. There was no thought given to that, just an anxiety, seize anything to beat the government with. "What little issue can we get today to attack them on? What little thing tomorrow?" There is no conceptualizing there but cheap, unwarranted attack so the people of Newfoundland

will think that we are doing away with reflectorized plates and think that reflectorized plates are some great safety device. They are not. If reflectorized plates are such a great device, then obviously the place to use reflectorized paint or whatever it is, is on the back of the car somewhere, you know, on a larger area of it. The car manufacturers should be required to do it, to use it. It should be used on the cars bumpers or on what ever.

Defective plates. Have you heard, Mr. Speaker, all the nonsense we heard about the new plates? How they were defective, The paint was coming off, they were peeling, they were wearing, they were denting, they were dissolving, they were dissipating, they were degenerating, the colours were going, I never heard the likes of what was wrong with those 1973 plates.

MR. A.J.MURPHY: The decomposing plates.

MR. CROSBIE: They were decomposing. What is the number of the complaints received by the department, by government, on these plates? How many complaints? The latest records I have are up to March 7, 1973. The Corner Brook office had eleven complaints regarding paint on the numerals being of poor quality. The Grand Falls office had eight complaints and had to replace plates in one instance and in St. John's, there were twelve complaints and in seven instances plates were replaced. That makes thirty-one complaints, and eight plates had to be replaced. Does that sound like this load of plates was worthless, that they were falling apart?

MR. MURPHY: How many thousand?

DR. FARRELL: We ordered 180,000

MR. CROSBIE: One hundred and eighty odd thousand plates. They were better plates than the denturists could produce, these plates were. That is the number of complaints. Yet the people of this province heard these ferocious attacks on the Minister of Transportation and Communications about his plates being no good, they were not reflectorized and they were peeling. There is nothing wrong with his plates, His upper plate is number one there.

DR. FARPELL: They showed a few on T.V. there.

MR. CROSBIE: Oh Yes, they had a couple of plates on T.V. I do not know who scratched the paint off the plates but they had a couple of plates on T.V. Every stop was pulled in this desperate attempt to destroy the Minister of Transportation and Communications who was just attempting to do his job for the people of this province, as he was elected to do, who gave up a lucrative medical practice -

DR. FARPELL: General practice.

MR. CROSBIE: Instead of looking after a foreign born refugee who fled from the Emerald Isle, he was abused because of his plates, of all things. I can understand it if he were a dentist, Mr. Speaker, being attacked about his plates, but he is not even a dentist.

That is one of the major points the opposition has brought up in the last - I would say it is the major point the opposition has brought up, Mr. Speaker, in the last fifteen months, as is shown by this resolution. Their most savage attack on the government, their biggest criticism, their reason why they are against us, why they are fighting tooth and nail to put us out, why they are trying to wear us down in this House, why they are keeping us here afternoon and evening with their endless repetition. The whole reason for it, apparently, is because of these reflectorized plates. It is the main issue, it is the only issue really that they have brought up this year, the plates.

In connection with the plates, we are only doing what they were going to do and had decided to do. The honourable minister was carrying it out and he thought that he was going to get praise and loud hosannas from gentlemen opposite but instead of that, what happened to him? He was practically sacrificed, he was worn down, his nerves went, unused as he was to public life and the abuse that you have to take. You see, Mr. Speaker, I am used to it. For year after year I have taken abuse and now I do not even notice it, I

just giggle.

Excuse me gentlemen while I clear my throat. Now, what do they say in British Columbia? The officials out there say this: "If six inch times twelve inch reflectorized area on the front or the back of a vehicle is an effective safety feature, then manufacturers should have it installed at the time of manufacture. All safety features on motor vehicles are prescribed by the Department of Transport under the Motor Vehicle Safety Act regulations. A reflective sheet or band is not one of their requirements." That is what they say in British Columbia and they are going into lifetime plates, non-reflectorized.

What do they do in Ontario? In Ontario they are going into—

DR. FARRELL: They did go in since then.

MR. CROSBIE: They have gone into non-reflectorized plates, five year. They say that if the strip of reflectorization were indeed important, then there are much cheaper ways to achieve it than reflectorizing plates. Yes, because you would put it directly on a vehicle, you would not bother reflectorizing the plates, you would put it somewhere else on the vehicle.

I could go on and discuss reflectorized plates but it is not necessary because I can see I have the sympathy and the support of every member of the honourable House on this point.

MR. NEARY: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I believe the honourable minister has gone over his time limit, Sir, of ninety minutes.

MR. CROSBIE: No, no, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: Five minutes last week.

MR. THOMAS: Fifteen.

MR. NEARY: Fifteen minutes last week.

MR. CROSBIE: I have only been an hour this week, so far.

MR. NEARY: No, Mr. Speaker, the honourable minister is more than an hour, he is an hour and twenty-five minutes.

AN HON. MEMBER: Call in the timer.

MR. CROSBIE: Call in that great timer from the sky.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the honourable minister should take his seat when I raise a point of order, Sir. Would the honourable minister please sit down and control himself? Could we have a ruling, Mr. Speaker?

MR. CROSBIE: The truth shall set them free.

MR. SPEAKER (DUNPHY): I have been informed by the Speaker that the honourable gentleman, the minister of Finance, has another ten minutes to go.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, I have the distinct impression that the honourable gentlemen opposite want me to stop talking. Now, Mr. Speaker, I am going to move an amendment, because, if I move this amendment I can talk endlessly. I am going to move, Sir, this amendment. I move, seconded by the honourable member for Placentia West, that all of the words after "now therefore be it resolved" be removed and we substitute the following; "that this House direct the Department of Transportation and Communications to continue to enquire into and investigate all aspects of highway safety and to continue to adopt all such measures as are feasible to improve safety on the highways of the province." I have the amendment here, Mr. Speaker, and a copy for honourable gentlemen opposite.

This amendment means that we would do away with the concept of having a royal commission. I believe all members of this House now and the honourable gentlemen from White Bay South, are agreed on that. This should be done. I think that we are going to reach unanimity on this issue. Forget the royal commission. The House has now discussed for several afternoons problems of highway safety. We have a Department of Transportation and Communications which is enquiring into and investigating all aspects of highway safety at all times, and that the House therefore just go on record as asking the department to continue to do this and to continue to adopt all such measures as are feasible to improve safety on the highways of the province.

This will mean that all honourable members of the House will have expressed their concern as to this serious problem and will be encouraging the department, directing the department to continue doing what they are doing and to adopt all such measures as they find feasible from time to time to improve safety. I think, Mr. Speaker, in all seriousness, that this would be a happy resolution of the resolution. Honourable gentlemen opposite get the credit for introducing it and for having brought the subject up, even if their resolution had a few mistakes of fact in it. Various honourable gentlemen have made a contribution to the debate, we are all concerned about it but on this side of the House we quite frankly do not see any necessity for a royal commission on this subject, for the reasons I have already pointed out.

I do not want to monopolize the time of the House, I do not want to take too long, therefore, I do not intend to speak on this amendment very long. I have a few observations of my own to make now on motor vehicle safety. What are we going to do about motor vehicles, Mr. Speaker? What are we going to do about highway safety? As more motor vehicles and more drivers go on the highways, we are going to have more accidents. There is no way, Mr. Speaker, of keeping up, no possible way of keeping up with the increase in the number of motor cars and drivers.

Honourable members I am sure have been to Ontario, some honourable gentlemen have been to California, some honourable gentlemen have been to Japan, some honourable gentlemen have been to Russia, some honourable gentlemen have been to Norway,

AN HON. MEMBER: China?

MR. CROSBIE: No traffic problems, all bicycles.

MR. ROBERTS: Any royal commission on bicycles?

MR. CROSBIE: It would be just as sensible as a royal commission on highway safety. You go to Ontario, Mr. Speaker, and look at the situation there. They have magnificent highways, they go this way and that way and crosswise and expressways. You go to Tokyo in Japan and

they have the same, go to Europe, in Germany and England, and they have the same. Yet, you go to any of them on a Saturday or Sunday and you are stuck in a traffic jam. I remember chugging along the expressway from Tokyo to Mount Fuji on "me" public duty, with my savoury in my hand, looking for a field to plant some savoury given me by the St. John's North member, with a Bell Island mushroom. Here we were on this magnificent expressway, four rows of traffic all going along at five miles per hour.

AN HON. MEMBER: In the same direction?

MR. CROSBIE: Yes, in the same direction on that occasion. It is the same in Toronto, it is the same everywhere you look. It is going to be the same in this province, Mr. Speaker. There is not enough money in the Dominion of Canada to build all the roads that would be required to be built here to service all the cars and drivers that there will be in the next few years.

What are we going to do about it? That is the problem. What are these areas going to do about it? They are going to have to turn to public transportation systems. This is what they have to do, it is the only sensible thing to do. What are they doing today in San Francisco, in the Bay Area? They are just finishing the construction of the Bay Area Rapid Transit System, "BART," known as "BART." That is a system of subways and trains that will take you all around the Bay Area, because they are choked with motor vehicles in San Francisco



California, despite all their highways, and highway safety is not in it. You are one hundred times safer on the roads here in Newfoundland than you are in California, and the same kind of thing will have to be done on a smaller scale here in Newfoundland. St. John's has to have a proper public transit system to save all the motor vehicles that are coming into it now. Any road you get on, any intersection, any time of the night or day in St. John's you have to wait, if there is no light, five or ten minutes before you can get on the road. St. John's is choked with traffic, choked. Try to go from East to West, North to South, Southwest to Northeast, Northwest to Southeast and it is the same problem, too many cars for the road system. What have the honourable gentlemen opposite done about it? Nothing except move this resolution, which has not been much help.

So, Mr. Speaker, my prognostication of the future is that the North American Continent, Europe, Japan, we cannot afford this increase in motor cars and that we have to put more of our resources into public transit systems. Now is there anything else I should touch on to ensure -

There is just one other special point I would like to make, Mr. Speaker. We have a perfectly splendid Minister of Justice, a reformer, Sir, in the great tradition of the bar. That honourable minister has a great career ahead of him yet and he has a great one behind him too. He is not here this afternoon but I know that our House Leader is listening attentively, making notes so he can pass on to the responsible minister all titbits of information that are requested. I cannot see, Mr. Speaker, why we cannot turn right on a red light. Why can we not turn right on a red light? They do it everywhere else, stop their car and if there is no traffic coming they turn right. What is wrong with Newfoundlanders that we cannot turn right on a red light? I know that red lights are anathema of course in our fair province but at least the ones that mark

stop and go on the streets you should be able to turn right on the red light.

MR. ROBERTS: The honourable minister is -

MR. CROSBIE: Well, in my younger days I debated that subject and I came to conclusions which I have to keep to myself being in the political business. Now that has been adopted unanimously by the members of this House and I hope the Minister of Justice, that great human being, that wonderful human being, he the connoisseur of legal reform that he will see, together with our colleague, (the great Dr. Far-Rell) he will see that these amendments are made and that we can turn right on a red light.

Now there was one other suggestion, Mr. Speaker, and I do not want to monopolize the time of the House but there is one other thing that I would like the honourable Minister of Justice and his committee to look into when they examine the no-fault insurance system and that is a suggestion made in an article by the former Chief Justice McRuer of Ontario, three or four years ago, which I gave to Jim Channing, and he may still have it. It was an article on the whole subject, Mr. Speaker, of highway accidents.

MR. SPEAKER: If the honourable minister would permit me, his ninety minutes of debating period has now expired. The honourable minister is now speaking to the amendment or the time subsequently he will be speaking to the amendment on which I understand he has unlimited time.

MR. CROSBIE: This is my last point anyway, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Also I understand from my officials that the amendment has to be put at this time, so I will read the amendment. The motion of the honourable member for White Bay South is on the record and the honourable Minister of Finance has moved the following amendment: It is moved and seconded that the motion be amended by removing all of the words after "Now therefore be it resolved" and substitute the following " that this House direct the Department of Transportation

and Communications to continue to enquire into and investigate all aspects of highway safety and to continue to adopt all such measures as are feasible to improve safety on the highways of the province."

MR. CROSBIE: Seconded by the honourable member for Placentia West. Now my last point, Mr. Speaker, because I know there are others who wish to enter into the debate and perhaps we can vote on this before six o'clock.

MR. ROBERTS: This week or next?

MR. CROSBIE: Oh, any week at all. My point is this, that it was a very interesting study of what should be done about accidents on the highway. Now, as honourable gentlemen know, today if you are injured on the highway and it is the other party's fault, you take an action against them for the damage to your car and for your personal injuries. The member for St. John's South spoke most eloquently of the effects of that system where each individual must take his own action for his damage or if he is injured personally or if it is a fatal accident his dependents through their lawyer have to take a fatal accidents action against the driver of the other vehicle and so on. The member for Placentia East mentioned an anomaly - the passenger in a motor vehicle must prove gross negligence to collect against the driver of the motor vehicle if he is driving the motor vehicle when he is injured, which is unjust and which should be changed. You have all these complications and you have, Mr. Speaker, our courts today blocked up with highway accident cases.

The whole burden of this article by Chief Justice McRuer, one of the great Ontario jurists who afterwards did a study on civil rights and civil liberties in Ontario, he suggested that the whole subject of highway accidents should be removed from the courts and should be dealt with in a similar system to Workman's Compensation. In other words, if you suffer injury on the highway or death or property damage that you should be compensated no matter

whose fault it was, that the question of fault is immaterial, that this should be a social cost, this should be a cost to society the same as workman's compensation is for the employer and the workman and to the public and that all this litigation should be taken out of the courts and the whole matter dealt with in a system similar to workman's compensation where there would be for example a highway compensation tribunal which would deal with all claims and what you got would not depend upon who was at fault but would depend on what injury you suffered, what damage you suffered, it would depend, if your husband were killed, on what his earnings were and so on, the same principles that apply in court now. There would be no need to litigate whose fault it was. The only litigation would be what is the assessment of the damages, and that cannot be agreed.

Mr. Speaker, it struck me when I read that article three or four years ago that this was a tremendous suggestion well worth looking at, to take this whole subject of death and injury on the highway out of private litigation, take it out of the courts, discard altogether the law of negligence in relation to highway accidents and put it under a special tribunal. The motorist of course would have to be assessed, Drivers would be assessed to get the funds to go into say the highway compensation fund and perhaps governments also would have to put some money from the general revenue and the whole matter would be dealt with in a similar principle to workman's compensation.

Now I have only read this article and I have never gone into it in any depth to see what problems there would be or whether it is practical or not practical but I would suggest my colleagues, the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Mines and Energy and the Minister of Transportation and Communication, might consider that when they are looking at the subject of no-fault insurance this summer, because it appears to me to be a far more rational and reasonable system if it be practical. Perhaps we could lead the

way in this province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have spoken all I should speak in this debate. I think it has been a useful debate and private members' day is a good time for issues like this to be discussed. I think, as previous speakers on this side have said, it was a good subject for the opposition to bring forward, the member for White Bay South. We have the same concern as they do about this subject but we feel that the House should direct the department to continue to do what it has been doing and to adopt all feasible measures and that a royal commission is unnecessary and would not serve a useful purpose and therefore I believe that members on this side will be voting for the amendment. We will see whether that carries or not.

MR. J.A. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the amendment and to speak to it and I would like to make a few points. First of all I think I would like to make it absolutely clear that I welcome the opposition's concern and the concern of honourable members who feel that it is necessary to debate such an important and vital issue as highway safety at this time. However I find myself in agreement with the amendment moved by the honourable Minister of Finance in that the Department of Transportation and Communication, as it is now called, be empowered to look into this and to suggest remedies because I feel, Mr. Speaker, that we know what the problems are, we know what the causes are and I think we know many of the solutions. This is not to say that the solutions are easy or can come very quickly but we do know many of the solutions and therefore it is unnecessary to take the time of this House or take the time of a royal commission or a special commission or to set aside special funds for that purpose.

I certainly would say that highways and roads are the most political possible area. I well remember the flurry in 1965 in the attempt to finish the Trans-Canada Highway and as one who drove over that highway many, many times before it was finished I certainly welcomed its completion. However I did not welcome the

undue haste with which the paving was finished late in the fall of 1965 and I myself was an eye witness to pavement being laid over snow and frost. Of course it had to be removed the next year as it hardly stood the winter and the extra cost I presume was absorbed by the federal government on the "formula "90 - 10" which was the basis on which that highway was finished. In fact I imagine that was the only way it could have been finished at that time, But there is no need to be wasteful of money even if it is other people's money.

Now a few observations about the highways in general around Newfoundland particularly the condition that they were in when we took over the government. First of all many of the curves are not sloped. They are practical level and if you drive around them at any speed at all, you find your car pulling over towards the ditch and many of the new highways have the roadbed itself perched high off the ground. Now I understand that this has something to do with making it easier to clear them of snow in the winter. Nevertheless, if you go off these roads in Newfoundland you are going to suffer grievous injury. I think that this is probably one of the biggest causes of injuries on the highway, second possibly only to actual collision. The shoulders in many cases are either nonexistent or unworthy of the name or far too narrow. In fact if I did not know better, I would be forced to the conclusion that certain districts in Newfoundland were favoured to the exclusion of other districts because it is certainly true that the road system in Newfoundland is not equally good all over.

I think this probably resulted from the attitude of the previous administration and their leader because I think we can say that if that honourable gentleman believed anything he believed that if he won a debate he had solved a problem. To digress ever so slightly for a moment, I well remember the celebrated debate about the location of the chip mill and how the then Premier sat

April 11, 1973

Tape 1162

JM - 7

down appearing to be defeated by the noisy crowd that he was addressing. However, I suppose he had a drink of water and went back into the fray and soon had everyone talked down and he ended up the evening being cheered. I honestly feel that he felt at that moment

that that problem was solved, that he need not think about it any more. He had gotten the cheers of the crowd and therefore there was no further need for any action. This was what he had been playing for, what he had been aiming for and this was the conclusion. Now, I think it was that attitude especially applied to highways that caused many of our problems. Our highway system is not adequate, was not adequate and will not be adequate until many, many more dollars are spent. Of course we know that this will take a number of years. I feel that this attitude that existed over the first twenty-two years of confederation is largely to blame for many of the inadequacies that we still see today.

We know that the previous government observed no priorities whatsoever unless it was to keep themselves elected. This in itself is perhaps understandable even praiseworthy but in the long run can prove disastrous to the public interest. It is not enough to want just to be elected. Unless you want to do a reasonably good job you do not deserve to be in public life.

Now, we do know what some of the solutions to the highway problem are. One of the first solutions is the increased co-operation between local roads boards and Department of Highways. Now, I know that I am perhaps putting the cart before the horse, I am discussing secondary roads before primary roads, but I am very encouraged to note that in my own district the Portugal Cove Roads Board has been getting in touch with the Department of Highways and Department of Highways have assured me and them of their co-operation in that they will see that they do all that they can to put those secondary roads into such a condition whereby the maintenance grant that is allowed per year, on the formula of four hundred dollars per mile and one dollar per head of population, will maybe not be adequate but certainly should be sufficient to see that those roads are kept



in reasonable condition.

Another cause of dangers on the highway - many, many people have referred to it time and time again and I have had occasion to mention it to the honourable Minister of Transportation and Communication - and that is that this sign "Keep Right Except To Pass" causes a great deal of trouble. I am sorry "Slow Drivers Keep Right" causes a great deal of trouble. No one likes to think of himself as a slow driver except possibly someone driving a very large truck or tractor trailer. Therefore the slow drivers tend to stay in the middle lane. This sign should be removed and substituted for it should be "Keep Right Except To Pass" which is the sign posting used in other provinces and in other countries or many of the other countries.

However, the minister says that this has not been done yet because these slow lanes, so called, are really just too short to allow for traffic to move over. It is not really a three lane highway system that we have. They are merely fairly long paved shoulders allowing heavy vehicles to move over and to allow the faster traffic to pass by. Now, I myself do not entirely accept this. I feel that some of those so called shoulders are long enough to permit that type of sign posting, "Keep Right except to Pass". However, I am assured that as funds become available and these shoulders or third lanes, as they are called, are lengthened that this type of sign posting will be brought in. All that I can say is that I hope that it is done very soon.

Another solution is the highways, especially heavily used highways, should be lit. Now, I know that this is costly and perhaps to some extent not practical in that it cannot be done this year or next year but I think that it is a solution that we should work towards. It is a definite solution. It will

certainly cut down on some of the hazards of driving particularly on the Trans-Canada Highway which is subject to fog and storm and varying weather conditions. I would like to see the day when the Trans Canada Highway across Newfoundland, particularly in the more foggy areas or the areas more susceptible to fog, are lit by a system of street lights that are probably two or three hundred feet apart but still street lights there that will allow the driver to be fully aware of where he is when weather conditions restrict the visibility. Of course, as the honourable Minister of Social Assistance pointed out to me just now, that especially where over-passed are concerned these could and should be lit. This would certainly be a step in the right direction.

The reason that many of these solutions are not in effect is because the previous government did not do it. Why did they not do it? One of the reasons is that they did not observe any priorities that I could discern. I feel that they wasted our substance and I feel many of the problems that we are struggling with can be directly traced to their mismanagement of them by particularly their previous leader. We have to run a tight ship and if we do run a tight ship, I think that we can bring about these solutions that I have outlined.

Of course, as the Minister of Finance has pointed out, the traffic problems will not go away, they will not get better, they are only going to get worse and the long-term solutions are in the realm of public transportation. I myself would like to point out that perhaps an overhead monorail system particularly for the more urban areas in Canada is probably the most workable solution. Subways requiring vast amounts of excavation and disruption seem to be prohibitively expensive whereas an overhead monorail system can be put in an existing urban area without too much disruption. Once put there the transportation can be rapid, effective and safe and free from the vicissitudes of the weather.

So, Mr. Speaker, these are a few observations I had to make. I do feel myself quite alarmed at the statistics of fatalities on our roads. I realize that if you analyze it by terms of passenger miles it may not be much worse this year than it was last year. We may even look forward to some improvements in per passenger miles but as the density and frequency of traffic increases we are going to see more deaths in absolute terms. This is to be deplored and I think that we should all try and do what we can to bring about some of the solutions that I have outlined. These are only a few. I am sure honourable members here can think of many more. Therefore, I support the amendment to the resolution and I certainly support the spirit of the resolution as moved by the honourable member for White Bay South. Thank you.

MR. W. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I just want to rise to give our position on the amendment itself. These are very few words on the amendment, Sir. I intend to have a few more remarks to make when I clue up the principal debate or the debate on the principal motion. We have listened to the Minister of Finance regale us today for a couple of hours. I must say, Sir, that we have very bad luck in this House. As I mentioned a couple of days ago, under the New Mental Health Act it takes two doctors to certify a man in this province. Last day when we saw the Minister of Finance dance a jig merrily across the floor here, unfortunately only the Minister of Health was present and the Minister of Highways, who is also a doctor, was out of the House. Today while the minister was giving every sign and evidence and manifestation of some inner malady, unfortunately the Doctor of Health was not in his place and all we had was the Doctor of Highways. So, legally we did not have enough to commit the honourable gentleman either last day or this day. Maybe one of this days, Sir, we will have a lucky break and both medical doctors will be in their seats at the same time and we will,

for the protection of honourable members and perhaps for the protection of the minister, we will be able to have him nabbed once and for all.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: The new wing will be ready.

MR W. ROWE I hope so. So that he will be more comfortable than he otherwise might be.

There was a time, Sir, when we could expect a relatively reasonable, sober-minded display from the minister during the afternoon sittings (by sober-minded I mean serious.) and then, in the nighttime, after a long, leisurely, semi-liquid supper, he used to really regals us in those days. Now, Sir, I am getting fearful for the honourable minister, because these antics of his have crept into the afternoon sessions as well as the evening. I hesitate to say what he is doing during his lunch hour.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: No lunch.

MR. W. ROWE: No lunch today. You mean, it was on a empty stomach. That is why, Mr. Speaker, undoubtedly the honourable minister could not carry.

Now, I just want to say something on the amendment and then I will sit down because I want to save the bulk of my remarks for when the debate closes. This amendment, Sir, must be the most stupid, most ridiculous amendment ever brought into this House. I would submit, Sir, that if we searched through the rules, that procedure is probably out of order anyway. Here is an amendment which directs the Department of Highways to do what the Department of Highways under its act is supposed to be doing in any event. All that we are asking in the main resolution, Mr. Speaker, is that the Department of Highways be assisted in this onerous job by some outside expert opinions, investigations, ideas, collation of material, all that sort of thing, people who have no axe to grind like perhaps the minister might have or the department, the officials of his department, people who are not overly concerned about the

cost aspects of implementing certain safety measures. That is the type of persons who should be making recommendations to the government on this whole situation of highway traffic safety, Mr. Speaker. Here is the honourable Minister of Finance in a desperate attempt to try to get some political kudos - God knows he has had little enough in the past number of months - get some political kudos on his side, in a blatant political attempt, Sir, to confuse the issue by bringing in an amendment which directs the Minister of Highways to do what the Minister of Highways is supposed to do legally. If he were not doing, Mr. Speaker, what this amendment asks him to do, I would submit, Sir, that he would be falling down pretty badly, dismally in his job as Minister of Highways. I know that the honourable minister whom I do not know too well but I know him well enough I think to be able to say that the Department of Transportation and Communication will continue to inquire into and investigate all aspects of highway safety and continue to adopt all measures that are feasible, or try to anyway, within the financial constraint. If he is not doing that all of the time, if Ministers of Highways have not been doing that for the past number of decades, Mr. Speaker, they have not been doing the job they are supposed to be doing.

So, I suspect that the minister will do that. You do not need a resolution from the House of Assembly directing him to do what he is supposed to do in any event. How ridiculous and stupid is that. Encourage! If the honourable minister needs encouragement from a resolution of this House, well then he should submit his resignation, Mr. Speaker. If he is Minister of Highways, Transportation and Communications he will try to do everything within his power and his department's power obviously to try to cut down on highway traffic accidents.

What we are suggesting, Sir, is that he resort to some outside expert advice on the situation, people with no axe to grind, people

who will not be involved in the politics of the situation, people  
who -

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. W. ROWE: \$100,000. Do not be so ridiculous, Mr. Speaker.  
\$100,000. Some people who can bring to the attention of the public  
the problems which are now in existence and make recommendations  
and dramatize the situation so that members of the public will  
be in a better position to know what is going on here compared to  
other provinces in Canada. The Minister of Highways will have  
some public pressure brought to bear on him, hopefully, to implement  
some of the recommendations. No minister likes to have that  
happen. I did not like to have it happen when I was minister,  
public pressure to make you do something which perhaps you did  
not have money enough for and that sort of thing, but that is the  
essence of democratic government, Mr. Speaker, that the public  
try to make its interests known to the people who are governing  
and the minister tries to do whatever he can. It is not encouragement.  
The minister is encouraged enough now I hope to try to do what he  
can. What he needs and what any minister needs to have kept before  
his mind and the minds of his officials are these problems that are  
with us and which we would like to see if not disappear at least  
diminish in their serious impact on our citizens in this province.

That is why we need a Royal Commission. I will go into  
that a little later on but just suffice it to say for the moment, Sir,  
that an amendment which directs the Minister of Highways

to do what he is suppose to be doing, if he is doing his job at all, is the height of nonsense, it is ridiculous, Listen to the honourable member for Green Bay over there. Go down and assist the Premier. Mr. Speaker, ask the honourable member to go down and assist the Premier; he needs some assistance. Well, to encourage the Premier to do his job. Why do we not pass the resolution for the Minister of Justice. Saying, "Dear Minister of Justice, you are hereby encouraged to do your job properly." Then to the Minister of Mines and Energy; "Minister of Mines and Energy, take no notice of the abuse that you might get in this honourable House of Assembly, you are hereby encouraged to carry on regardless. Do your job," Mr. Speaker, "do your job, do not falter in it, do not let a little abuse or a little criticism get you upset." So here we are now directing the Minister of Highways who needs no encouragement in any sphere of activity in life, I would submit. Sir, no encouragement at all. I would say he is trying to do his job, he may need some help from outside sources but he may need some pressure brought to bear on him to do what the public considers to be necessary rather than perhaps what some narrow group of civil servants deem necessary or some other narrow-interest group. That is the only reason we are asking for this. He does not need any encouragement, no minister needs any encouragement. Mr. Speaker, no resolutions need to be passed saying to a minister, "Minister, do your job." If the minister is not doing his job, theoretically he will be thrown out of the cabinet by the Premier, and if the government as a whole are not doing their job, they will suffer at the hands of this House in a vote of no-confidence or in a general election they will be thrown out by the people or the party will not have a majority after the next general election. No encouragement is needed.

What we need is some pressure, some advice, some information, some collation of material, some recommendations in order to cut down on the the abysmal safety problems which we are having in this province and in other provinces of Canada. The statistics which I will bring into the House later Mr. Speaker when I clue up the debate, will show

that our rate of increase is in fact relatively higher than any province in Canada, notwithstanding the gobbledegook and mumbo-jumbo which the Minister of Finance regaled us with today.

That is all I will say on the amendment, Sir, we are against the amendment because it is useless and it is a political ploy on the part of the Minister of Finance. What we would like to see is a Commission of Enquiry with no axe to grind, carrying no brief for anyone who can look at it dispassionately, objectively and then expose the recommendations to the minister of the government and the public and let us see what comes out of that. That is what I would like to see.

MR. BARRY: Mr. Speaker, many of the points raised by the honourable members on the other side of the House in course of this debate I would have to agree with, as strange as it may sound, I have to agree with some of the points raised but I cannot support the resolution and I cannot understand the logic of the honourable members in proposing such a resolution.

We have heard so many times in the last weeks and months the honourable members on the other side of the House lambast the government for the amount of study that was being done, the number of committees, the number of commissions that were looking into different aspects. How many times have they said; we do not need committees, we do not need commissions, they are a waste of money? Now what do we see? We see a resolution that the House direct the government to establish immediately a Commission of Enquiry to examine and to investigate all aspects of highway safety.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if we look at some of the points raised by the honourable members themselves, in previous sessions of this honourable House, we will see that by the very points that they make themselves they clearly establish that this is not a situation for the appointment of a commission. For example, the honourable the member for White Bay South, in introducing the resolution on Wednesday, March 21, stated such a royal commission does not have to be expensive and it does not have to be time-consuming. They should do, as I have said, not any original



research into problems which have already been examined by the jurisdictions throughout the world, they should be able to collate this information, gather in this information, look at recommendations of other jurisdictions to see what they have done in other jurisdictions and to see what the results have been. They do not have to do any original research in respect of that kind of information.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think that point in itself indicates that this is not the type of problem which requires a commission. The problems here are clear and many of the solutions to these problems become fairly obvious.

MR. BOHE, U.N. Well would the minister not agree that if he again read on in Mansard, maybe on the same page or a little further on, I have mentioned that this commission should certainly collate information which is readily available elsewhere and deal with some unique or peculiar problems, problems which are peculiar to Newfoundland, and that would be an additional term of reference of the commission obviously. Does not the minister agree with that?

MR. BAPRY Yes, Mr. Speaker, I agree there may be some unique problems but the types of problems the honourable member referred to, they can do some research into our distinct, unique and peculiar Province of Newfoundland such as a road system which is very extensive, the dirt roads, the gravel roads we have, the paved roads and the Trans-Canada Highway.

Mr. Speaker, these are things which any member of the civil service, which any member of cabinet are familiar with. There is no great research investigation required into matters distinct to Newfoundland, peculiar to Newfoundland. The problems that are set out here, the major problems are universal ones, they are not peculiar to our province. In some slight ways we have - I will go into them in some detail - in some slight ways there are unique peculiarities in the province. But the major problems, the major points which have to be attacked are points which are universal, on which there has already been extensive study done, on which there is enough of a consensus, I

would submit, to enable the honourable the Minister of Transportation and Communications Department to tackle these problems one by one and to get solutions much more efficiently, much faster and at much less expense to the province than could be done with a commission of enquiry.

It is a matter in most cases of working out details of solution rather than putting any amount of research, as the honourable member on the other side of the House has pointed out, or any great amount of original thinking into it.

Now some of the points that have been stressed that I would agree with are, for example, the need for high school driver education, not just education for the high school level but education of our population generally, in proper driving methods, in defensive driving methods. Mr. Speaker, this government have already commenced, we have already. The honourable the House Leader has pointed out that there have been film strips prepared in connection with this very point.

AN HON. MEMBER: Whose were they?

MR. BARRY: I do not know, I assume they were McLean's or some other -

AN HON. MEMBER: How many errors are in it?

MR. BARRY: I do not know how many errors are in it, Mr. Speaker, but I say this is a step in the right direction. And again I have to ask and the honourable member on the other side of the House pointed out, felt it necessary to point it out, that they did not want to hear any statements made from this side of the House to the effect of why had this not been done in the past? Why had this not been looked into in the past? I think one of the honourable members pointed out the pressures of office in his particular department, I believe - was this correct? The previous administration, the pressures of office prevented inquiry into many areas? That is understandable.

But Mr. Speaker, I personally do not understand how all of a sudden, I know it has been said "Tory times are hard times," but I do

understand how all of a sudden we have these pressing safety problems come out of the blue. What has been done over the past twenty-three years? How is it the honourable members feel that all of these should be solved overnight with a new administration? I can agree that these are things that are of concern but this government are looking into them, this government are aware of them and this government will solve them. Mr. Speaker.

Another point raised by the honourable members on the other side of the House that I have to agree with is the need for better licencing procedures. I believe it has already been mentioned that already a move is being made in this direction. There has been a change in the written licencing examine. I do not know if this has been brought in already or if it is about to be brought in, but the honourable the House Leader mentioned it when speaking in this debate. I would agree that there is a need for stricter road tests. I think we are all familiar with situation where people who are unable to pass tests from inspectors in some areas usually I believe it is a matter of the testing officer being stricter and known to be stricter by people in the area, so they will shop around and perhaps find an officer who is either under greater pressure or somewhat more relaxed in the method of testing. They will shop around until they find somebody who will pass them. This use to be the case, Mr. Speaker, I do not know if it is being continued today. But we also have the problem of people being tested in rural areas, getting a licence without any familiarity whatsoever in driving either in city traffic or on the Trans-Canada Highway or at high speeds.

We have the fact that there is no visual testing done in the province and I believe we are the one of the only provinces not to have (what do they call them?) a visual acuity test. I remember when I first went for a driver's licence, it was in the Army. COTC-

AN HON. MEMBER: The Salvation Army.

MR. HARRY: They took them approximately one-half an hour to give us this depth perception test, to check peripheral vision and a fairly in-depth visual examination. This is not done in the

province. Perhaps this is an area we should get into. I do not know what the mechanical problems would be. Do we have enough personnel enough equipment to give this type of test? I think it is something that is serious enough to be looked into.

I suspect, I know myself probably when I started to drive, I think the first thing I drove was a two and a-half ton truck. Looking back I would honestly have to say that the truck was carrying me rather than me carrying the truck or directing the truck. I think there are a lot of people who find themselves in the position where they are driving and they do not really have the control that they should have, solely because of the leniency or the lack of strictness in the road tests and other examinations which they have to go through.

The demerit system has been referred to. The demerit system is something which this government are now studying, looking into the implementation of this, and very quickly there will be a decision on this. One thing that we should point out is that we must try and ensure as much fairness as possible in any system that is applied. You should have some sort of appeal procedures. There are people who are going to get in problems because of technicalities. You can have a situation where a

person has had two speeding violations, is obviously at fault, and then he has a third and final violation if you are using say a three-time loser criteria. You have another violation where a person is caught for driving fifty-five miles an hour or fifty-two miles an hour in a fifty mile zone. Now are you going to, in that case, take away his driving privileges altogether?

You have to have some system where you can ensure what we call fairness and ensure that the system is properly applied.

The question of no-fault insurance: There is at the present time a cabinet committee studying this matter and it is hoped to have a decision made in time for legislation, if necessary, at the next session of this honourable House. A number of points have to be looked into when you consider no fault insurance. Most importantly I suppose you have to look at the effect on safety.

Will there be a lack of deterrence if you bring in a no-fault insurance system? Will people become less responsible in their driving habits? Another factor that should be looked at is the effect on the cost to the people of Newfoundland. This is a very important factor as well because many, I would say most of our people depend upon the right to drive in order to earn a living today in Newfoundland and when you take away a man's right to drive, or when you make it prohibitively expensive for him to drive, then you are interfering with his ability to earn a living. So the cost is a factor which has to be considered in any insurance scheme that you bring in or any change that you make to existing insurance schemes.

Mr. Speaker, there is also the question of the fairness of any insurance scheme you have. There are certain traditions which have been followed in our society that are having certain attitudes. The question of fault, for example, we have an attitude

I do not know how important or how significant it is, how reluctant people would be to change it in our particular province, they have done it elsewhere, but you do have people looking at things in terms of who is at fault, who is to blame.

Unfortunately in the area of motor vehicle law, as any lawyer at least knows, fault is often a very artificial thing. Who is at fault when two cars are driving along the highway, both cars on their own side of the road and one car hits an icy section of a highway and slides over into the other car's lane, when the car that slid over had no indication it was coming to a slippery spot on the road?

I would think that nine times out of ten, the car that slid over into the other car's lane would be considered to be entirely at fault, one hundred per cent to blame for that accident and liable one hundred per cent for the resulting damages.

Now that is an artificial idea of fault or blame because the person who was driving along in his own lane, on a clear road and suddenly came onto the patch of ice, could in no way, in the normal sense of the term, be said to be at fault or to blame for the accident but the way the law is today, he would legally, under this artificial idea of fault, be held one hundred per cent liable in most cases.

Another point which I personally am in favour of - the higher compulsory limit on the amount of insurance which must be carried and we have already seen action taken by this government in this respect. As a personal point of view, again not government policy but as a personal point of view, I think that everybody should be obliged to carry insurance. I think today that it is irresponsible for a person to drive without insurance.

Again the other side of the coin of course is that this in turn means additional cost on certain individuals who can now afford to buy a car and get the licensing and so on but feel that they cannot afford to pay the insurance premium.

Well when I balance that out against the problems of having uninsured people driving around the province, having accidents, putting people in hospital for life, I feel that on balanced it is better to have compulsory insurance and take the added cost of driving.

Mr. Speaker, when I look at the whole problem of highway safety, one thing that becomes obvious, to me in any event, is that in most cases the solution to most of these problems is one of changing attitudes, of changing the way people think about driving, about specific details. For example, some of the points that have been made here are: Why is it that younger drivers who, although they have better reflexes normally, better vision and so on, why is it these younger drivers have twice as many accidents as older age groups?

Now I submit, Mr. Speaker, it is because of the attitude that they have towards driving. They do not drive as responsibly as they should. They have a different outlook on the manner in which they should be driving and how it is going to affect people around them.

Why is it, Mr. Speaker, that in half of the accidents we have, not just in our province but everywhere, in fifty per cent of these accidents alcohol is involved. It is an indication of the attitude of all of us about drinking and driving. We do not, I think, frown upon a person having one drink, two drinks, and it inevitably leads to three and four drinks and getting in a car and driving.

The simple fact is that most people do not know or will not admit when they have had enough drinks to impair their driving ability. Now this is the fault, as far as I am concerned, of an attitude that is prevalent in society.

Another example of a wrong attitude, an attitude which can only lead to bad habits being developed in our children, is the way in which we talk about the police on the highway. The way in which we are not concerned about speeding - we are concerned

about being caught for speeding.

I remember one day, a couple of years ago, one of the radio stations here in town, for half an hour to three-quarters of an hour made it a point every two or three minutes of warning drivers passing through a certain stretch of highway that there was an R.C.M.P. car with a radar trap set up in that area of the highway.

Now that is evidence of a bad attitude. If the radar trap were there, people should not have been warned because anybody who was speeding at that time should have been caught, because he would be speeding at other times and unless an example is set, unless he is caught, he is going to continue in his bad habits. I do not think most people, I did not see any great criticism of this radio broadcast. I did not see letters written into the editor about this poor citizenship or bad citizen attitude on the part of this radio station.

Some of the suggestions, Mr. Speaker, that have been made, some of the things that have been pointed out as serious problems on our highway, I disagree with. I disagree with the fact that this passing lane, because of the markings, is a problem. The only reason the passing lane is a problem is again because of the attitude of drivers. There are two sets of drivers, one driver is the person who says, "I am going fifty-nine miles an hour," or "I am going fifty-five miles an hour, that is fast enough for anybody to be going on the highway and I am not moving in to let that guy pass me. I am in my lane. I am not slow traffic. I am going fast enough and I am staying right here in the outside lane," He forgets about whoever is behind him.

Now that is an irresponsible attitude, that is a poor attitude, Mr. Speaker. Anybody can see, if he is driving properly he can see cars moving out behind him and when he sees this, if he sees that they are moving at a speed in excess of the speed that he is moving at, whether he be going himself ninety miles an hour, I submit he should haul over and let the



car behind him pass.

At the same time, we have a bad attitude on people who come up behind the drivers in these slow lanes. They immediately become frustrated, they become annoyed, they either start tailgating or they will pass on the right or generally react in an irresponsible manner.

The same thing is true of the merge sign, or the yield sign before. I do not think it really makes too much difference. Merge is a better example of what was happening ever since the passing lane was put on the highway. There was no such thing as yielding. The cars were merging. It is a perfectly legitimate device, a perfectly legitimate sign. But unless drivers remain responsible and have the proper attitudes, permit cars to come out of the passing lane when there is a line of traffic, if they are in the passing lane permit the faster moving cars to go by before hauling out, unless that happens it does not matter what signs you put there.

We have to face up to the fact, Mr. Speaker, that we do not have a four-lane highway. We do not have a divided highway. We have to make do as well as we can with the type of highway that now exists. If we could get more money from the federal government, we could improve our highway. We cannot afford to put a four lane highway across the province from provincial revenue alone, at this time, so we have to drive as safely as possible on the highway that exists and it is nonsense, it is rubbish, it is garbage for anybody to blame our highway fatalities, our accidents on poor sign marking. That is nonsense.

Mr. Speaker, some of the statistics that have been brought out in this debate are ones I think that have been available for some time. For example, the statistic that one out of every two individuals will at some time in his life be involved in a serious accident resulting in disability. Now that is a serious statistic. It is a statistic which makes it important for us

to pay very serious attention to the matters that have been raised in this debate in the past few weeks.

But, Mr. Speaker, there is a tendency for people to look for simple solutions to what are complex problems.

one example of this is in the area of sentencing generally, not just sentencing for highway traffic offenses but sentencing for any crime, any offence. We have the attitude of, well let us sock it to him when he is caught, let us give him the maximum sentence or let us increase our sentences, let us make our sentences harsher and we will cut down on the number of offences. To a certain extent, Mr. Speaker, the penalty for the offense is a deterrent but unfortunately just crying for higher sentences, crying for stricter sentences against impaired drivers, against people who are convicted of dangerous driving and so on, that in itself is not sufficient and it is burying his head in the sand if anybody puts that forth as a proper solution to the problem.

It is necessary to develop a change in attitude. As I just pointed out, I think one of the best ways that this will be done will be by driver education programmes. The work of the Newfoundland Safety Council has to be praised in this area and in other areas where they have taken action. Again at this point I should mention a concern, it is a personal concern that I had. I thought that the Newfoundland Safety Council, and I still do, I thought they did a fine job. I was concerned, and this was before I was in the administration so I was not too personally involved or taking it as personal criticism, but I was concerned at the whole reflectorized license plate crisis and some of the positions taken primarily by Mr. O'Neil in the course of that debate. There is absolutely nothing wrong and I would compliment the Newfoundland Safety Council for taking a position on something like that. Now I disagree with the position they took. I did a little experimenting myself, driving at night, to try and see just what effect a reflectorized license plate had on your vision when you were coming up behind an automobile. I have to confess that I saw taillights, I saw rear window and I saw bumpers most times

before I saw any reflectorized license plate.

I do not think the reflectorized license plate was a safety feature on any automobile but that is a matter of opinion and I do not deny the safety council the right of stating a contrary opinion. As a matter of fact I compliment them for taking a strong position on something like that. However, I think that once their point has been made and once it has been made forcefully and made several times over, I think that that is sufficient. I think that in the reflectorized license plate crisis that we had a couple of months ago, we had certain members of the safety council over-reacting. We had them then being manipulated by honourable members on the other side of the House when it became apparent that their might be some political mileage to be made here. Here is the danger, Mr. Speaker, here is the danger of any organization such as the Newfoundland Safety Council becoming embroiled then in what is a political dispute. There is a danger of loss of credibility, Mr. Speaker.

The safety council had made its point and had made its point forcefully but when their cries take on a hysterical note, when you find all of a sudden the opposition taking up the hue and cry and a very chummy relationship developing and when you find that the members of the safety council are being manipulated for political ends then there is a problem. So I just point that out as an aside, Mr. Speaker. I compliment the safety council on the work they have done and are doing but I throw out that note of caution, not a caution against criticism as I welcome their criticism but a caution against hysterical continuance of criticism after a point has been made.

Mr. Speaker, I have just about finished the points that I wanted to make here. The question of attitude I again submit is all important. We will not find solutions to the problems that have been pointed out in this debate, unless we get

changing attitudes. Now to change attitudes you have to start with the young. You cannot teach an old dog new tricks and I think that cliché holds a certain amount of truth. After we have been doing a certain thing for a period of time, it is difficult for us to change, but we should all be aware of our old attitudes and the problems that we create by improper attitudes. We should reassess our position on drinking when driving. Often the deterrent effect of a conviction in court does not nearly have the same weight as the deterrent effect of criticism by one's peers and if the attitude develops that well you are just not being cool when you take your car and you have a few drinks and then you drive your car home, if you are sneered at when you do this, if you are sneered at for taking your car when you go out for cocktails, apart from improving the position of taxi drivers in the province it will also do a lot to avoid the carnage on our highways.

Without speaking even in terms of the human suffering that is involved with this problem, Mr. Speaker, one has to only think of the number of millions of dollars that are involved in these accidents. Anybody who has put a dent in his bumper is aware of what it costs to get an automobile repaired in this day and age. We have statistics showing that 60,000 accidents have occurred on our highways. If we said just \$100.00 an accident you have \$6 million. Now surely the average cost of repairs would be in excess of this. I would submit the average would probably be closer to \$1,000 an accident and you are then into \$60 million, Mr. Speaker, and \$60 million is coming out of the pockets of our people. With \$60 million there is an awful lot could be done. So even not talking in terms of the human suffering and this has been stressed and we know what it means for somebody to be injured in an automobile accident, somebody to have to spend the rest of his life in a wheel chair or in hospital and not being able to provide for his family and children, even without that just thinking in

very cold financial or economic terms, it is imperative that we take action, I do not say that we study but I say it is imperative that we take action.

This government is taking action and the amendment that is put is not to direct the honourable Minister of Transportation and Communication to do his job, as the honourable member for White Bay South stated. The amendment is to direct the minister and the minister's department to continue to do the excellent job which that minister and that department have been doing since taking office. I support the amendment.

MR. NEARY: It has been said, Mr. Speaker, that the honourable Minister of Finance, if he has one weakness, Sir, it is the fact that he has no feeling for people, no feeling for human beings, Sir, and today, -

MR. SPEAKER: Before the honourable member finishes his speech, I have had a request from the honourable member for St. John's South that he has a request to make of the House, briefly.

MR. WELLS: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would ask leave of the House to withdraw my motion, which is motion number eight on the order paper, dealing with the Crown Proceedings Act. Because that bill has now been passed by the House, I would ask leave to withdraw it from the order paper.

MR. SPEAKER: This motion has now become legislation. Is it the pleasure of the House that the said motion be withdrawn? Those in favour, "Aye," those against, "Nay," carried.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, there are times in this honourable House when you use statistics to counter an argument that is put up by either side of the House. There are times when you do that, Sir, and it is a good defense especially if the statistics that are given are accurate, it is a good defense but in this particular debate, Sir, it is wrong, immoral, unethical, cruel, cold-blooded to use statistics, Sir, to counter arguments that have come from this side of the House. Will the Minister of Finance, when he comes

across a poor old widow or a poor old man in a wheel chair or relatives of somebody who was killed on our highway say, "Well, look I am sorry but here are the statistics. Last year we collected this much revenue on the gasoline tax. We sold this many cars in Newfoundland last year, what do expect? There is more mileage clocked on our highways. This is the reason for it." Some poor woman with tears in her eyes, down at the emergency at the General Hospital, and the Minister of Finance standing there with his statistics in his hand saying, "Yes, I feel sorry for you but you know there are more cars on our highways now and more pavement."

Mr. Speaker, I have heard ridiculous debates in this House but I never saw it as bad, Sir. If it were not such a serious topic we were dealing with here it would be pitiful and pathetic. No wonder the minister has been accused of having ice water in his veins. What happened, Mr. Speaker, was this Bob Benson, whom I have the highest respect for, was on "Person to Person" with Doug Brophy, today at lunch time, and Mr. Benson gave the minister credit for being one of the master debaters of this House. He always does his homework and he has the facts -

MR. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, to a point of order, the audio-system in this House is quite adequate and I feel it is unnecessary and disrespectful of an honourable member to -

MR. NEARY: Sit down! That is not a point of order. What happened, Mr. Speaker, the minister came in today, the minister was on an ego trip -

MR. CARTER: Would you make a ruling, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please! While we would like to remain and be regaled by the honourable member for Bell Island, it is unfortunately six o'clock and I do leave the Chair until 3:00 P.M., tomorrow, Thursday, April 12, 1973.