

# Ferry turned back after tanker takes its berth

By JAMES McLEOD

THE TELEGRAM

The remnants of hurricane Kyle may not have packed the expected punch, but for passengers on the MV Apollo travelling between Blanc Sablon and St. Barbe, it did create some tense moments.

According to Liberal Leader Yvonne Jones, when the provincial ferry made its noon run across the straits, it found its berth in St. Barbe occupied by an Ultramar oil tanker. The captain of the tanker refused to move, saying winds kicked up by Kyle made it unsafe.

The RCMP was called in. However, it turns out there is no regulation entitling the Apollo to that berth, and the vessel was forced to return across the straits — in the same high winds — to Blanc Sablon.

"These ferries are the highways, are the essential links for people and goods between one part of the province and another," Jones said. "I think this is ridiculous. I mean, it could happen tomorrow any place around the province."

A spokesman for the minister of transportation said the bottom line was because of the high winds, moving the Ultramar vessel was simply too dangerous.

Jones said she hopes that after the

tanker has finished off-loading, the captain will be more willing to leave the berth.

"I'm not necessarily looking to apply fault anywhere here," Jones said. "I'm pointing out that there is a major problem that has to be fixed."

Jones said she hopes the government will amend the rules to prevent similar incidents in the future.

Other than ferry woes, Kyle's effect on Labrador is expected to be minimal, according to Environment Canada meteorologist Herb Thoms.

"The heaviest rain is just moving into parts of Southeastern Labrador," Thoms said Monday afternoon. "It's not excessive amounts."

The criteria for rain warnings is 50 mm in 24 hours, but weather predictions fall well short of that.

"We have Goose Bay there at 15 mm today, 15 mm tonight, and 10 mm tomorrow. So that's a total of 40 mm, and over a little bit less than 36 hours? That's not a great concern," Thoms said.



Yvonne Jones