

wilful destruction of certain classes of public and private property. That is provided for already. From the records I have of our own city and others, as well as schools—and it applies in other places as well—except on Hallowe'en there has been very little tampering with the safety devices set out in the explanatory note to this section. The note says:

Its purpose is to make it an offence for anyone to tamper or interfere with fire extinguishers or equipment in or on any premises which would render it inoperable in the event of a fire.

That is the proposal now put into section 16. I suggest that far more damage has been done, as any school board can tell you, certainly in our large cities, damage amounting to anywhere from \$15,000 to \$20,000, I am told, by children throwing stones at hydro electric lights and globes. It runs into a large sum of money. The same complaint comes from other cities. I have seen reports in one paper about the destruction here in Ottawa, to a lesser degree. I think for more damage is caused in that way, but school boards and community clubs are checking on it.

As regards fire calls, I think the fine of \$500 is too much. For the most part it will be found that juveniles are at fault, especially on October 31, Hallowe'en, and offences of this sort also follow every war. There is always wilful destruction of public property. The Addington administration faced the same problem as far back as 1801. I would ask the minister whether he has had any recommendation from the fire chiefs in this regard.

Mr. ILSLEY: Yes.

Mr. CHURCH: Nevertheless I think the penalty is severe, a year and \$500. Surely the police can stop this without such a penalty. Damage has been done also to some public buildings. I know that, from the insurance rates having been marked up, because of fire protection not being ample. There has been damage to some of the public departments, to schools and public institutions by reason of such interference with fire equipment or fire boxes. A few minutes' delay in getting to a fire might result in a heavier loss. I know this is a serious matter, but I think the penalty is too great because most or some of the offenders are juveniles.

I suggest that there should be some other remedy with regard to wilful destruction of globes, and interference with direct currents and primary and secondary lines of electricity, and fire and police electric boxes on highways. Often lights go out on street cars and

in subways because someone interferes with a pole or globe or with conditions around plants, or right of way, or on overhead and all that kind of thing. The minister says he has had recommendations from the fire chiefs association?

Mr. ILSLEY: Yes.

Mr. CHURCH: Many of them?

Mr. ILSLEY: Several.

Mr. CHURCH: I still think the penalty is too severe, and it is dangerous to imprison for this in the case of juveniles who cannot shell out.

Mr. BROOKS: It occurred to me that if, as suggested by the hon. member for Peterborough West, a period is put after "device", it means that a mischievous boy ringing in a false fire alarm would be subject to a \$500 fine or imprisonment.

Mr. ILSLEY: Yes.

Mr. BROOKS: Would that not be a severe penalty?

Mr. TOWNLEY-SMITH: Would this allow anyone to fool around with fire equipment, take it away and bring it back, as long as it was not damaged or rendered inoperative or ineffective?

Mr. ILSLEY: If he has it at home it is inoperative and ineffective.

Mr. TOWNLEY-SMITH: It seems to me that a parallel case would be to allow a man to use a rifle to shoot at somebody else and it would be all right as long as the bullet did not hit him.

Section agreed to.

On section 17—Section repealed.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: What is the reason for the repeal of subsection 7 of section 554?

Mr. ILSLEY: It has been redundant since 1941. It is a little complicated.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: Is it only a case of redundancy?

Mr. ILSLEY: Yes.

Section agreed to.

On section 18—"judge" defined.

Mr. JAENICKE: This is the important section of the amendments before us. As I understand it, if a person is convicted of an indictable offence and has been indicted three times previously of an offence for which he was liable to imprisonment for over five years,