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SPEAKER: THE HONOURABLE JAMES M. RUSSELL

The House met at 11:00 a.m.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS:

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Manpower and Industrial Relations.

MR. E. MAYNARD: Mr. Speaker, all honourable members are aware we have been searching for some time now for a suitable Chairman for the Workmen's Compensation Board. The last board was disbanded some time ago. We have advertised and received a number of applications for the position of Chairman. A selection board was recently set up headed by the Chairman of the Public Service Commission, Mr. Bob Olivero, reported back to Cabinet with their recommendations. As a result of the search I am happy to announce that effective January 1, Mr. W.J. May who is presently the Assistant Deputy Minister of Manpower in my department will assume the full-time position as Chairman of the Workmen's Compensation Board. Mr. May, as most members are aware, has had a fairly long career with government. A short resume, previous to coming with government I might point out that he was secretary of the Newfoundland Federation of Labour for two years, was appointed by government to act as the first permanent secretary of the Workmen's Compensation Board in January, 1951 and held that position for a couple of years; subsequently appointed by government as a member of the Apprenticeship Board, acted as secretary of that board; in 1953 he was appointed to the position of Director of Apprenticeship Training and Tradesmen's Qualifications; in 1960 he was appointed to the position of Principal, Vocational Training Institute; in 1963 he was appointed to the position of Director of Trade Training, Department of Education; in 1965 was appointed to the position of Assistant Director of Technical and Vocational Education; in 1968 he was appointed to the position of Director of Vocational Education and in 1973 was appointed to his present position of Assistant Deputy Minister of Manpower in the Department of Manpower and Industrial Relations.

We are very confident that Mr. May will serve as an excellent Chairman

of the Workmen's Compensation Board and has the capabilities and certainly the background to be able to do a good job in that position. I might point out the next steps to be taken in relation to the Workmen's Compensation Board are the appointment of an Executive Director as well as the appointment of commissioners to serve on the Board with Mr. May as Chairman. These commissioners, of course, traditionally the same thing will apply, now traditionally represent equally organized labour and employers. We are hopeful that this can be accomplished within the next months or by the end of January, 1975 we should have the full compliment of the Board as well as an Executive Director in place.

I regret that I do not have a written statement to distribute to the honourable members but I would be quite happy to answer any questions they might have if there are any on this statement.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Bell Island.

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker,

I must say that I can find no fault with the minister's announcement that Mr. W. J. May has been selected as the gentleman to head up the Workmen's Compensation Board of this province. It is unfortunate, Sir, that the workers of this province have been left in the hands of a group of civil servants for so long and I do hope, Sir, that the minister will move swiftly now to appoint an executive director of the Workmen's Compensation Board and the two commissioners that will support Mr. May in the important work that he has to do as Chairman of the Workmen's Compensation Board.

Mr. May, Sir, is a gentleman that I have known for a good many years. I can remember Mr. May when he was over on the Southside in an old shanty, I think as Director of Apprenticeship Training. Mr. May pioneered manpower training in this province. I want to congratulate him on his new appointment. It adds another dimension to his already, Sir, excellent career in the public service of this province and I do want to wish him every success in his new job. I do hope, Mr. Speaker, that when the minister is considering the two commissioners that he will not allow himself to be influenced in any way, shape or form because I do not think there was any politics involved at all in Mr. May's appointment. I hope that this is coming events casting their shadows before them and that the two commissioners will be appointed on a straight basis of qualifications and ability to do the job rather than on politics.

MR. SPEAKER: Any other statements by ministers? The honourable Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. BARRY: Mr. Speaker, I am happy to inform this honourable House that yesterday the Royal Commission on Mineral Revenue presented its findings to government, presented a copy to the Lieutenant-Governor and delivered a copy to myself. I want to thank Mr. Gordon Goundrey, the Chairman, an eminent economist, and Mr. Leonard Martin of Corner Brook, a lawyer, and Mr. William Maher, formerly of Buchans now of St. John's, mining engineer, all

of whom put in some very difficult work on a very complex matter.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that it is one of the rare occasions when a royal commission has actually brought in its report within the time scheduled at the time the commission was set up. So I want to compliment these gentlemen. This commission's report will now be studied by government in the hope of releasing it early in the new year.

MR. SPEAKER: Are there any other statements from the honourable Minister of Mines and Energy?

MR. BARRY: Mr. Speaker, again for the interest of the members of this honourable House, I would like to announce the establishment of five new positions within the Department of Mines and Energy and I mention this because there is one position of particular significance. The five positions are for senior geologists in programmes of geological mapping, mineral evaluation, geochemistry and information and public services. Appointments to these positions are expected to be made by March 1975.

Now of particular significance is the establishment of a position for a senior regional geologist for Labrador. This will establish on a continuing basis the department's geological mapping programme in Labrador which was begun in 1974 when we had two field parties in the Seal Lake-Makkovik Belt as part as the Canada-Newfoundland Mineral Exploration and Evaluation Programme. Hopefully, if finances permit, Mr. Speaker, the department plans an expansion of the programme. We would like to see around seven field parties a year in order to achieve the geological map coverage of these areas of Labrador that have high mineral potential.

In order to achieve the level of coverage, Mr. Speaker, that other provinces have already arrived at, this under the terms of union, the responsibility for geological mapping was assumed by the federal government and the understanding was, although it is not spelled out in expressed terms I do not believe, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, but the responsibility was clearly assumed by the federal government and Mr. Speaker, I am sorry to say that in my opinion they have not done what was undertaken at the time. They have not provided funds to bring Newfoundland up to the level of mapping that other provinces have arrived at. We hope to see

improvements in this area over the next few years because, Mr. Speaker, this is one of the things that will be most beneficial in terms of leading to further mineral development in the province. In other words getting the mapping done, getting the information out to companies who are interested in investing money in exploration so that we can have more mines and more employment for all Newfoundlanders. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bell Island.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, this seems to be rather a routine matter.

MR. BARRY: Ask the honourable members for Labrador?

MR. NEARY: Well I am glad, Sir, that Labrador will be gone over now with a fine tooth comb by this team of geologists that the minister will appoint. I think this is very necessary. The minister did not make it clear, Sir, and perhaps at a later date he might wish to tell us why it is so necessary to set up an information public service in the minister's department when we already have Newfoundland Information Services and we already have a team of people pumping out propaganda down on the eighth floor in the Premier's Office. So I would like the minister to make it clear, Sir, or to convince me why this was necessary. But nevertheless I think the appointment of the geologist to do the mapping in Newfoundland is very essential if we are going to develop our natural resources and open up new mines and so on.

I am particularly glad, as I am sure my colleague the member for Labrador North is pleased to hear -

MR. EVANS: Long overdue.

MR. NEARY: the announcement that they are now going to concentrate their energies and efforts on trying to discover new minerals and so forth in Labrador.

MR. SPEAKER: Are there any other ministerial statements?

REPORTS OF STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES:

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Health.

DR. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table for the benefit of the honourable members of the House the annual Report of the Newfoundland Medical Care Commission.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS:

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Tourism.

MR. HICKEY: In response to a question from my friend, the honourable member for Twillingate a couple of days ago who wanted to know the amount of money spent on the vessel, "The Norma and Gladys," I have some information for him.

The total amount of federal funds spent to date, or the total amount of federal funds I should say - \$165,738: the amount spent to date - \$137,578, leaving a balance of \$ 23,160. The total provincial contribution - \$46,000: and there is presently a submission into the National Museum people in Ottawa for operating expenses in the amount of \$43,968. I might say, Mr. Speaker, there has been a great deal of interest shown by the federal government in this project and I for one am very, very pleased that this administration has been able to bring about the restoration of this vessel, one of the last of its kind. It certainly indicates a very promising future.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Transportation and Communications.

MR. ROUSSEAU: The honourable member for Bell Island a few days ago asked for some information on a letter that I received from St. Bernard's in respect to the road conditions down there. I have a report now which I will give him. I might say that the report is dated on December 13, but it is the first opportunity since the question has been asked that I have had to give the report. Here is the report as I have it.

Len Singleton Limited has a contract with this department for reconstruction of 1.4 miles of highway from Bay L'Argent towards Harbour Mille. This section of road is completed and is reported to be in good driving condition. The same contract includes reconstruction of 2 miles of road from the Jacques Fontaine and St. Bernard's intersection with the Harbour Mille Road going towards the Burin Peninsula Highway.

The contractor has recently started this section which includes cutting down the grade of the existing road over a hill of rock and filling in a sag in the old road. This section is still under construction and is hoped to be completed soon.

ORAL QUESTIONS:

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS: I have a question first of all, Mr. Speaker, for the Minister of Mines and Energy. Would the minister be in a position to elaborate on the reported cutback in mining operations at Consolidated Rambler, Baie Verte?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. BARRY: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, I can get the information for the honourable member. The only thing that I can think of off hand that might have some affect if that is in effect a decision by the companies, that there has been a significant slump in copper prices as the honourable member probably knows. , But I will get whatever details or information that the department has on it. At the present time I am not aware of any particular decision made along those lines.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, a question for the honourable Minister of Transportation. There has been considerable concern around the Community of Harbour Breton in the last few days about a rumour I guess, widespread at any rate, that the Highway's winter maintenance depot at Harbour Breton is to be phased out and is to be combined with the Seal Cove maintenance operation, I wonder would the minister comment on this?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Transportation and Communications.

MR. ROUSSEAU: It is a rather topical question because we had a question on that this morning as well from people in Harbour Breton. Apparently there is some rumour down there and I have checked with officials. We have at this point in time no intention of closing down the depot at Harbour Breton. It is, as the honourable member suggests, a rumour at this point in time and I have no knowledge of any intention of this department doing so.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS: A question for the honourable Minister of Education: I wonder would the minister in view of the increasing costs of boarding accommodations for district vocational school students who are attending schools outside of their own communities and unable to commute therefore, in view of the increasing costs of boarding would the minister indicate what government's intention might be concerning the possibility of increasing weekly allowances for the provincially sponsored students at those schools?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Education.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, insofar as that

is related to the next fiscal year which of course is still part of this academic year, then it would be a budgetary consideration but certainly this is a matter which will be taken into consideration.

MR. SIMMONS: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Since part of the school term will be part of the succeeding fiscal year but many of the students of course are experiencing real financial difficulties now, in most cases their boarding accommodations is actually exceeding the amount of the allowance, I am wondering if the minister would take under advisement the matter of increasing the allowance in the current fiscal year?

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Education.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, for the approximately three months which remain of the current fiscal year I do not think it would be possible to change it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Member for St. Barbe North.

MR. F. B. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, this question comes as a result of a representation from St. Barbe North. I do not know whether to address it to the Minister of Transportation and Communications or the Hon. Minister of Forestry and Agriculture. In view of the fact that certain people, particularly people working on LIP projects during this winter wish to use some of the forestry access roads particularly on the Northern Peninsula and the new ones that are being built, does the government have any policy at all with respect to the plowing and the keeping open of these roads during the winter months? I do not know which minister would like to answer the question.

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

HON. H. COLLINS: (MINISTER OF FORESTRY AND AGRICULTURE): Mr. Speaker, I would like to, if I knew what the honourable member is talking about, I would be glad to discuss it with him outside to get the full details of it, to see what we can do.

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the minister's answer. I can assure him there is a need for the opening of such roads.

The Public Works Minister is not here this morning, Sir, perhaps I can address the question to, I thought the Premier was here - what about the Minister of Education, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister indicate whether or not the failure to obtain the building permit for the construction of the new applied Science and Engineering building at Memorial University will delay in any way the construction or completion date of that particular school?

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Education.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, to the best of my knowledge this would not cause any serious delay. Presumably they have applied for a permit and they have not gotten it, so they will have to reapply and fulfil whatever qualifications or whatever additional information is necessary.

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Member for Labrador North.

MR. M. WOODWARD: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Hon. Minister of Fisheries. As of yesterday I learned that the Labrador Linerboard mill would cutback some thirty per cent in their production of wood this year, and consequently the production at the mill will be lower than this previous year. I wonder if the minister could elaborate and tell the House exactly what is happening in the Labrador Linerboard operation and how it will effect a number of people in jobs?

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Fisheries.

HON. J. C. CROSBIE (MINISTER OF FISHERIES): Mr. Speaker, I think the honourable gentleman is a bit premature. The company is now reviewing what its policy -

MR. WOODWARD: Inaudible.

MR. CROSBIE: No, but I will explain it, if he will let me answer, and then if it is not satisfactory he can ask again. The position is that the company is reviewing what its wood requirements will be next year, in view of the fact that it now has a very extensive inventory of

wood. I do not remember the exact figures but I think the company over this year is going to cut and deliver to the mill something like 500,000 cords that is purchased wood and wood from Labrador and wood from their own cutting operations on the island. So they have quite a large inventory of wood which they should work off next year. Therefore, it will not be as necessary for them next year to cut or purchase as much wood in the next twelve months, in the year 1975. That is what they are reviewing now.

As far as the Goose Bay operation is concerned, I do not think it will result in any reduction in employment it would be very minor in that area. The major problem there has been, as the honourable gentleman knows, in getting sufficient people up there to cut the wood that they want to cut in that area. While I forget the exact figures, there will still be a requirement for 500 or 600 or 700 people in the Labrador Area next year, even if they reduce their cut somewhat. I am not sure what figures they are discussing in reducing it up there but, in any event, I would say that it will not effect employment in the Goose Bay/Happy Valley Area. I think that they were there yesterday to discuss this with the people involved in the operation at Happy Valley/Goose Bay.

But the situation is that the Labrador Linerboard will need to cut less wood next year because it has a large inventory of wood now. It had greater success in getting wood than it was anticipated, and partly because the production at the mill this year will be under what we anticipated. The twelve months that will end at the end of March this year will probably see a production of some 200,000 or 210,000 tons in linerboard rather than 225,000 or 250,000 tons that might have been expected because of various problems in connection with production at the mill.

These problems, Mr. Speaker, have now been largely overcome but within the last eight weeks the linerboard market has turned exceedingly soft in the United States of America, and therefore throughout the world. The price in linerboard has not declined because the various linerboard mills are trying to hold the

price by cutting their production. Most of the U.S. linerboard mills are going to be closed over the two weeks Christmas period and they are going to have shutdowns during the first part of next year to try and restrict their production, so that the linerboard market is expected for at least the first half of next year to be soft, and it will be more difficult to sell linerboard, but particularly during the first half of next year. That of course also means that it is not anticipated to be as great a requirement for wood.

AN HON. MEMBER: A black market then.

MR. CROSBIE: There is no black market in the sale of our linerboard, Mr. Speaker. Practically all the linerboard produced by the Labrador Linerboard has been sold in Europe for the simple reason that the prices in Europe for linerboard have been, I think, it is some seventy-five dollars a ton higher than the prices in the United States of America. And practically all linerboard produced by Labrador Linerboard has been sold in Europe or outside the United States. Some has been sold in South America at prices that are based on the sliding scale between the U.S. and the European price. Labrador Linerboard will next year continue to sell most of its production in Europe, and hopefully the prices will maintain themselves there, but if the American mills find that they cannot sell all the linerboard they are producing in the U.S. which they have been doing this year, and start to dump it in Europe and break the price there, of course, that will have an effect on the price we will get.

So that generally speaking is the position, I think, in relation to that question.

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Member for Bonavista North.

MR. P. S. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Fisheries; did the Linerboard Mill during this past season, that is, 1974, import wood from other provinces, and if they did, will they also import wood from other provinces during the coming season?

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Fisheries.

MR. CROSBIE: I cannot say from memory, Mr. Speaker, whether there was any wood brought in from outside the province this year. If there was there would have been very few cords, perhaps 8,000 or 10,000 cords. I would have to check to get the exact amount. It would either be from Prince Edward Island or from New Brunswick. Of course the problem up to now is that they have not been getting sufficient wood but we seem to have that overcome. We would certainly not be planning to bring any wood in next year, Mr. Speaker, but I will have to check to get the exact amount. But it would not be very much.

MR. P. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I wonder could the minister get the figures for me and also the approximate estimate of wood that is to be imported during 1975. Another question for the minister, Mr. Speaker; could the minister confirm or deny the report that the Linerboard Mill during 1975 will not be purchasing any wood east of Grand Falls?

MR. CROSBIE: I cannot confirm that, Mr. Speaker. No, I cannot confirm it. I mean, that may be something that they are discussing now, and that certainly is a possibility because any wood east of Grand Falls is extremely expensive for the Linerboard Mill because of the transportation costs. But when the Labrador Linerboard Mill knows what its policy is going to be next year I will inform the House or let the honourable gentleman know. But that is a possibility, yes.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I would also like to direct a question to Minister of Fisheries, as the Minister of Fisheries. Seeing that the federal government are taking a very great interest in the offshore fishery and they are using the military boats for surveillance, I wonder if the provincial government are planning on asking the federal government to allow them to have some officers from the Provincial Department of Fisheries on these boats?

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Fisheries.

MR. CROSBIE: We have not asked them, Mr. Speaker, and I doubt that we would because, number (1) we do not have sufficient provincial fishery

officers anyway to have them on these vessels. Secondly, we

MR. THOMS: We have 10,000 unemployed people.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. CROSBIE: Secondly, Mr. Speaker, it is the federal government's responsibility and their job to police these areas and not ours. I cannot see that it would serve any useful purpose for us to have our own officials on any of these vessels. In addition to which, Mr. Speaker, there are very few of them anyway conducting any surveillance, so it would not certainly employ very many men. It might employ one man a month.

There is an interesting offer that has been made to us, which we are going to take advantage of, from Mr. Bill Bennett of Gander Aviation who has a contract, I think it is with Eastern Telephone or with the people who own them, the cables, the Trans Atlantic Cables, he has the contract to patrol those with aircraft surveillance to keep trawlers away from the cables and this kind of thing for this coming year. He has written and offered, and of course they are out everyday on this cable patrol, he has written us and offered to provide us with information on what they see out there in the way of foreign, you know, the foreign fishing fleet, where the vessels are, how many and to take our observers with them whenever we want to send someone out. But then it says that they can go in his aircraft at no charge.

MR. COLLINS: He can drop them when he is out there too.

MR. CROSBIE: Well the honourable gentlemen - Yes, if anybody wants to go opposite we might arrange for a drop. But

MR. P. THOMS: I am sure -

MR. CROSBIE: We would miss you.

MR. THOMS: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. CROSBIE: So, the point is, Mr. Speaker, that Mr. Bennett has made this very generous offer which we will take advantage of and at no charge. He is not proposing to charge anything. So we will from time to time have somebody from the Provincial Department of Fisheries go out on his aircraft and survey the scene.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member from St. Barbe North.

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of Education: In view of the fact that the various Roman Catholic School Boards have it in their power to prove Family Life Education Programmes in their particular districts, have these programmes first received the final approval of and authorization of the Minister of Education? and secondly, have the contents of these programmes or the curriculum, the course of study of these programmes been overviewed, say, by medical authorities or medical doctors to insure the accuracy of the medical aspects and scientific aspects of such courses because you quite frequently find mistakes even in science texts that are being used at the high school level? I agree with the concept but I -

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Education.

MR. G. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, the curriculum or instruction people of the Department of Education are certainly aware of the Family Life Programme which the Roman Catholic Educational Authorities have decided to use in the schools under their jurisdiction. We have not endeavoured to interfere. This is a matter which we regard as essentially the responsibility of the Roman Catholic School Board. We are aware of the content of it. We have absolutely no criticism of it and we view this as within the prerogative of the Roman Catholic School Authorities.

MR. ROWE: Another question to the Minister of Education, Mr. Speaker: The minister promised last week that he would have the, in view of the fact the minister promised that he would have the information regarding the operating expenses of the other seven or eight School Tax Authorities

tabled before the House and the fact that he would have the Harris Report on Education tabled before this House this week and this is the last day of the week, can the minister insure that it will in fact, these items will be tabled today?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Education.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, the operating expenses for the school board, this was tabled a few days ago.

MR. ROWE: We have seven now. There were -

MR. OTTENHEIMER: The honourable gentleman got the only ones that we have, the reason being that for School Tax Authorities their records end the end of June; in other words the year goes from the first of July to the thirtieth of June. We have not yet in the department received from the Auditor General's Department the audited accounts ending June to June past. I presume we will get these within the next month or so but the honourable gentleman has all that we have because we have not received from the Auditor General's Department yet the audited accounts for areas ending last June. With respect to the Harris Report I know I cannot give assurance that it will be tabled today. It is being photostated. It probably will not be available today. It should certainly be available the next time we meet.

It is a fairly hefty document and there is quite a bit of photostating involved.

MR. ROWE: Not even one for me. No copies at all. -

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Hermitage.

MR. R. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs. I wonder would the minister indicate whether the Government of Canada has agreed to participate financially in any project commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of Confederation.

MR. CROSEIE: That is an interesting question, Mr. Speaker. I would like to know the answer myself. Well, that is an interesting question. Well, the position, unless there has been any change in the last two days, is that the Government of Canada has said that it would participate in a

capital project but they have not said the amount and so on but they would make a contribution towards some particular capital project. A particular project has been suggested. I do not think - it has not been said what it is publicly, so I guess I cannot say what it is but a project has been suggested. The Province has suggested a specific facility that would meet a need here for people who have certain disabilities. I will have to check with Mr. Jamieson when he comes down next week to see just where it is but they have agreed they want to make a capital contribution to some specific capital project and that is being discussed with them.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary there: Is there any deadline by which time this must be agreed to or when does the minister expect there might be some public announcement on the subject.

MR. CROSBIE: Well, of course, Ottawa has to decide that but certainly they would want to do it this fiscal year. So it should certainly be agreed before the end of March. Now, in fact I am not sure of the exact situation but I would think that something would be announced probably before the end of this calendar year. It all depends on if Mr. Jamieson comes down here next week, but certainly it will be this fiscal year.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, is the minister indicating that he has a meeting with Mr. Jamieson on this subject in the next week or so before the end of the calendar year.

MR. CROSBIE: Not just on that subject, but I expect that Mr. Jamieson will be back for Christmas. I was talking to him this morning about it, Mr. Speaker, and woke him up as a matter of fact, five to eight, Ottawa time.

MR. NEARY: Did the honourable member talk about the Leader of the Opposition?

MR. CROSBIE: No, no, we did not even discuss unpleasant subjects like that. We discussed other more interesting topics.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. CROSBIE: Topics that may mean millions in the pockets of our Newfoundland people. As you know, I saw him last week, a week ago, for about five

hours and reviewed all the status of various DREE agreements and subsidiary agreements and the rest, so I will be seeing him when he comes down again before Christmas or if not immediately after Christmas.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Bell Island.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs already indicated that Ottawa was going to pour a substantial amount of money into the fishery. Would the minister indicate what the Province is going to do in conjunction with the Government of Canada to help get the fishery over the crisis, the difficulties that they are now in?

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Chairman, it took me an hour the other day just to describe, a week ago I think it was, some of the things that the Province was doing in the fisheries so I will not go over all of that again now. The situation at this time is that today it is expected there will be an announcement from the Minister of Fisheries of Canada as to just what programme of assistance they are going to offer the Eastern Canadian Industry on an interim basis to carry them hopefully over the period from the beginning of January to the end of March or end of April. Then the Industry will have to look at that assistance and see whether they think it is sufficient to keep them in operation in view of the heavy losses they have sustained the last eight or ten months, and they will have to ascertain whether that puts them in a position to make a new offer to the union in connection with the dispute, collective bargaining dispute.

MR. NEARY: Inaudible.

MR. CROSBIE: I come to everything in my time but it takes me a while to warm up and give the background, paint the broad picture, Mr. Speaker.

They will have to examine that and we will have to examine that to see whether it enables them to make a new offer to the union of increased payment for the trawler fishermen. Whether the Province will make any contribution itself at this time will then be decided. Over the next three to four months though, Mr. Speaker, we are working with the Federal Government on the long range programme of assistance for the industry, what changes are needed in the structure, are there changes needed in the marketing, what plants should be closed down on the basis of economics, whether those plants should be kept in operation because of social requirements, and the Province

of Newfoundland will have to play a large role there because we are not in the position of being able to say 'x' plant should close, for example, Twillingate, because it is uneconomic. We have to examine the social requirements and that is where the Province will have to participate financially.

MR. NEARY: Inaudible.

MR. CROSBIE: Well that has been dealt with, both by the Leader of the Opposition and myself in this debate. The honourable gentleman, I think, was gone somewhere out, he was not in the House. Both the Leader of the Opposition and I agree that nationalization would not be the answer. We are heart to heart and jowl to jowl and brain to brain on that.

MR. NEARY: Only -

MR. CROSBIE: But there is no question that there will be conditions and controls imposed in connection with the industry.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, one more question to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs: Is the minister aware that Canadian National Railways plan to do away with less than car load freight rates in this Province which will mean an increase of 300 per cent in the express rates when they change it to the new category? This should be right up the minister's alley because it will give him an opportunity to attack Ottawa again.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Fisheries.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, I think it is quite noticeable in my short tenure as Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs that I have not attacked Ottawa at all -

MR. NEARY: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order, please!

MR. CROSBIE: Nor, Mr. Speaker, nor do I propose to attack them unless we disagree on some basic issue that effects the good of the Province of Newfoundland at which point, if that becomes necessary, we will certainly make our position known. My relationship with Mr. Jamieson has been most pleasant, most convivial and we get along very well.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. CROSBIE: Now, for to come back to the CNR, that is not inter-governmental. The CNR is above government. I mean governments are in the same class with the CNR. That would have to be a minister of Inter-governmental Affairs to deal with the CNR. Our Minister of Transportation and Communications is the expert on that. We have noticed that less than car load lots, whether that would mean a 300 per cent increase, I do not know but I can assure you that the Minister of Transportation and Communications will certainly be following that up.

MR. ROUSSEAU: You wish now to hear from the Minister of Inter-governmental Affairs. The honourable member broached a question previously in this session about the

lifting of the rail freight rate freeze and we mentioned that we were corresponding with Ottawa on that, and we have done so, and put forth our views very strongly on it. We have had replies from Mr. Marchand, quite lengthy replies suggesting that they are going to do it anyway because of certain policy statement, and I did promise the honourable member, and I will undertake to do so, that when the correspondence is completed it will be tabled in the House just what we have done. But I am pleased to announce that we will be meeting with Mr. Marchand, the Atlantic ministers responsible for transportation, in Halifax in mid-January. There will be a meeting of the Atlantic ministers responsible on the day prior to the meeting with Mr. Marchand, and we will be meeting with him. There are quite a number of items on the agenda. As I understand it, unofficially this morning of the twelve or so items, that I will be responsible for putting forward the position of four of them. Certainly these items will be discussed at that time; the effect of the lifting of the rail freight rate freeze on this Province, as well as, I am sure, I presume the other provinces and as well questions of this nature in respect of transportation and the CNR. So following these meetings I should be in a better position to inform the member, give actual replies to his questions as well as table the correspondence we have had with the Minister of Transportation on the lifting of the rail freight freeze.

MR. NEARY: I hope, Mr. Speaker, that the minister will make as strong a representation as possible on behalf of this Province.

Sir, I wonder if the Minister of Fisheries could tell us what is happening concerning the unsold salmon belonging to the fishermen in Southern Labrador? Has the government come to their assistance? Will they be compensated in any way? Has the salmon been sold? Is it still in St. Anthony? What is the situation concerning these poor fishermen in Southern Labrador?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Fisheries.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, the position on that is that the government has no real direct involvement in it.

MR. NEARY: They have morally.

MR. CROSBIE: Well, morally, we are not responsible for everybody's morals. We would certainly help in the situation if we can. The position is that the company known as McCain's Fisheries Limited purchased certain salmon from the fishermen of Labrador South during the summer -

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. CROSBIE: Yes, I am coming to that - And he purchased it from them apparently on the basis that they would be paid when he was paid or when the company was paid. A shipment of that salmon was made to some purchaser or broker in Montreal who said the quality was not good enough and repudiated it, refused to pay for it, so that McCain Fisheries did not have the money to pay the fishermen for their salmon. But then there was other salmon that McCain Fisheries purchased which was put down by them into the freezer of the fish plant at LaScie which is now operated by Newfoundland Quick Freeze Limited or leased by Newfoundland Quick Freeze Limited, and that salmon was put in the freezer down there. There is about 75,000 pounds of frozen salmon in that freezer. The company is apparently insolvent, McCain's Fisheries. Their liabilities outweigh the assets. Now that 75,000 pounds of frozen salmon in the freezer at LaScie is one of the assets. There may be a sale for that, I am told, within a few days. But the returns from that, of course, the plant at LaScie has the right to certain charges that they have for warehousing and working on that salmon.

We have told them, Newfoundland Quick Freeze Limited, who have an arrangement with the government that they are operating the LaScie plant, the government picks up any losses, that the government would prefer them not to collect on that salmon, to add that to the operating loss for the year and the government would look after it. It comes to something like \$20,000. So if they get a sale for that salmon we are going to do our best to see that the full price of the salmon gets back to the McCain's Fisheries and from them to the fishermen.

Now that is the general situation, I think, on that situation. But the 75,000 pounds, when it is sold is not going to be sufficient to cover everything that the fishermen are owed up there.

MR. NEARY: Is this company owned by the same gentleman who ran -

MR. CROSBIE: It is owned by Captain Ed Cain.

MR. NEARY: Former P.C. -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. CROSBIE: He is part owner. Who he ran for is irrelevant. It is certainly not any deliberate act on his part. It might be bad judgment or whatever but that is the situation.

So this salmon may be sold in the next few days and if it is we are going to absorb the warehousing charges and costs at LaScie.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The time period for the question period has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY:

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask leave of the honourable House, Sir, and beg the indulgence of the Minister of Mines and Energy in accordance with Standing Order number (23), that the regular business of the House be adjourned to discuss a definite matter of public importance, namely, Sir, the widely publicized shortage of skilled tradesmen in this Province. Surely, Mr. Speaker, if this House is to mean anything at all to the ordinary people of this Province, it will interrupt a paper work agenda and appoint a select committee, Sir, to launch an immediate independent investigation into the factors behind this shortage of tradesmen in a Province with record unemployment and recommend remedies, Sir, to correct this anomaly which, if allowed to go unnoticed, could really cripple future provincial productivity.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, if I could address myself to this question or on a point of order. That obviously, Mr. Speaker, is not within the rule of a matter of urgent public importance that has to be dealt with immediately, and is an abuse of the rules of this House because the honourable gentleman has brought similar resolutions before this House on every day of the session to date. Now it is like the old story of the man who cried wolf when the wolf was not there but one day a wolf was there and he cried wolf again. How can this House, Mr. Speaker, ever accept such a motion from the honourable gentleman when he has brought one in every day, on a topic like this to do with manpower training that is not a matter that must be debated this very moment because the Province is in peril. It is a shocking abuse.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The honourable Member for Bell Island,

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I resent the fact, Sir, that the Minister of Fisheries made the statement that this is an abuse of the privilege of the House. In my opinion it is not an abuse of the privilege of the House, Sir. It is in accordance with the Standing Rules of Order of this honourable House. Any member, Sir, has a right, if he thinks the matter is urgent and should be debated immediately in this honourable House, has the right to bring in a motion, Sir, and I would like for Your Honour to direct the Minister of Fisheries to withdraw his remark that he made, Sir. I am sure he did not mean it, that this is an abuse of the privilege of the House. This is the sort of thing, Mr. Speaker, that downgrades this honourable House and I am surprised that the minister would take the attitude that he has.

During this sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker, we have on six or seven different occasions tried to have the House adjourned -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order, please! The honourable Member for Bell Island is rising to a point of order and now is proceeding to make a speech. While honourable members to my left or to my right for that matter because any honourable member could bring in such a motion as this, may not agree with the content of the motion, it may be a little annoying to them and nevertheless at the appropriate time, I am calling it the Orders of the Day. Any honourable member does have the right to make such a motion and it is up to the -

MR. ROBERTS: Hear! Hear! - -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! It is up to the Chair to decide whether or not he accepts that motion. After reading this particular motion the Chair does not consider it to be one which warrants the adjournment of the House at this time for a debate on this particular topic.

On motion of the Hon. Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, a bill, "An Act To Provide For The Direction Of Intergovernmental Affairs In The Province, read a first time, ordered read a second time presently by leave.

December 20, 1974.

Tape 2287

RH - 5

Motion second reading of a bill, "An Act To Amend The Motorized Snow Vehicles And All-Terrain Vehicles Act."

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Transportation and Communications.

MR. ROUSSEAU: I had number 121 on that bill, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ROUSSEAU: Well, Mr. Speaker, this bill is meant to amend a previous Act the Motorized Snow Vehicle and All-Terrain Vehicles Act. If I could I would like to say a few words about that this morning. I think that the act itself is a very important act, the amendment is a very important amendment and the regulations that will flow from the act as amended, by this amendment, will be of extreme interest to many people in this province, to many members of this House and I would suggest more so to members representing Labrador.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROUSSEAU: It is a bad Bill at the start. Well we will talk about it and we will see. But anyway in the meantime perhaps the political differences that exist between the three members for Labrador may be cemented with the principle of the bill. Anyway the fact that the regulation and the operation and mechanics of licencing the vehicle that has become most popular in the province is certainly topical at this time. Honourable members of the House, Mr. Speaker, will recall that in the last session a bill was passed to govern the operation of snow vehicles and all-terrain vehicles in this Honourable House. It was the original intention of government to have these points that are now being put forward for amending to the act to be included into the regulation but it was the feeling of government that these changes were of significant importance enough to put them into the actual act and to provide more clout for them. Of course, from this act as amended will flow regulations and we will have more to say about that in a few minutes.

The advent of snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles in the province, of course, have created certain problems. Their uses are multiple. In certain instances they are merely used as vehicles for pleasure or recreation. In other instances, and very few, I would suggest, they are used for hunting. But in certain areas of the province, notably Coastal Labrador and certain other isolated areas, they are not only that, they are a means of transportation and a means of livelihood for the people. In the Northern Peninsula and other isolated areas they certainly cannot be covered under one blanket as a pleasure and

a recreation vehicle.

I think that honourable members can appreciate that to make one set of regulations to govern a pleasure and recreation vehicle would be rather simple, but to make regulations for vehicles which include a multiplicity of uses, pleasure, recreation, hunting, a way of life, transportation, it becomes a little more difficult.

Now originally we had solicited, and had received without solicitation, as well, representations from many people, many groups, many official groups in the province, notably the Federation of Mayors and Municipalities had a brief submitted, the Wild Life Associations, the Snowmobile Clubs and so on were encouraged to submit briefs as to their thoughts on what regulations should be enacted to govern the operation of these vehicles.

Certainly I would like to think that as many members as possible this morning would give their thoughts on this. I am sure that the contribution of the Member for Labrador North will be significant as well as, I hope, the Member for Labrador South, who is not in his seat at this time, will have an opportunity also to speak as well as other members in the House, on the regulations that would ensue from this amendment and the Act itself.

I might say for my part, the snowmobile or the ski-doo had become a way of life many years ago. It is rather difficult to travel in Labrador West right now and not see at least one snowmobile in front of every house. It has become a very important part of life up there and I am sure is growing in other parts of the province as well.

Now the act itself really was originally intended, and still is, to set up the machinery for the regulation and control of these vehicles, where they operate, how they operate and who operates them. But in looking through the Act in the preparation of the regulations thereunder there were a couple of sections in there that were not covered completely in the estimation of government, and so ensued these amendments.

This government have during the past two and a-half years made every effort possible to ensure that coming generations of Newfoundlanders would have the same ability to hunt as we have today, as our forefathers

had years ago. In order to do so, of course, we must provide some regulatory controls in respect to hunting on this type of vehicle. Now in this vein we work closely, of course, the Department of Transportation and Communications with the Department of Tourism and the Wild Life Officials and so ensued this section, Section (2) of the amendment which suggests that "Every person who operates a vehicle to chase, hunt, harass, pursue, worry, injure or kill any wildlife..." should be included in the Act to provide the safeguard of these animals. Also a fine is stipulated for that. And, of course, as we all know it is not necessary that a man with a gun would merely shoot an animal but by harassing them and by chasing them on a snowmobile of course there could be other consequences, without a rifle shot, that could do harm to these animals.

So government feels that it is important to protect the wildlife, to ensure that coming generations of Newfoundlanders will have the convenience and the enjoyment of hunting as we have today and as our forefathers have had. So that is an attempt to ensure that unfair advantage is not taken of these animals by the use of these vehicles.

In addition, of course, Section(22) the second amendment to it, and if I may go to the original Act for a moment, the section that is being amended, the section in the original Act reads, section (k) "Merely prohibiting the driving of vehicles in defined locations." So what we have done is taken out that mere one line, one sentence and substituted it with Section (3) (k) "Prohibiting the driving of vehicles, or any class or type of vehicle, or regulating or restricting the use of such vehicles, class or type within the province or locations or areas within the province." In other words the minister's discretion is that this could be limited to certain areas, the use of them or abandoning the use of them could be limited to certain areas in the province or could at, of course, government's discretion be made to cover the whole province. So there are certain discretionary matters there for the government to consider.

We certainly intend to consider them, as I said before, the multiple problems of pure pleasure and recreation, of hunting or the way of life, or transportation is necessary, these have to be considered. So for that reason we would certainly welcome the representations of all members of the House on any points that they feel strongly enough about in respect to the regulations that would ensue from the Act as amended. Certainly the conditions of licencing and operating will be put into force shortly within the next year and also, of course, the other factors of operation and the mechanics of operation of the machines will be the subject of a white paper which government intends to put forward for the diagnosis of the various groups, individuals, bodies in the province who are interested in them, to have their reaction to them, and the Premier will speak later on this topic.

It is our intention, as it has been our intention, to listen to people in the province in respect to the laws that govern this type of vehicle. I think all members of the House, as well as all people in this province, will appreciate the difficulty in attempting to restrict a vehicle that is used for pleasure and recreation as the snowmobile is, but we must also, of course, remember, and government is well aware of, and the Premier himself is

keenly aware of the needs of other people in the province for hunting and transportation and this sort of thing. It is a rather difficult situation but we intend to cope with it by looking to the people and trying to enact the regulations in such a way that it will not be detrimental to those people who have to use it as a way of life, as a means of transportation, nor will it be detrimental to those people who wish to use it for pleasure and recreation.

Most of the Provinces of Canada have come up with some type of either snowmobile regulations on its own as the rest of the Atlantic Provinces have. Whereas we have a Snowmobile or Snow-Vehicle and All-Terrain Vehicle Act, Manitoba, for example, has only an All-Terrain Vehicle Act which includes all vehicles of this type. Other provinces have varying situations.

It was estimated, and I can only give you figures because we do not know at this point in time, it was estimated, I think it was in '69, we were talking about this in the department, that there were approximately 10,000 vehicles of this nature in the province. We do not know, that is a rough estimate. Right now, off the tops of our heads, we would suggest that there are probably 20,000 to 30,000 in the province under no regulations nor control.

I remember in my days in Labrador City as a school principal we used to have a difficult time prohibiting during the school day the use of snowmobiles on school grounds. We finally put up some signs but unless there are regulations, of course, to govern these the difficulties will ensue and it can be an inconvenience to the public. To the people in certain areas of the province, for example, who are on shift work or who wish to sleep during the day, work during the night and so on, when these things are buzzing around during the day it becomes quite an inconvenience for these people.

The regulations have to be of a type that will be all-inclusive in order to attempt to take into consideration all aspects

of the use of the Motorized Snow-Vehicle and the All-Terrain Vehicle Act.

We have certain points in this original bill and 18 honourable members have taken time or had the opportunity to read the bill which they may wish to comment on. As I say, we will be open departmentally to any briefs, any presentations or any suggestions that honourable members would like to put forward this morning. Certainly they will be considered and I will try to answer all questions that honourable members put forward in my summing up of this amendment.

I think the important thing is that we have to realize that the explosion of the number of vehicles of this nature in the province is a recent occurrence. It is rather difficult to cope with them and try to be fair with all involved. We have, for example, had representation from skiers and ski people who use the areas for skiing and so on that motorized snow vehicles going over their ski tracks spoil them. They have to be considered. Certainly private property has to be considered. I recall sometime ago a case in Ontario, because we were up north and it was important to us, that a gentleman went on another gentleman's land with a snowmobile, had an accident, had no permission to be on this gentleman's land, sued the gentleman who owned the land for costs and won. This was in Ontario.

There are problems of this nature, certainly, but I think from the experiences of other provinces we will certainly learn much here. This government in this act, as well as in any other act, are prepared to listen, to take into consideration the various representations made and attempt to come up with a clear and just set of regulations that will take into consideration the question of the operation of the Motorized Snow Vehicles and All-Terrain Vehicles Act.

The intention right now, the suggestion is that license fees, of course, will be put on the vehicles, license plates will be put on the vehicles, that they would be subject to the drivers having

insurance, that there would be an age limit as to what age people should be. The act here, as honourable members will recall if they have read it or reread it lately, says that it is sixteen unless otherwise prescribed in the regulations. In other words, the regulations could say differently but subject to subsection (2) a person under the age of sixteen years shall not drive a vehicle unless accompanied by a person who is (a) sixteen or older or if under nineteen properly insured. Unless there is a regulation permitting younger than a sixteen-year-old, of course, sixteen years old would be the limit, but of course, that would be subject to the regulations.

Essentially what this act is doing, and what the amendment is doing is giving the minister responsible for the act the power and the jurisdiction to make regulations thereunder, with the approval of the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council, of course. Certainly I would like to hear the comments of any honourable members on this topic. Any questions, as I say, that they have to put forward we will certainly attempt to answer at the end of it. We think in government that this is a significant piece of legislation. It is an attempt to cope with a problem that is developing in our province. We are prepared, as I say, to listen to the people as to what sort of regulations they would like to see under these. Of course, in the final analysis the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council must make the regulations and it is unfortunate everybody will not be able to be satisfied but we will certainly try to keep in consideration the various aspects of the operation of these vehicles.

We think it is a significant piece of legislation, as the Premier suggested last night and I know that he would like to speak on it himself. Certainly, as I say, I would welcome the comments from my two honourable colleagues from Labrador, St. Barbe North and, I am sure, other isolated areas of the province as well as my colleague the honourable the Minister of Tourism whose responsibility is the Division of Wildlife who will have responsibility for the regulations as they pertain to hunting and wildlife in the province.

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): The honourable the Member for Labrador North:

MR. WOODWARD: Mr. Speaker, I may comment that the amendment is a bad amendment, because of the fact that it does something for one particular area of the province and it takes something away from another particular area. I agree with the minister when he states that there should be some regulations brought in to control the all-terrain vehicles. I agree with him that in cities and towns people are harassed. There are people running over private property in order to get to the areas whereby they can use their machines.

In other areas of this province that is not necessarily so. Since the snowmobile or the all-terrain vehicles came into isolated areas of the province where we have no roads, in one way or another they are being looked upon as automobiles. There are a number of things that apply to a particular automobile. This is an aid for a lot of people in remote areas, especially in the Labrador Coastal Areas, to derive a living.

One of the reasons why I say that it is bad is the mere fact that if you want to hunt in this particular portion of the province you are allowed to get into your automobile or your pick-up truck or whatever you have and drive to a particular area whereby you can hunt for moose or caribou. If this bill is passed in this particular House it will restrict people leaving a particular community with a ski-doo for the purpose of hunting caribou. This is what the act reads.

If the regulations are going to be different from the act then you are going to be breaking the act because it says right here: "Every person who operates a vehicle to chase, hunt, harass, pursue, worry, injure or kill any wildlife is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine of not less than five hundred dollars and not more than one thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or both."

AN HON. MEMBER: You are reading it in isolation.

MR. WOODWARD: I am reading it in isolation but that is the way it reads. I do not know how you are going to build the - but you are not

allowed, according to this, to hunt with that particular vehicle,
as we have restricted

in a number of areas in this province where you are not allowed to hunt by aircraft. I suspect that the same type of regulations will be built; if you want to hunt you cannot hire an aircraft to go in and land in a particular herd of caribou to hunt. So when the regulations state this then I suspect that the same rules will apply to the vehicle, You are not allowed to use a snowmobile to hunt no more than you are allowed to use an aircraft to hunt.

So if this is the case, Mr. Speaker, and if this is the intent of this particular bill, then this bill should not be passed in this House because indeed it will affect the lives of a number of people in this province. Now if the minister can assure this particular House that the regulations will be built, I was under the suspicion that this particular type of legislation would come in. I welcome some amendment. I think it is needed. I think if a number of community councils throughout this province and a number of groups have been looking to the government to provide some type of regulation to govern, or to control the all-terrain vehicles. I think it is good. I think in a lot of communities that we are having problems.

But then again when we bring in this type of legislation, and then when we, indeed, looking at a vehicle in one part of the province for purely a recreational vehicle, and looking at it in another part of the province where it is largely used as a way of life and to provide a livelihood, then again if we are going to bring in this type of regulation then we should have two separate sets of regulations, and not to conflict with the livelihoods of the people.

I was watching a particular television programme and I saw a particular professor from the university on a programme not too long ago saying that there should be something done with regards to snowmobiles harassing wildlife in the province. I had suspected at that time, in the back of my mind, that this is the type of legislation that the government would bring in, which to my mind is not the type of legislation that really applies to people. It does not relate to people or a large portion of our population.

The snowmobile in a number of communities, especially in communities, Mr. Speaker, where you have totally no roads at all, I think, that is going to be very difficult. In a community like Nain, in Northern Labrador, where this snowmobile is used for eight months of the year, a way of life with perhaps ninety or ninety-five per cent of the people, we could have in the Community of Nain where we have a population of 800 people as many as 300 snowmobiles. They are used largely every day of the week by the people. If they go to the grocery store they take their snowmobiles along to pick up their groceries, if they go into the other end of the village to visit with their neighbours they take their snowmobiles along. In lots of cases if you are a short distance from the schools, where there are no buses, the snowmobile is largely used. As a matter of fact, in Cartwright the school board is paying snowmobile operators to haul the children in by snowmobile where there are no roads and no buses being used from the other side of the harbour.

So in this case, Mr. Speaker, in that total population extending from Makkovik we have had people who travelled from Rigolet to Nain and travelled in the country for a distance of some fifty or sixty miles to hunt caribou by ski-doo. I am sure that the honourable minister may recall going back three years ago where we had three hunters stranded in the wilds inside of Nain and we had to go in by helicopter in the summer and retrieve their ski-doos for them. They left them in there and walked out of the bush for a distance of sixty or seventy miles and it took them a period of three weeks to get back to the Community of Nain.

This whole Labrador, not only the north but indeed the south as well, depends largely on the ski-doo. A lot of people use it to bring home firewood, a lot of people use it as a means of transportation from one community to another. I suspect that when the regulations are written and the big fear that I have is...

AN HON. MEMBER: For hospital cases, emergency cases, you name it. The ski-doo with those people, they are very efficient operators,

they travel long distances. Most of the local people through their own natural skills are expert mechanics, they keep ski doos running for long periods of time without the aid of any skilled crafts or craftsmen to do it.

I suspect if we are going to look at drafting regulations and if this is not brought into consideration and I am sure it is not - when we look at this particular bill and we have been subject to this type of thing when you try to restrict it for one use or another - I think this amendment is aimed directly at not using a machine to harass wildlife. If that is the case then it is going to be hard to separate the hunting aspect in Labrador from the recreational aspect of the thing here in the province.

So I suspect, Mr. Speaker, that however you do this, now we have had over the years and rightfully so there were regulations brought in, and I would like to go back to the time when we largely hunted in the wilds by airplane, a small aircraft, this over the years have been gradually wiped out for the same reason. You can go into a large marsh or in on a lake and you can land an aircraft in a herd of caribou. You do not have to move out of the aircraft at all, you go in and land, you take your gun and you shoot your caribou the same as they shoot the wolves in the Arctic, and then you put it aboard the aircraft and you are on your way again. Now this was prohibited, but it is not so with the snowmobile. The snowmobile, if you are going to hunt for one hundred miles and you are going to travel that type of terrain then you are going to have, to be well prepared and you are going to have, to have knowledge of the local conditions. So it is not everyone who is going to go in to a particular area, and in other words you are restricted to some degree because you cannot get a licence to hunt caribou in Northern Labrador.

Well I suspect, Mr. Speaker, that when you are travelling these long distances it is only the people who are familiar with the environment who can really take advantage of this. I for one say that if this particular regulation is brought in and it in any way extracts or takes away from the people their hunting privileges by ski-doo then this bill should not

be passed in this House.

The honourable minister went on to explain maybe the regulations that would be brought in would be restricting the drivers to an age of sixteen years. I feel this is ludicrous.

MR. ROUSSEAU: I said the bill says that. (Inaudible).

MR. WOODWARD: Unless otherwise specified in the regulations. There are a number of areas in this province where we should not have snowmobiles, if you are driving on streets where there is other traffic of things of that nature. Now you will discover when you travel widely in this province that the ski-doo is largely used by a number of high school students for transportation to and fro from school. I know that my son have had a ski-doo since he was the age of eleven and operated it very carefully, very skillfully and very safely and is still operating it. I have another son who is seven years of age and he has a ski-doo too. It is on a smaller scale but then he is permitted to use it in the wilderness areas of Labrador. So if we restrict the age limit to sixteen years of age, which is the age limit when you are permitted to drive an automobile almost of any kind, then I suspect, Mr. Speaker, that we are taking away something from the recreational life of the youth in this province. We should not attempt to do that. I do not think it is the aim of the minister to take something away from the youth of this province because there is very little recreation in most of our outport communities, and since the ski-doo has come in it has played a major role, equally as much as the family automobile. It has played a major role in the way of life for a number of people and their children. This is the first opportunity -

rather than taking the fishing boat on a Sunday afternoon with an old putt, putt and going out to an island. Now during the wintertime they take their ski-dooes and they travel around with their girl friends from one community to another. I would hate to think in terms of regulations being built around this amendment to restrict that happening and I do not think it should happen, neither do I think that the minister in his wisdom will see that it happens. I think that this particular vehicle, and when you look at it, although there has been a number of accidents cited and if we are looking at a total number of 30,000 or 40,000 all-terrain vehicles in this Province, and you look at the number of accidents that have happened, and I suspect, Mr. Speaker, that the all-terrain vehicle is largely used by the youth, the person who is under fifteen or sixteen years of age and not necessarily by the head of the family or the adult, as in cases like those I talked about in Labrador where it is a way of life for the people and they use them as a means of a livelihood.

So I think there are two important things that should happen. We should not let whoever is going to draft the regulations for this particular - I cannot support the bill because as I read the bill I am very much afraid that, it reads, it is very plain and very simple and I am afraid that the regulations will be drafted as such that it cannot conflict with the bill and in essence the bill will go through and the regulations will be built in its true form which will restrict people from hunting in Labrador with a ski-doo. If this does happen then I cannot support the bill and I have no evidence, maybe the minister when he speaks again on the bill can show some reason or give us some assurance that this will not happen. But then again I am very much afraid, as I have experienced the problem with the aircraft, that if this happens, if this bill just goes through now, or this amendment is passed then the regulations will be built so that they will restrict hunting. This will not be a forward step, Mr. Speaker. This will be a step backward which will affect the lives of a number of our people.

MR. WELLS: Does the honourable member permit a question?

MR. WOODWARD: Indeed.

MR. WELLS: - (First part inaudible) honourable member on the question

he has raised about hunting with aircraft, in other words, that the aircraft was too efficient and game did not have a chance in effect. I would like to hear the honourable member's comments, Mr. Speaker, in Labrador, for example, we know there is hunting by ski-dooes. It has been a practice. Is the wild life in any danger of being too seriously depleted by this type of hunting in Labrador?

MR. WOODWARD: No, we have been fortunate enough in the North. Labrador is divided up into three zones and in the northern zone only the people who live in that particular area are allowed to hunt in that zone. The people from Goose Bay and Happy Valley or the Lake Melville area are not allowed to hunt in that particular zone. There are very few caribou in around the Lake Melville area. But we have a number of caribou and our wildlife biologists are telling us, with the herds that we have north of Goose Bay and the population that is hunting those particular herds, this will no doubt be enough, that herd will not be extinct for a long period of time and maybe never. So there is no great danger there. The only danger there maybe as in a lot of cases where our regulations state that a family of six or eight can have six or eight caribou. Maybe eventually they will reduce that to four or five when they feel that the six or eight caribou is too many. We have one caribou per a member of the family. But there is no fear of that and if those people are going to hunt this is the only way they can hunt. If you cut off the ski-doo then those people will not be able to afford to do it by any other means. Neither is there any other means whereby it can be done.

So I suspect this is a great danger and when I look at the bill it reads very simple and plain, Mr. Speaker, that every person who operates a vehicle to chase, hunt - now, I cannot see how you can build regulations around that. If I am taking my gun, my provisions and I go to the wildlife officer and say, "Look, I want a licence to hunt caribou," and he would automatically turn around and say, "How are you going to do it?" And there is no other way but for the person to turn around and say, "I go by ski-doo", and then he turns to the regulations and says, "No, you are not permitted to hunt by ski-doo."

If this is the case; now, maybe I am seeing something here, or there is something in here that I am not seeing. But according to the way it reads that you are not, in the case that this particular bill is passed in the House then you will not be permitted to hunt caribou or any wild-life. Now I do not know how this would affect going hunting for rabbit or things of that nature or to go and hunt for ducks or something.

So, these are my concerns, Mr. Speaker. I think it is a bad bill as I see it, unless the minister can explain differently. I think I have brought my points out on the bill. I cannot vote for the bill and I think if the bill is passed in the House then it will indeed do an injustice to a number of people in our Province.

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): The Hon. the Premier.

HON. F.D. MOORES: Mr. Speaker, I first of all would like to say to the Member for Labrador North that he can rest easy as to the intent of the bill. I think it is very important that the bill be interpreted in the manner in which it is meant. First of all, the regulations for this bill will come out in the form of a white paper immediately after the New Year when we will be asking for representation from the various parts of the Province. The obvious reason for this, Mr. Speaker, is the very simple fact that in a great many areas of the Province, the problems, the usages of these machines are for totally different reasons, for totally different purposes, and this has to be taken into consideration. The use of the snowmobile on the Coast of Labrador particularly, as opposed to the use of snowmobiles around the City of St. John's, are just as different as night and day. No one realizes that better than we do. So it would be our intent before anything is done regarding any regulations to make sure that thorough representation is made, because the reasoning behind this bill is primarily to insure that there is safety, that there are regulations that are meaningful, but certainly in no way is it intended to interrupt a way of life where this sort of machine is necessary. Absolutely not. I want to clear that early and that is why I say the regulations will come out in the form of a white paper so that everybody will have an opportunity to comment on them and all these comments will be listened to.

The other point I would like to make, Mr. Speaker, is that the regulations for the all-terrain vehicles, those track machines particularly we are talking about, will be hopefully into effect by the time the snow is off the ground and the snowmobile regulations will be into effect by the time next year comes. It would take that long to get full representation to make sure that they are covered properly. So I hope that partially answers the Member from Labrador North's worry.

The wording of the bill itself where it says "To chase, hunt, harass, pursue, worry, injure or kill"; now, Mr. Speaker, I think that is fairly self-explanatory whether you live in Labrador or whether you live in Buchans or wherever. The object of that is to stop the "Buffalo Bills" of this world from going loose on one of these machines. We had an instance last year where I think there was something like twenty animals slaughtered by one machine, where a man gets in with a gun mounted and away he goes. That is not good for any part of this Province no matter where they are from. The idea is not to be cruel to animals, just go in and chase them for the sake of doing it and possibly they die after. It is a matter of bringing in regulations that will penalize anybody who abuses the way of life we have in this Province, not someone who needs the machine to use for the way of life they have in the Province, which they need for that way of life. Certainly that is not the intent at all.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk, first of all, on snowmobiles. As most people know the safety regulations, particularly in the more urban parts of our Province, the safety regulations are of critical concern because I know of members of this House, as well as

every other member of the travelling public, in the winter have been driving on highways and they have seen this one light coming at them and the danger of picking off some kid on a machine or causing some serious accident is something that is a very real possibility and one that certainly has to be controlled.

I think in the more urban areas we are looking at recreation areas where these machines can be used, where people can use certain trails for ski-doo's or snowmobiles. I think on the Labrador Coast, obviously, they have to be used for transportation. There are parts of the Island part of the Province - on the Northern Peninsula particularly Harbour Deep, Grand Bruit on the South Coast, areas that are isolated - most certainly need them for transportation as do some of the areas which have much heavier snowfalls.

But having said that I still think it is terribly important that safety regulations be applied according to the district and the use which the machines are needed for. There is no question but that the regulations that will apply to the Coast of Labrador or the Northern Peninsula will be different than the ones that apply on the Avalon Peninsula. Certainly, Sir, it is not a good thing, in my opinion, to have a situation where a man can use one of these machines to abuse the limited wildlife we have in the province. It has been done, it is being done more frequently every year and it is something that has to be controlled.

I am not talking about a man who has a licence to go in and get a caribou and he goes in and shoots it in Labrador when he has no other way to get there because it is one heck of a distance if you are in Labrador to go to shoot wildlife on that coast. A lot of people think the wildlife is right on the coast. That is not so. It is a long trip before you get to where the wildlife habitat.

The other section of the bill, Mr. Speaker, which bothers me, I suppose, more than the snowmobile one is the all-track machines. I do not know how many people in this House have had the opportunity to fly over the province. When you have seen the damage to the vegetation that has been done just by random use of track machines

around this province - it will take, I think, something like thirty to forty years for this to grow back. Where we have so many marshes and bogs in the province this has caused damage that will, as I say, take many years for it to grow back. If it allowed to run unchecked it will be even worse.

The intent is, with the all-terrain vehicles, that people who have a genuine commercial use for them, of course, should be allowed to use them. That would be, for instance, the patrol of power lines, they would have to be used for that purpose, they have to be used in woods camps, sawlogging industries, they have to be used even for outfitters, and, once again if we are talking about hunting, to take the equipment into the woods camps, but not to be used to go shooting from at that stage. Once you are in the location of your woods camp or your outfitters camp then quite naturally you should be able to do your hunting from that location.

Basically what this bill is intended to do, Mr. Speaker, is to preserve the way of life we have, to preserve the wildlife we have, to put some safety into the use of these machines so people will not be killed or maimed or whatever. You take a motor car and you have to be of a certain age and of a certain qualification in order to drive it. But you take a snowmobile and any kid can leap on the back of it and go charging down LeMarchant Road tomorrow morning - not in the city but for all intents and purposes there is no regulation as to how old he has to be before he pops off on his own.

The other thing that has to be remembered is the nuisance value in the urban areas. These machines screeching all around the place, doing a lot of damage, there has to be some control on them. This is the intent of this bill; basically to let people who enjoy recreation enjoy it; to let people who want to use these machines do it under controlled conditions, but not just to abuse the environment we have. The regulations that will allow that will be put out in white paper form so that representation can be made from every group; recreational, outfitters, hunters, people in various parts of the province that have different reasons for different regulations. That is why it will

take so long before these regulations are put, actually, into effect. The easiest thing in the world to do is draw up regulations and put them into effect, but as the Member for Labrador North has pointed out, there would undoubtedly be areas that would have tremendous penalization by doing it in that matter.

The intent is to bring in the white paper on regulations early in January, to have the all-terrain vehicles legislation, that is the track machines and that sort of machine ready when the snow goes off the ground - when they come into play, and the snowmobile regulations ready for next fall.

The All-Terrain Vehicle Legislation will basically be under permit only and permits will be allowed according to the type of vocation the person is operating it for. Basically, Mr. Speaker, this is, I think a terribly important bill for a great many people. It is amazing how many people do use these machines for recreation and also for work, for commercial reasons. I think it is terribly important to our countryside, to the wildlife, to our whole way of life in this province. But I can assure the House now that before any definitive regulations are brought in every aspect and every difficulty will be studied to make sure that they are done in the best manner.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Bonavista North:

MR. P.S.THOMS: Mr. Speaker, it is very difficult to decide whether or not you are for or against this amendment. I believe that if one considers all the pieces of legislation and the motions that we have had before this honourable House since we opened three weeks ago, this bill is possibly the most important. It is even more important than the controversial Redistribution Bill.

The proposed amendments in this bill, Mr. Speaker, will definitely have far-reaching effects throughout the whole island portion and mainland portion of our province. I can sympathize with the honourable Member for Labrador North because, if these amendments to the bill are carried out, if they are passed in this House, this will have a detrimental effect to many sections of our province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have so far been talking specifically about the ski-doo because I believe that these amendments will affect the operation of ski-doods more than any other vehicle that the act may engross. The snowmobile, Mr. Speaker, is a new vehicle to Newfoundland. Its primary purpose was for pleasure and many of our people, especially our young people, have found great pleasure in operating a ski-doo throughout our countrysides.

In certain sections of our province it is also used as a means of transportation. Of course, Mr. Speaker, by using it as a transportation means, the ski-doo has taken the place of, say on the Island portion of our province, the horse. On the Great Northern Peninsula and in Labrador it has taken the place of the dog.

Mr. Speaker, back in 1935, I believe it was, the government of the day then felt it necessary to bring in regulations and legislation concerning dogs, which was transportation at that time and what we are talking about now really, in a sense, is transportation.

Mr. Speaker, as I look through the Dog Act I notice one specific, important thing, Sir; that the Act was brought forward in sections. You had one section pertaining to the City of St. John's alone, another section pertaining to the Avalon Peninsula,

and other sections pertaining to the rest of the island portion of our province and a specific section pertaining to the Labrador portion of our province.

This, Mr. Speaker, was felt necessary because of the extensive use that was made of the dog at that time as a means of transportation. I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that at the present time the ski-doo and the all-terrain vehicles have become a means of transportation in sections of our province. In St. John's, a person who has a ski-doo I suspect it is mainly for pleasure and nothing else. In the greater portion of the island section of our province it is for pleasure, it is for transportation and it is for industry.

Many of our loggers today are using the ski-doo for the transportation of logs out of the woods. As you go farther north in the island portion of our province and of course in Labrador, you find that it is during the winter months particularly, possibly the only means of transportation available in any one community.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I believe that The Motorized Snow Vehicles And All-Terrain Vehicles Act should be designed in such a way similar to The Dog Act of 1935. I believe if this were done that it would not encroach upon the freedom of the people who are of major concern especially to the people of Labrador.

The vehicle itself, Mr. Speaker, the snowmobile, the ski-doo, or the all-terrain vehicle, I would submit to you that the standard of this vehicle is not what one would like to see and I speak particularly about the noise. All of these vehicles are much noisier than any motor vehicle on wheels or any other high powered vehicle. They are a nuisance and an irritation when used within the confines of a community, whether it be in a city or a small village. If used on the roads they are a hazard and a danger and we have already had fatalities in Newfoundland.

So, Mr. Speaker, inbedded in any legislation or any regulations that the department may bring forth, I certainly hope that they would set a set of standards for such vehicles so that such irritations would not exist in the future.

Mr. Speaker, the ski-doo in particular on the island section of our province is widely used throughout the winter months. Many times we find that it is wrongly used, particularly during the cold season of our hunting periods. I believe it has been proven time and time again that a number of people misuse this vehicle, especially in wild life sections of our province. They have been used for poaching. They have been used for chasing animals.

Mr. Speaker, this is very important. Because as honourable members of this House realize, this time of the year and throughout the winter months, the moose populations of our province gather together in some drook of woods, usually in a fir drook. They stay within a small confined area. They even feed within this area. Any person who has walked through one of these areas can readily identify it because all the small trees have been eaten, everything is trampled down because possibly you get twenty, maybe thirty animals within what is commonly called a yard of moose. The reason this expression is used is because you have a small area of moose and it resembles a yard, like a yard of cattle.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. THOMS: No "yard" is not a measurement in this case.

AN HON. MEMBER: Like a backyard.

MR. THOMS: Like a backyard.

Throughout our island province and in Labrador, Mr. Speaker, we have numerous yards of moose at this time of the year.

MR. SIMMONS: You are learning.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please!

MR. THOMS: Now, Mr. Speaker, when these moose are yarded up, as we commonly say, at this time the moose are yarded up. There could be six inches of snow on the ground or there could be six feet.

AN HON. MEMBER: In a yard of moose.

MR. THOMS: And one yard of moose is correct.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please!

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MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, the members opposite think that this is a real joke. But this is a very serious matter, a very serious matter.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please!

MR. THOMS: I am trying to teach the honourable gentlemen something.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please! Order please! I am inclined to agree with the honourable member for Bonavista North, while some of the terminology may be a little different to the honourable House, the Chair considers the principle of this bill to be a very important one and would request honourable members to my left to give the honourable member the honour which he deserves, to be heard in silence.

MR. THOMS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, the moose in our province, at this time of year and throughout the winter months, they yard up. Now I know honourable gentlemen opposite do not understand this, but I am trying to teach them. If they were good attentive students they would learn something.

Now, Mr. Speaker, while the moose are yarded up there could be from six inches of snow or there could be six feet of snow. Now if these moose are disturbed while there is a small amount of snow there is no real danger to the safety of them. But if they are molested or chased or disturbed when five or six feet of snow exists on the ground these moose will travel from the yard, will depart and I will bet you that nine out of every ten of these moose will perish within twenty-four hours. They will beat themselves out running through the heavy snow. I am sure if any honourable gentleman here has ever travelled our woods that they can find evidence of this such as I have. It is a good bill in a sense and it is not a good bill in another sense, and I will point out why it is not.

So, Mr. Speaker, we need rules and regulations to ensure that these animals during the winter months are not disturbed. Because if you realize during the winter months, all of the animals are in poor condition because of the food supply. It is not the same as it is in the summer and in the fall. The cows, or at least some of them, are pregnant, and chasing

these animals during this period is very detrimental to that animal. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, in this sense I would support any rules or regulations that would protect these animals, especially during this period in time.

Now, Mr. Speaker,

I will agree with some of the words the Premier said when he spoke about the all-terrain vehicles, when he said that many of our areas, he did not specifically state but I believe he must have meant the caribou marshes on the interior of our province, when he must have at some time or other saw what was happening because of the misuse of mostly amphi-cats over the caribou marshes.

I was on such a marsh only three months ago, Mr. Speaker, at Caribou Lake, and I was also on the marshes over around Mount Peyton. Mr. Speaker, there are tracks in these marshes that have been used time and time again by amphi-cats. They are so obvious and so well beaten down that you would almost think someone was going to come along the next day and install street lights.

MR. MARSHALL: Would the honourable member like to adjourn the debate it is almost 1:00 P.M.?

MR. THOMAS: Yes Mr. Speaker, I would like to adjourn this debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Now that the honourable Member for Bonavista North has adjourned the debate I will now call it 1:00 P.M. and leave the Chair until 3:00 P.M. this afternoon.

The House resumed at 3:00 P.M.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! When we adjourned for lunch the honourable Member for Bonavista North was speaking and he may continue.

MR. P. S. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, as I was explaining to the honourable members of this House when we adjourned for dinner, I was more or less trying to educate them even though they were in a very jovial mood about what you could consider the housing facilities that moose of our province have during the winter months.

Mr. Speaker, the moose during the winter months - December, January, February and most times during March - they group together in what is commonly known as "Yards". These yards consist of very small areas only a couple or three hundred feet in diameter, in some cases. The moose more or less rest, they do not do any travelling whatsoever. This, Mr. Speaker, is because normally of the deep snow that we are used to having in this province of ours. Mr. Speaker, if we are to allow snowmobiles or all-terrain vehicles or any other vehicle to disturb these animals then what would normally happen is that these animals would be driven out into the deep snow, and after travelling under very severe conditions they are rapidly exhausted, with very little food, they die very shortly after within a span of hours, not days or weeks, but within a span of hours.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, if this act and the regulations that were to follow were true then in this aspect of the legislation I would totally agree. Mr. Speaker, I believe, we have to define some of the words that are used in the act. For example, when we talk about hunting with snowmobile, does this include the travelling from one's home to a hunting areas? And in the case of residents of Labrador, they may have to travel forty, fifty, sixty miles before they can possibly reach a wildlife area where they can hunt. In this section of our province, Mr. Speaker, this may be the only means of transportation that these people have at their disposal, not only in Labrador, Mr. Speaker, but also in the northern section of our province.

Mr. Speaker, if this amendment or indeed if this act encroaches upon the ability of any of the residents of this province or limits their ability to travel, then, Mr. Speaker, I am totally against it.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

MR. THOMS: In this aspect of this bill, and when one considers it in this light, it is definitely a bad piece of legislation as the Member for Labrador North has said.

Now, Mr. Speaker, over this past five or six years we have witnessed a rapid decline of our wildlife throughout the island portion of our province and throughout Labrador. It was only a few years ago when the Wildlife Division found it necessary to allow one hunter to bag two moose, in one season. This was only five or six years ago. The moose population of our province was good. Some officials at that time even stated that we had approximately 43,000 moose. It was quite evident, Mr. Speaker, that we did have a good population of moose because along the Trans-Canada Highway in any section of the province, one could easily see a moose. I can travel from here to Gambo weekend after weekend and not see a moose, not even in the National Park. They have all but disappeared. It is only in the interior of our province now, Mr. Speaker, that we have any significant population of moose whatsoever. Even in the interior the population seems to be declining year after year.

Mr. Speaker, many of the Rod and Gun Clubs in our province are very concerned about this, not only about the moose but all wildlife. Our rock partridge at the present time is down to the lowest ebb that it even has been. It is only right and proper that we should take steps in this Assembly to booster the population of any of our wildlife if we can. But, Mr. Speaker, while taking such steps we should not encroach or penalize the rights of any of our citizens within this province. I feel that is why if this bill is passed, as I am sure it will be because the government have a huge majority in this House - thirty-one votes to eight of us - I am sure they will vote for this bill, Mr. Speaker, and that this will be implemented.

Under the proposed bill before this House at the present time, rules and regulations can be implemented that would certainly encroach upon the rights of many of our citizens. This, Mr. Speaker. I believe, is wrong. I do not believe that we should at all cherish the thought of passing this bill. Mr. Speaker, the whole act, The Motorized Snow Vehicles and All-Terrain Vehicles Act, is designed completely wrong because if ever there was a case in Newfoundland where you have to make cheese of one and chalk of the other this is the case. We cannot implement legislation and rules and regulations pertaining to these vehicles for the people of the Avalon Peninsula and apply the same rules and regulations in Northern Newfoundland and in Labrador. It is impossible to do it. It is unfair to do it. It is undemocratic to do it.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I urge the minister to get the support of the government so that he can withdraw this bill.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. THOMS: It should be.

AN HON. MEMBER: All of it?

MR. THOMS: All of it. The bill should be withdrawn.

Mr. Speaker, the minister and his officials should take very serious consideration and if necessary revamp the whole bill itself. I claim that the act should be designed in certain sections so that rules and regulations can be drawn up to control these vehicles within the Avalon Peninsula and another set for the greater portion of our province and maybe another set for the Great Northern Peninsula and also a part dealing with Labrador. Mr. Speaker, we have here two extremes. I am sure on the Avalon Peninsula the only reason a person will purchase one of these vehicles is for the purpose of recreation and that is good. They should be allowed to purchase these vehicles and to enjoy the hours in the outdoors. I agree with this. That is good. It is a good sign.

Mr. Speaker, we should have certain rules and regulations pertaining to the Avalon Peninsula because nowhere on the Avalon Peninsula will it be necessary to use a ski-doo as a means of transportation to and from schools, to and from your work. If you use a ski-doo on the Avalon Peninsula, it is used specifically for recreation.

Then, Mr. Speaker, if you go to the larger portion of our province, that is the island portion, you will find that the ski-doo is used not only for pleasure but it is also used for a means of transportation. It is also used in industry. In the past, Mr. Speaker, our people who worked in the woods used the horse to pull out logs. Now the ski-doo is replacing the horse and in many cases it is even replacing the tractor because it is much faster. It is more mobile than the tractor. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, we are going to have to have a different set of rules and regulations or we

should have a specific section of the act set aside for this area of the province. The same thing, Mr. Speaker, would apply to the Great Northern Peninsula. Only I am sure that the times and the dates would have to be different in this section of the province than they would be in the other two.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it is entirely necessary to have a special section of the act set aside for Labrador. Here the vehicle is used more extensively for transportation while it is used also by certain areas as a recreational facility. Transportation, Mr. Speaker, in Labrador is nil. In years gone by the dog was the only means of transportation for the people of Labrador. The aircraft was there for quite a number of years but it was never used to the extent that the dog was. Today the ski-doo is taking the place of the dog. Therefore, I believe we should have a special section of the act, special rules and regulations for the Labrador section of our province.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the minister should give this some very serious thought. I note, Mr. Speaker, that this act was passed in 1973. I am wondering why the rules and regulations were not drafted and why they were not implemented before now. We have had ample time to do so. If they were important as I believe the minister himself said, why was not this piece of legislation the first before this honourable House when it opened some three weeks ago? Because, Mr. Speaker, in my opinion, this is the most important piece of legislation that we have discussed this fall in this honourable House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I once again plead with the minister and ask him to get the support of his other colleagues and have this piece of legislation withdrawn because it is a bad piece of legislation. Have it withdrawn and consult with his officials and at the same time I believe he and his officials should consult with other independent

people across this province so that a proper set of rules and regulations can be drawn up, a proper act can be brought before this House and one that would not encroach upon our people at this time.

Mr. Speaker, I trust that the honourable minister will give this some serious consideration. I trust that he will see fit to act.

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Tourism.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, I find it incredible to hear the honourable gentleman ask that this bill be withdrawn. After listening to a fair amount or most of his speech and most of the points he raised, they all seem to add up to the necessity for this bill. He pointed out before lunch of the danger with regards to ski-doo's and snowmobiles or what have you. He pointed out to some detail about the danger to wildlife of harassing and chasing wildlife and the necessity for control.

Mr. Speaker, this is really what this bill proposes to do and that is to control and make sure that the wildlife is protected in this province. I am at a loss to follow the honourable gentleman when he now suggests that we should withdraw the bill. I can agree with him. He said on the one hand that this is a very important subject. Certainly, it is. He mentions in some detail about the moose population and I can give him some figures, Mr. Speaker, which certainly do not bear out with what he says. There are approximately 40,000 moose in the province today or at least there were yesterday.

AN HON. MEMBER: How many, 40,000?

MR. HICKEY: 40,000.

MR. WOODWARD: How many moose are there in Labrador?

MR. HICKEY: How many are there in Labrador? I have not counted the ones from Labrador separately so I will have to take that under advisement.

Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of people under the misconception with regards to the moose population that

approximately seven to ten years ago there were something close to 80,000 moose in the province as compared to an approximate figure given at the time of 40,000. The people who are most familiar and who are professional in wildlife, my staff advise me that the estimate at the time was way off, close to fifty per cent, and instead of the population as quoted at that time of being 40,000, or between 40,000 and 50,000, it was more like 80,000. So that in effect over the years it is true to some extent to say that the moose population has decreased.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. HICKEY: But, Mr. Speaker, this is one of the main justifications for the licencing system that this administration put into effect. It is one of the main justifications for the increase in the licence to nonresidents.

AN HON. MEMBER: Decreased.

MR. HICKEY: Decreased?

AN HON. MEMBER: Decreased.

MR. HICKEY: Increased. An increase in the licence fee? An increase in the licence fee and a decrease in the number of licences? All, Mr. Speaker, all directed to protect and to conserve the moose population. The caribou is estimated at approximately 20,000. The black bear, I am told, is on the increase and like some other species that we know of is becoming a bit of a nuisance.

HON. MEMBERS: Inaudible.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, why would anyone suggest or think that I was referring to anyone in this honourable House. Of course not. I would not dare suggest that, Mr. Speaker, especially with my record which I am not really proud of, of having two sojourns from this just Chamber, I would dare not suggest that anyone in this Chamber was a nuisance.

MR. SPEAKER (STAGG): Order, please! Just so that honourable members are not even misled into irrelevancies that -

AN HON. MEMBERS: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER (STAGG): I would suggest the honourable member be relevant.

MR. HICKEY: Thank you, Your Honour, I want to get back to the bill before the House but I was prompted to give some of those figures because my honourable friend for Bonavista North expressed some concern and indeed he made some statements which he thought were correct but which are really not. The polar bear, I am told, is almost extinct, very, very few and it is on the way out. Now, Mr. Speaker, to get to the bill, I certainly add my support to this bill for a number of reasons, one being the fact that with my honourable colleague, the Minister of Transportation and Communications who now has responsibility for it, I had the pleasure of having some input and doing some work with regards to this bill and reaching the stage where it is today. I can say without any fear of contradiction, I suppose, Mr. Speaker, it is repeating really because the Hon. the Premier to my mind laid at rest any fears that honourable gentlemen might have with regards to special consideration for the people of Labrador who used the vehicles covered in this bill, for certainly purposes other than recreation or indeed survival.

I wish to address myself to this question for a few moments Mr. Speaker, by pointing out to the House that one of the reasons, and this is in answer to a question raised by my friend, the Member for Bonavista North, when he says, why were not the regulations made before now? One of the reasons I would suggest to him is indeed the fact that this administration acknowledges the special conditions and the special situation in Labrador.

I can recall, Mr. Speaker, on at least three occasions being questioned in this House about those regulations and this bill. My answer was that on all occasions it was under consideration, draft regulations had been developed and that we were not prepared to go forward at that particular time. I am sure the Member for Labrador South can bear me out when I say this because he requested a copy of suggested regulations and he was provided with those regulations and indeed he came back with a number of suggestions which I might add were taken into consideration and included.

So, Mr. Speaker, there has been ample time. While I am afraid that there has not been the kind of input that we expected and that we want because, as the Premier said this morning, this is a very important area and the government wish and are desirous of being sure that the proper kind of regulations are developed and so on. Even, Mr. Speaker, when they are and even when they are brought before this House, I think it is fair to say that in dealing with this kind of a complex subject those regulations when they are proclaimed will indeed be changed before too long and before they are in effect too long. It is very difficult to legislate or to regulate this kind of a situation.

Mr. Speaker, the necessity for this kind of legislation surely one cannot quarrel with for a number of reasons. The snowmobile, for example, the small snowmobile that is used today. In this province there have been some accidents, I believe there have been a couple of fatalities, I am not quite sure of the number, but at least a couple. In the Province of Quebec, Mr. Speaker, there has been an astronomical amount of accidents, a great number of fatal accidents so much so that that province has a very well developed system of control, of policing, of licencing, and that province, Mr. Speaker, has spent a pretty fair amount of money in developing this package for the general public. I have a booklet, for example, from that province which outlines the safety regulations, safety measures, a great deal of information on snowmobiles. It outlines the areas where they may be used, and not only in terms of control and licencing, Mr. Speaker, but that province has also spent a considerable amount of money in developing areas, trails and areas where those vehicles may be used and may be used in safety.

It is also, Mr. Speaker, very important that we concern ourselves and we address ourselves to the question of age in terms of the operation of the small ski-doo or snowmobile. Children, actual children today are operating those vehicles. Mr. Speaker, it is all the more reason why there has to be some kind of control and in some instances, Mr. Speaker, it has to be rigid control. There has to be the kind of

safety measures developed and those measures, Mr. Speaker, must be well publicized so that the general public are aware of them. It is also very important that this province develop the areas where those vehicles may be used. This to my mind, Sir, is one of the reasons why I consider this piece of legislation and this bill by this government one of the most progressive and forward steps, certainly another one of them as taken by this administration because it involves so many people. It involves actual lives. It has been said so many times, Mr. Speaker, that saving one life

would justify any kind of an expenditure no matter what or how much it is. The Province of Quebec, Mr. Speaker, to illustrate a little further how well developed and how well organized they are in this very vital area, they have developed a map in which they outline the trails. It is similar to a road map. One interested in using the ski-doo or small snowmobile for recreational purposes must only pick up this map and they know where they can go; they know where the trails are and beyond those areas it is unlawful to use those vehicles. I am not suggesting, Mr. Speaker, that we have to move quickly to attain this kind of level of development at this particular time. I am suggesting, Sir, that I think this is what we have to look for a little bit down the road so that we have this area developed in a very systematic way as has the Province of Quebec. Because, Mr. Speaker, it is too late when children are killed or when people are killed, adults or what have you.

As has already been indicated in this debate, I have had the occasion of driving along the highway eight o'clock in the night only to find that there is one light coming towards you. You think it is a car with one light. You know nothing until it cuts across you, maybe a dozen or two dozen car lengths ahead of you, literally crossing the highway. I have seen this, Mr. Speaker, although it is probably unbelievable for honourable members to appreciate this, happen on the Trans Canada Highway at eight o'clock in the evening. Mr. Speaker, if there were no other reason for this legislation coming before the House but purely and only the safety factor surely that in itself is sufficient justification for bringing it here. As I said, I was involved to some extent as a former Minister of Transportation and Communications. Now in my portfolio my department will be charged with the responsibility of the policing and the control of the regulations when they are presented to the House.

Mr. Speaker, I have no doubts in my mind, no fears about the people of Labrador not being well taken care of with regards

to any regulations that are made under this bill. As I have said, the fact that it has not come before this House before is good proof that this administration is very, very conscious of the importance of those vehicles to the people of Labrador.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. RICKEY: No more than I have any fear, Mr. Speaker, of those regulations offending to any great degree the people who live on the island, be it the people who use the all-terrain vehicle or the small snowmobile. As has already been indicated, this legislation really is to control those people and to prevent the destruction of wildlife, either indirectly or directly, to protect the environment, the habitat and the vegetation because if we do not do that - and my friend from Bonavista North who mentioned a decrease in the moose population - there will be a much further decrease if we allow our environment to be destroyed as it is being destroyed right now.

Mr. Speaker, I have much pleasure in supporting this bill. I see no reason for any changes and certainly no fear that any honourable member should have with regard to how it would adversely affect any of his constituents.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable the Member for Labrador South:

MR. M. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, this is one of those bills which I have particularly warm feelings for, having been involved from the very early stages of the original act itself and the formulation thereof. I should like to put on record, Sir, I think, that it deserves to be noted where credit is due. At the very early stage the formulation of that which is now an act, they were working on the bill, the honourable minister who just spoke, who was responsible at that time, did get in touch with me and asked for my recommendations. I made numerous recommendations and the bill when it was presented incorporated all of those recommendations. It is indicative of the kind of sensitivity which that honourable gentleman has toward our problems in the north. I would like him to know that we appreciate that.

The act as it stands has a long ways to go, as he said, but we are in no particular hurry because the problem has not reached

those crisis proportions which it has in the Province of Quebec. There is hardly, I think, a more destructive force to be turned loose on the wilderness than a snowmobile or an all-terrain vehicle operated by a person who is alien to that environment and who has no sensitivity towards that environment and this includes almost anybody who was not raised in that environment. Now I do not want to raise the hackles of the sportsmen from cities like St. John's and Corner Brook who are very, very sensitive to the wilderness but all too often we find people buying these vehicles for recreational purposes only, taking them out into the wilderness and wreaking all kinds of havoc, ruining trees, shrubs, disturbing wildlife in their habitat, overrunning, in the case of all-terrain vehicles, nesting grounds and this kind of thing. I think it is timely and very important that we get on with the licencing of these vehicles.

With regard to this particular amendment, I should like to say that subsection (b) of section 2, when we looked at it earlier today, I was called out of the House so I immediately brought it to the attention of my honourable friend from Labrador North who had already noted the same thing and asked him to make sure that the matter was raised and it was, that is that subsection (b) of section 2 in the amendment is an objectionable subsection and in private representations to the government members, they have agreed, I think to make certain amendments to this section which will be forthcoming. If that offending subsection is removed from this amendment, then we certainly have no hesitation in supporting it as it stands. There is one thing I would like to say on the regulating of the age of operators for these vehicles. Perhaps rather than stating a definite age limit, the minimum age limit for operation of these vehicles which I will be the first to admit there is a very great need to stop children from using these things before they have any knowledge of the proper use of them, especially a snowmobile with its high speed is as much a lethal weapon in the hands of an unskilled operator as is an automobile and it should be regulated closely - I am not quite sure whether or not it is quite necessary to impose a minimum age limit in a place, for instance, like

Pinsent's Arm or William's Harbour in Labrador where there are only thirteen or fourteen families and the training in these vehicles very often starts, and quite deliberately so, at a very, very early age of seven or eight years old. Maybe a better way to do it would be to stipulate that a waiver could be granted by the local authorities, the R.C.M.P or municipal authorities to allow persons under the minimum age here to operate vehicles under those special circumstances. I think if special waivers were permitted in this case that everybody would be taken care of and nobody would be discriminated against.

I have no hesitation, Mr. Speaker, in supporting the bill as I am sure it will be amended later on in the session.

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Member for Bonavista South.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, just a few brief words on this amendment to the act itself. I listened to the arguments put forward by the Hon. Member for Labrador North and I can sympathize with his concern, especially taking into consideration the fact that these motorized snow vehicles are used extensively in Labrador for the purpose of hunting by the residents in the Labrador section of our province. Of course, the main purpose of

this amendment, or the two main purposes are: Number (1) is to prevent the harassment of wildlife mainly, and number (2) is to give the minister the authority to regulate the use of such vehicles.

Now the honourable gentleman from Bonavista North also mentioned that he did not feel like supporting this amendment based on the fact that the vehicles could not be used for hunting. But I would like to point out to this honourable House that the bill itself which is "An Act Respecting Motorized Snow Vehicles And All-Terrain Vehicles," that in section 24 of that Act, in fact section 24 (4) of that Act, that different regulations may be made with respect to different areas of the province, which means that when the regulations are drawn up by the minister that there can be a different set of regulations for Labrador, completely different from those on the island part of our province. That is number one point.

Number two point is the fact that section 24 (1) (1) of the act states that these regulations, will be drawn up by the minister and pertaining to this act he may exempt any area of the province. For example, the regulations can stipulate that a section of Labrador South or Labrador North may exempt that area from this act even applying to that area.

The main purpose of the amendment is to prevent the harassment of wild life by these motorized snow vehicles. Included in that clause every person who operates a snow vehicle to chase, to hunt, to harass, to pursue and to worry and go on from there but the word "hunt" is in there but I cannot see personally how it can be removed, because I do not want to see these snowmobiles used on the island part of our province for hunting. But I would like to see them used, and of course they are going to have to be used, by residents of Labrador for the purpose of hunting. Therefore I think the amendment as it is can stand based on the fact that the regulations when they come in, can control the areas of the province where the act will apply. So sections of Labrador can either be eliminated from the

act completely or exempt from the act completely or there will be a different set of regulations as the act now says that there will be. For example, I will read the section of the act which says that different regulations will be made under this section with respect to different areas of the province. Which means that when the regulations do come into effect, the regulations can be drawn up to suit the Labrador Area accordingly. Still keep in the section we are dealing with today the amendment, still keep that section with hunting in there. We are going to have to keep it there because we are going to have to prevent the hunting of animals.

Furthermore, for example, if we are going to allow the hunting of animals in Labrador, there must also be a stipulation and regulation to the effect that the hunting must be only allowed by the residents. because if the regulations, for example, state that hunting is going to be allowed in Labrador or if certain sections of Labrador will be exempt from the act, it could mean that outsiders - we could have Americans coming in or other people coming in for the sole purpose of hunting in Labrador, sportsmen coming in - and they could be allowed to use this act to go in and hunt in areas where this act would then not apply. So we must stipulate in the regulations, if we are going to allow the motorized snow vehicle to be used for hunting in Labrador, we must stipulate in the regulations, very important, that the regulations apply only to the residents of the area and not to give a sort of blanket exemption allowing the use of snowmobiles and ski-doo's, etc., because if we allow that we are going to see all kinds of sportsmen and outsiders coming in taking advantage of the situation and harassing and hunting wild life.

So I do think that this is a rather very important piece of legislation because we must have regulation with regards to the use of such vehicles. I know it is becoming a very serious problem in many municipalities and smaller communities around the coast of Newfoundland. The unfortunate part is that these vehicles are used mainly on the island part of our province for recreational purposes. The other unfortunate part is they are used mainly by teenagers and the younger type people. There are only one or two exceptions in my

district where I have seen the vehicles used for logging operations. Sawmills use them, sawmill operators use them to get the logs out of the woods in the wintertime. With only one or two exceptions they are used mainly for recreational purposes and they are used all over the place on private property. I have seen them used on highways.

Now the act does stipulate that we cannot use the vehicles on the highways but we must have regulations with regards to the use of the vehicle other than the highway.

Of course the big question mark is when we see so many snowmobiles around today and ski-doods and motorized snow vehicles, the question is how are we going to control and regulate who can operate that vehicle? For example, if we are going to set an age limit on who can operate these vehicles the act already stipulates that the limit for the use of the vehicle on the highway is age seventeen. That is quite clear. But what age should we use to restrict the use of these vehicles on places other than the highway?

I know from my experience around Bonavista Bay that most of the vehicles are now being used for recreational purposes by, I would say, kids ranging from the age of twelve to fifteen or twelve to twenty, but in most cases from twelve to fifteen. So I do not think we can really restrict the age to age seventeen for the use of vehicles off the highway. I cannot see how we could do that. So I would like to see maybe the age twelve or thirteen, of course with a stipulation that

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. MORGAN: But if we are going to take away the recreation from so many, I would say hundreds of children around the province today, children of teenagers, call them what you wish, who are using these vehicles, I would like to see that. If we are going to, for example, lower the age to thirteen, seventeen for the highway and thirteen for off the highway on private property or other property, secondary roads etc., on proper prescribed trails for the use of these vehicles, not ski trails, away from ski trails but prescribed trails for the use of these vehicles. I think the age thirteen would be reasonable providing, of course, that the persons going to use these vehicles have to be checked

out by somebody and given specific instructions on the use of these vehicles before they are allowed to take them out on their own.

There are many aspects to look at but under the act itself the act covers wide use of the vehicles but the specific use must be covered by regulations, must be governed by regulations and this amendment today is a very important piece of legislation because it is going to give the minister the authority to bring in these regulations and put them into effect, to make these regulations adaptable to different parts of the province, that is also very important.

Also I think it is going to prohibit the use of these vehicles and it will prohibit the use of these vehicles in areas where we should have a stop on the use of them and that is in the aspect of maintaining our wildlife in different parts of our province.

Mr. Speaker, without anything further I give the opportunity to the members of the opposite side but I would like to say one thing: I know I am going to be out of order, Mr. Speaker, but in closing seeing we are drawing closer to the Christmas Season, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all members of the House of Assembly a very happy Christmas.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for St. Barbe North:

MR. F.B. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I could not agree with the Member for Bonavista South more when he said this is a very important piece of legislation but the one thing that concerns me, whether it is a good or bad piece of legislation, I honestly do not...

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. ROWE: Yes exactly, to know whether or not this bill or amendment to the bill is a good piece of legislation depends upon the nature of the regulations that are going to be brought in as a result of this bill, and for one I would almost suggest, Mr. Speaker, that this particular bill be shelved or a moratorium or something placed on it until such time as the regulations can be drafted, if in fact regulations can be drafted without this particular amendment, which I assume they can be.

because the nature of the regulations themselves will determine whether or not this amendment is a good one. The Premier gives us his assurance that the regulations will be drafted in the form of a white paper. I presume that the Premier means that a white paper will be drafted and, depending upon the submissions we get as a result of this white paper, modifications will be made and regulations will result from the white paper.

If that is to be so, Sir, I would tend to vote for this amendment or this particular bill, but we have no assurance that this will be so. We have no assurance that there will be proper representation from all parts of this province or if in fact we do have proper representation and input from various parts of this province that the so-called white paper will be amended accordingly. Sir, I realize that I may be stretching latitudes just a little bit here but we do have precedence in this honourable House. Over the past year or so where certain things have been said in the House and a typical example was the Redistribution Bill and the report, where what was said in the House and what took place thereafter were quite two entirely different things. If we could have complete assurance— if we can count on complete assurance from the government— almost asking for the honourable the Premier to swear on the bible that we will have proper input and representation from all parts of this province, particularly Labrador, and that the white paper will be modified accordingly and that we will get regulations that will be consistent with the wishes of the people in Labrador — then, for example, I could see myself voting for this bill, Sir. If we do not have that assurance, based on the history of this House so far this year, Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned. I am just as concerned as my colleague from Labrador North. I would almost tend to vote against the bill. I am completely confused as to what I should do, the trouble with the bill is that the regulations may not be satisfactory.

For instance, I will explain to the honourable the Minister of Social Services. I will use an analogy here.

MR. MURPHY: (Inaudible)

MR. SPEAKER: Order please!

MR. F.B. ROWE: Are we going to have a case where some civil servant, with all due respect to civil servants, sits down in an office, or a group of civil servants, or a group of professors or a group of anybodies, cabinet, sits down and drafts up a white paper. Then we do not have satisfactory representation from the rest of the province and it is not modified accordingly and they are put in the regulations and they are not suitable for the people of Labrador nor anywhere else in the province. If they are not suitable this means that this bill is a bad bill.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. F.B. ROWE: That is the point, this is the very point that I am trying to make, Mr. Speaker. Whether this bill is good or bad is determined by the nature of the regulations. What I am saying is probably, if it is possible - I am no legislative expert nor expert on parliamentary rules as was witnessed a few days ago - if it is possible I would suggest the shelving of this particular bill (121), which is an amendment to amend the Motorized Snow Vehicles and All-Terrain Vehicles Act. That it be shelved until such time as we see the nature of the regulations and see whether it is satisfactory to the people all over this province.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. F.B. ROWE: Yes. Right! Well this is all this pertains to, the hunting aspect of it and the ecological aspects of it. Now, Mr. Speaker, that is one point I would like to make.

The second point is that all that has been said about Labrador I agree with entirely. We have heard from the Member for Labrador South and the honourable Member for Labrador North and we have heard from the Minister who represents the District of Labrador West. I would like to point out, Sir, that there is another part of this province which is identical almost, or I would say identical. There is no such thing as Labrador when you start comparing geography, topography and weather conditions. The Coast of Labrador is one thing, the Happy Valley Area is another thing, Wabush-Labrador City is another thing,

the Straits Section is another thing - quite entirely different geographical, topographical areas and climatic areas.

The northern tip, particularly of the Northern Peninsula, which more or less represents my deceased district, is identical to the Straits Section or the Coast of Labrador as far as weather is concerned. Sir, the people of St. Barbe North and - I will use the Northern Peninsula from now on, Sir - the people of the Great Northern Peninsula depend upon a snowmobile more in the winter than we depend on a car or a pick-up or a truck of any kind. I think this should be taken into consideration. Certainly, if we are going to have hearings or input or representation made with respect to this white paper, I appeal to the minister that he ensure that such input will occur from the Northern Peninsula part of our province and I guess the same thing will apply to the Baie Verte Peninsula, the Northeast Coast.

I would ask that he assure this honourable House that the Northern Peninsula and the Baie Verte Peninsula and that area be given as much consideration as Labrador because the circumstances are identical.

Now, Sir, I should like to get on another point, this business of confiscation of snowmobiles for going in and knocking off one moose too many. I do not know how to describe it but I am not condoning the poaching of moose. In some parts of our province an unpoached moose is not proper to eat, it has to be poached to have a good taste. I am not condoning that we perpetuate the poaching or the illegal shooting of moose, caribou or any type of wildlife but there have been examples where people have had their machines confiscated because they have broken the law with respect to the Wildlife Act for shooting a moose in the National Park or for shooting one moose too many, or what have you. We do not have to get into the detail of it but, Sir, here is the point that I want to make: confiscating the machine of a chap on the Northern Peninsula or in Labrador is a far different story from confiscating the machine of, say, an honourable member in this House who uses the machine only for hunting or recreational purposes.

The people in Labrador and the people on the Northern Peninsula use these machines, for example, for such a simple thing as getting water to their homes. Of the forty-three communities in my district over three-quarters of them do not have a water supply system. They have to bomb off on their ski-doo's, Sir, with those little sleds behind with water barrels and they go three or four miles to a river where the ice is not frozen to the bottom. They pour the water in the barrels and they bring it back to their homes. They use their ski-doo's for going back and forth to school, for getting their groceries, for going to dances, for going to church. The ski-doo is more important to them than a vehicle is to us. At least we have a road or a sidewalk or a paved road or a bus. Sir, to confiscate a man's machine or a woman's machine -

MR. NEARY: Watch your language now. Is that unparliamentary, Sir?

MR. F.B. ROWE: Snowmobile, Sir, because they have broken the law with respect to the Wildlife Act or the Games Act, whatever it is called, to take the ski-doo away is more than taking it away for hunting purposes. I would submit that the minister and the cabinet and the government consider some other form of

punishment, if you will, for a person who is guilty of breaking the law with respect to the shooting of animals other than the confiscation - confiscate the guns, confiscate the Coleman stove, but not the ski-doo - and I would recommend that in all sincerity to the honourable the minister. Sir, another point that I would like to make is that the minister made some reference to the licencing for ski-doods. I would submit, Sir, that there should be two different sets of rules for licencing or regulations for licencing. I do not know whether any honourable member has brought this up at this point, but using a ski-doo for recreational purposes, as we would in this part of the Province, is far different from a person who has to use a ski-doo on the Northern Peninsula or in Labrador.

Sir, it is the people on the Northern Peninsula and in Labrador who would under these circumstances be forced to buy two different sets of licences for transportational purposes, one for his vehicle that he can only use in the summer, early fall and late spring, and he is forced to buy another set of licences for any number of ski-doods that he has, that is the only form of transportation that most of these people can use during the winter. We have our choice down here. We are not forced to use ski-doods to come to work in the morning and even if we did have enough snow here, a vicious snow storm, it is illegal to use a ski-doo in the city anyway. So, the point that I am trying to make to the minister, Mr. Speaker, is that the people in Northern Newfoundland and in certain other sections, Northeastern Newfoundland and Labrador, will, because of the licencing regulation, be forced to get a licence for his four wheel vehicle, as well as his ski-doo or two that he might have in the family. I think some special consideration should be given to that fact because these people are being discriminated against in terms of having to buy licences for transportational purposes. I think I have made my point clear on that.

Another thing, Mr. Speaker: The Minister of Tourism made some reference to certain pamphlets that are being put out, and that by the Province of Quebec. Again I am not that entirely familiar with the original act here that is being amended. I do not know if there is anything in the

act that requires, makes it compulsory or mandatory for instance, to have a safety booklet included with the sale of every single ski-doo in this Province. Sir, there have been some terrible accidents on ski-doos. A simple little thing like roaring across a field, Sir, with one piece of barbed wire, six inches below the snow, can tear a machine and a person apart, and I can give hundreds of examples. I am sure other colleagues who have been using ski-doos more than I have can certainly give examples of some safety precautions that should be made available to owners of ski-doos, and it should be mandatory and it should be compulsory that these types of booklets be included with the sale of a ski-doo.

Another point, Sir, I do not know, some of these points are occurring to me as I am speaking - I think there should be some control placed on speed ski-doos.

MR. NEARY: Governors.

MR. ROWE: The honourable Member for Bell Island suggested governors. I think that is an excellent idea, Sir, particularly with respect to use of ski-doos by so-called children. With my short experience with ski-doos I have driven some very powerful ski-doos, ski-doos that can pull heavy loads and do the work. But I have also been on ski-doos that go up to fifty, sixty, seventy miles an hour. Sir, there should be some control placed on these types of machines and I submit that the only place that these things should be used is on controlled race tracks in this Province, controlled ski-doo race tracks. It is like asking to have one of those souped-up stock cars or race cars or whatever these little -

MR. NEARY: Like we had -

MR. ROWE: Like we had going around Confederation Building. It is like allowing these to be used in the city. I would submit that some control has to be placed on, not power ski-doos, but speed ski-doos and they should not be placed indiscriminately in the hands of people throughout this Province.

Sir, I, last year, drove out over the Trans Canada Highway and I looked on - is it Cochrane's Pond there or just across from that little provincial park?

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Paddy's Pond.

MR. ROWE: Paddy's Pond. Paddy's Pond, and Sir, it looked like a piece of raw meat in the woods in the middle of the summer with a bunch of ants going all over it. It was just incredible the number of ski-doo's that were on that lake that Sunday and there were several accidents. We had speed ski-doo's out there and we had an overcrowding of that particular lake and it certainly has to be policed because after all we are only protecting the public in this matter.

MR. NEARY: Against themselves.

MR. ROWE: Against themselves. I have a note down here, some ski-doo operators abuse themselves and the lives of others rather than the lives of animals. I think this certainly should be taken into consideration.

Sir, I can get into a long winded thesis on this whole business of destruction and alteration and endangering the ecology of our land with the use of all-terrain vehicles. I think - I happen to be, my scientific as it happens, is biology - and it is sufficient to say, I think we are all aware of the fact that any kind of a vehicle going through the bush in this Province, whether it is a ski-doo or an all-terrain vehicle can do damage to our strawberries, our bogs, our forests, our flowers and what have you, and once you disturb one link in that whole chain you are asking for ecological problems. There is no need for me to go into depth about it but obviously there is need for control in this area.

One last point, Sir, the honourable Member for Labrador North said that he has no objection to children using ski-doo's. Sir, I tend to agree with him. I think that if a kid can operate a ski-doo to the satisfaction of a responsible parent, he should be allowed to do so provided we have something like governors so that a little fellow or girl does not end up going sixty or seventy or eighty miles an hour, Sir. And the reason I say that is this: we allow our children as soon an age they can balance the machine, the bike, we allow our children in this Province and every other province to get on a two wheel vehicle, a balanced vehicle, a vehicle that he himself has to balance -

MR. NEARY: That is manually operated.

MR. ROWE: That is manually operated and can reach some pretty high speeds and absolutely no protection, driving on our highways and our streets. Now if we want to talk about dangerous vehicles in this Province, I submit, Sir, that the most dangerous vehicle in this Province or any other province is the bicycle—no protection, capable of reaching high speeds, has to be balanced by an individual, balanced by an individual as well as driven.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: A motor bike is the same.

MR. ROWE: A motor bike is the same way. The same thing can be said for an actual motor bike. It will be after a long argument before my kid ever buys a motorcycle, but these two-wheel vehicles, manually operated or operated by motor are the most dangerous things in this Province.

MR. NEARY: A motor bike is dangerous.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: It is not the most dangerous thing in the Province.

MR. ROWE: Oh! Yes, well, we will confine this to inanimate objects, Mr. Speaker.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROWE: Yes, that is even questionable. Mr. Speaker, I was distracted there and I think I was talking about, yes, the point that I was trying to make is this is that I am all for responsible use of ski-doo's by children. As a matter of fact I think using such a vehicle by children with responsible parents is good training in responsibility and use of such vehicles and good training towards the use of four wheel vehicles later on, providing it is done responsibly and we have certain controls.

So, Sir, I will end by saying that I cannot vote for this amendment, or bill which amends the act, not because it is bad but because I do not know whether it is going to be good. Because whether it is good or bad depends upon the regulations that are going to come as a result of it. I would respectfully ask, Sir, that the minister shelve this

particular bill until such time as we see the regulations, if we can get the regulations with this particular bill shelved. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Member for St. John's South.

MR. R. WELLS: Mr. Speaker, I have listened with great interest to the debate, and I may say I think it is an excellent debate. It shows that this House, on occasion when something that is of great concern to the citizens comes before the House, can deal very responsibly and very well with matters.

Now I think we would all have to agree that-

AN HON. MEMBER: The honourable member

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. WELLS: No, the honourable member is very well, thank you, but the honourable member appreciates your concern.

I think we would have to all agree, Mr. Speaker, that it is necessary now for us to do something about snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles in Newfoundland. These are vehicles that have increased rapidly in numbers as we all know, and you might say they are swarming over the countryside and obviously a bill was necessary. It is necessary that it be proclaimed and that regulations be made under it. Now in thinking about it, as has been said, I believe we have to divide the question into the area of recreational use on one side, and then the hunting and transportation use which the Hon. Member for Labrador North spoke about so well this morning.

Now in terms of recreational use, I think the bill sets out and gives the government and the minister the power to make the appropriate regulations. I have no hesitation in supporting it because the minister has said, and the Premier has said, that every consideration will be given to representations from all over the province, and from every side of the province, and every shade of opinion in order that these regulations can achieve the desired effect, and that is that people can use these vehicles for recreation, and they are excellent recreation at that. They can use them, but nonetheless that they can be used according to prescribed rules for the safety and convenience

of the rest of the community. After all that is our objective. It is just the same as the motor car in that respect, that it can be used for pleasure and for work but nonetheless that the remainder of the community can be protected against the irresponsible. That, I think, is inherent in this act and inherent and explicit in any regulations which would follow.

I would say, Mr. Speaker, that there is a problem with regard to Labrador. The member this morning, I think, touched on it very well and dealt with it very well and I am sure that the minister is very much aware of this. The sub-section of the clause which has concerned the member and concerned other members who have spoken refers to hunting, harassing, pursuing, worrying, injuring etc., or killing wildlife. I think, perhaps some of the difficulty may occur there because we are talking about things which can be essentially different. In other words, to chase, harass, pursue, worry, injure are all things which nobody would want to be done to animals, nobody in his right mind. Whereas hunting and killing of animals are things which when prescribed by law and regulated by law become lawful and become proper to do. I think that is where some of the difficulty is arising in minds, that whereas harassing animals everybody in his right mind would be against, under certain circumstances set out by law, to hunt or to kill is quite all right. I think that is where the difficulty is. I would like to hear the minister discuss that point because maybe the minister has something to suggest whereby this clause could be made more acceptable. But the principle, and that, of course, is what we are discussing now, Mr. Speaker, the principle of the bill is very clear, and the principle of the amendment is very clear. I think it has to be passed, this amendment and the bill, of course, has been passed, it is not yet proclaimed, Mr. Minister, I understand. It has to be proclaimed and the amendment has to be passed so that we can make a start on regulating these vehicles which in their recreational sense are unsettling to a lot of people because they are not regulated and they are, as I say, swarming all over the

place, and in the hunting and transportation sense also deserve to be regulated.

I think we have to be aware, anybody living in this province, that there has been a lot of poaching go on by use of these vehicles. There are also certain types of all-terrain vehicles that are damaging to the countryside, to the interior of the province where they are used. These things have to be regulated. Certainly there have been many cases come before courts which have involved the harassing and killing of animals contrary to law. This act I would hope and the regulations under it would prevent that sort of thing.

If I may make one small suggestion to the minister, Mr. Speaker: that is I have read, I think it is in one of the other provinces or several of the other provinces, that the tracks of the vehicles have like a licence number or some sort of number which is different in the case of each vehicle actually welded on to the track or attached somehow to the track permanently, so that if my snowmobile is No. 6472 wherever I go as the track turns it will leave that number in the snow. I think this would be a very useful thing because it would identify, and I know this happens, and it has happened in Newfoundland, the wildlife officers have found snowmobile tracks at the site of a kill, that is an illegal kill of caribou or moose, they have tracked them so far but there is nothing to identify the snowmobile that has been used. Whereas if this track each time it revolved printed a number in the snow it would be a great help in curbing illicit use and illegal use of snowmobiles for poaching and the like. So I recommend that suggestion to the minister for consideration, I believe it is done elsewhere in Canada.

So that all in all this is a very good act. It has been a quite short but nevertheless a very good debate. Perhaps the minister might have something to say on this Clause 2 which seems to be the only course of real worry. I must say the bill as a whole I would commend to members on the opposite side. I feel that with the assurance

assurances given by the minister and the Premier that the government will take into account all shades of opinion in formulating the regulations. I think this will fill a very definite need and it is a good bill worthy of passage, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I did not intend originally to get involved in this debate but I have been provoked by my honourable friend for St. John's South who does not look well these days, Mr. Speaker, does not look too well. I am very concerned about the honourable member's health. But, Sir, I am completely overcome by the number of honourable members who have participated in this debate. You never know, Sir, you never know when you introduce an amendment or a bill in this honourable House what sort of debate is going to follow. You never know what is going to occupy the minds of honourable members, Sir, but apparently this particular amendment, Mr. Speaker, has caught the attention and the imagination of honourable members on either side of the House and I do not think that I will be the last speaker in this debate. (I have the wrong bill in my hands now, Sir, I have Intergovernmental Affairs).

Mr. Speaker, all honourable members who have spoken in this debate to date have made some very valid points indeed. But I was rather fascinated by what my honourable friend, the Minister of Tourism had to say, the minister responsible for wildlife in this province. The minister said that the reason the regulations had not been made was because of the points that were made by my honourable colleague, the Member for Labrador North that the government were holding back. The government were holding back. Yes, I am going to say something that may interest the minister. The government were holding back, that they did not proceed to make regulations because of the very reasons given by my honourable colleague, the Member for Labrador North. That may or may not be the real reason, Sir, why we do not have a set of regulations before us in this province today. But I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that this matter has been neglected by the administration the same as a good many other matters have been neglected and that is the real reason

that we do not have the regulations before us today. And only, Mr. Speaker, because in the last few weeks since the snow came on the ground and the pressure has been put on the administration by people like the members of the Chamber of Commerce in Labrador West and various other groups throughout the province, Sir, and my colleague just passed me "The Daily News" here of Thursday, December 19 "Regulations must be enforced. Chamber would advise on snowmobile laws."

That is the real reason, Mr. Speaker, that this amendment is being brought before the honourable House at this time because we are into the season now when people are beginning to use their snowmobiles and their motorized snow vehicles. It is only because of the pressure that is being put on by various groups and various organizations across this province. If the House were not open at this particular time, Mr. Speaker, there would be no way they could get this amendment before the House. It just so happens, and it is a pure coincidence, Sir, that the pressure is being put on at a time the House is open. I would submit that this is the real reason, Sir, that the Minister of Transportation and Communications has brought this amendment before the House at this particular time and not the reason given by the Minister of Tourism, the minister responsible for wildlife in the province.

Mr. Speaker, in their haste to get this amendment before the House, I would say to Your Honour and to honourable members of the House that the amendment has been ill-conceived and that not enough of thought has been put into this amendment. It has been put together in a hurry by the legal draftsmen, Sir. I think if honourable members will study this amendment very carefully that they will realize that section 2, Sir, of this particular amendment is a very dangerous clause indeed. In my opinion, Sir, it should be eliminated altogether. I hope that the minister in third reading of this bill, "An Act To Amend The Motorized Snow Vehicles And All-Terrain Vehicles Act" will accept my recommendation and will take my advice and strike section 2 out of the bill completely. We were told this morning, Sir, by the honourable the Premier, who very rarely speaks in this honourable House but felt so strongly about this piece of legislation that he had to leap into the debate when my colleague from Labrador North made some very valid points concerning making the Labrador North and Labrador South special areas, "We will bring in a White Paper." Well, Sir, what the government should have done before they brought this amendment before the House was brought in their White Paper not after we passed the legislation, because it does not make any difference after we passed the bill, after

we passed the legislation, whether it is white paper or pink paper or brown paper or sand paper or any other paper. The damage is done then. The legislation is passed. It does not make any difference, Sir, what kind of paper the honourable the Premier brings into the House then, because it is too late, the damage is done. What do we do then? Do we have to come back and amend the legislation?

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. NEARY: It is too late, Mr. Speaker. My colleague says, shelve it. Well I am not an authority on parliamentary procedure, Sir, as we found out a day or so ago in this honourable House. Mr. Speaker, I was one of the people of this province who believed the honourable Premier and members on the government benches when they told us, Sir, that select committees of the House were going to be appointed to deal with matters of this nature. I believed that, Sir. I believed it to be true. I could not think, Mr. Speaker, of a more significant matter to submit to a select committee of this honourable House than this particular amendment that we have before us today. What has happened to the committees? There is where this matter should be considered, Sir. It should be sent to a select committee of the honourable House and let the committee deal with it and then bring their recommendations into the House. That is another matter, Sir. That is another unkept promise.

Here we are today, a few days before Christmas, trying to get the House closed, trying to rush through the business of the House, dealing with a bill, Sir, that in my opinion has been very poorly thought out, very ill-conceived. The only thing we can do with it now, Sir, that we have it before us - obviously the government are not going to agree to send it to a select committee of the House - the only thing that we can possibly hope to achieve (I do not know if we can do this in second reading or in third reading. I think we have to do it in third reading, Sir.) is to strike out section 2 of the bill altogether because, Mr. Speaker, can Your Honour visualize himself getting aboard his ski-doo on a Sunday afternoon, going off out in the woods, parking his ski-doo, going into the woods, in behind a bush somewhere to meet the call of nature and along comes the wildlife officer and says: "Ah, ah! I caught you harassing the animals."

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Mr. Speaker, how can you interpret - I do not have a legal mind, I am not a lawyer. Mr. Speaker, let us say that the Hon. Member for Labrador West, the minister who is introducing this bill, is going off -

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. NEARY: I am not talking about indecent exposure because all that honourable crowd over there -

AN HON. MEMBER: Big deal.

MR. NEARY: Sir, the Member for Labrador West, if he got aboard his ski-doo or his snowmobile -

AN HON. MEMBER: Ski-doo is just the trade mark.

MR. NEARY: Ah, ski-doo's, motorized snow vehicles. How is that? I am not trying to put in a commercial for ski-doo's. I am not the agent for them.

Let us say that the minister was riding along enjoying the countryside on a beautiful winter's day and all of a sudden the authorities swoop down on him and say, "Ah! You just passed by a herd of caribou and you harassed that herd of caribou and you are going to be taken into court."

AN HON. MEMBER: Worried them.

MR. NEARY: Or worried them. Worried! Mr. Speaker, can you not see the poor, old moose and the poor, old polar bears and caribous worried to death. They cannot sleep at nights. The minister is going off on his ski-doo worrying them. Why they will be old before they are thirty, Sir, worrying. How can you interpret it, Mr. Speaker? I would like to know. It is nonsensical, Sir. It is just ridiculous.

AN HON. MEMBER: Did you ever hear of a dog worrying?

MR. NEARY: Yes, my dog worries every night at 11:30 P.M. when he cannot get outdoors, Sir.

Listen to this, Mr. Speaker: "Every person who operates a vehicle to chase, hunt, harass, pursue, worry, injure or kill any wildlife." Well, Sir, I would hate to be the judge. What will we need, Sir? Will we need a group of psychiatrists going around the province giving us a certificate as to whether the poor, old moose or caribou are worried,

issuing tranquilizers. What nonsense, Sir. I am sure the minister must realize by now that this particular clause, Sir, is absolutely ridiculous, ludicrous and the bill should be amended. It should not be allowed to pass in its present state. I hope and I am very sincere about this, Sir, that the honourable minister at the appropriate time will move that section 2 be stricken from this bill altogether.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Social Services.

MR. MURPHY: Mr. Speaker, if I may, I will not be too long on this.

The Hon. Member for Bonavista North spent a few moments in the House, a few minutes, telling us about the moose and the caribou, how they were in the yards and along came a naughty, naughty machine, disturbed them, worried them to death, made them run in the snow, not six inches of snow now, we are not talking about six inches of snow but six feet of snow. These dirty machines, Sir, went and made these moose or wild

animals run and kill them. Now we have another member say: "It is an awful thing they cannot go in and worry a moose or chase them or anything else." Consistency where art thou? That is all I say. I rose to speak and I can understand some of the members Sir, in this House especially the Members for Labrador, we know that it is a work vehicle, the ski-doo we call them, or whatever the machines are. They are for work. But can anybody see, Sir, in all sincerity, you in a motor car or a jeep, leave the road in any part of Newfoundland, on the island, and drive across the country in a jeep following a moose or anything else? I think this is for protection and everybody knows we can make a great issue of it, but everybody knows, Sir, that a man who wants to go hunting can go hunting.

You are not allowed to shoot from a moving vehicle, you are not allowed to shoot game of any kind from a vehicle from the road, you are not allowed to hunt within a certain area of a road. When you are out in a wilderness area like in Labrador, where is the road and where do you get out of the vehicle to hunt game? I think it has to be established - as the honourable Member for Bell Island just said, you can stop behind a tree whether it is to pick strawberries or whatever you are doing - but if a guy is carrying a twelve gauge or a .303 rifle certainly heavens, he did not drive into the woods to get behind a tree for any other purpose, you know, carrying a .303 rifle he has the rifle for something. And it is for hunting.

This is the only way I see it: if I go out for a run on a ski-doo, Sir, and I do not have a catapult or a bow and arrow or a gun, how can I be charged with hunting game? My worry of this is, and why I am so happy, that some control will be made and I will do it from a personal point of view - my \$100,000 estate with the swimming pool and the champagne just fourteen miles from town at Topsail Pond, the year before last I received a call saying that ski-doods were using my garden up there for a sort of runway. As we know, we put fences around our property. In summertime these are effective, but when the snow builds up a fence is no longer

effective to protect your property. As it happened, at that particular time, Sir, my lawn was in an exposed area and there was no snow on that part of the lawn that I had worked pretty hard personally to build up. I went up there and I asked what the trouble was and I was told that there had been three or four ski-doo's there. I asked if there was any identification and was told no there was no licence plates nor anything on them. They had a track dug in my lawn, Sir, about eight inches deep. They were using this for a takeoff. That cost me a lot of dollars to replace and that is why I feel, Sir, - in addition to that I had planted two trees that took seven or eight years to come to any maturity. The branches had been snapped off by these same irresponsible people who use private property for, I do not know what you would call it, you could call it drag racing in a sense and everything else. I feel, Sir, that it is time with the great growth, I

I feel, Sir, that it is time with the great growth - I just forget the number of vehicles that was quoted but many thousands I believe are in the province today, that there has to be some control of this thing, Sir, to protect peoples' property. So I say, you can build a fence and in summertime it is a warning to people to keep out but when snow banks up against it there is no fence there and they drive all over the property, they destroy the few ornamental trees you try to get around your place.

Again no one, but no one is saying that there cannot be exceptions, Sir. It has been read out by the Member for Bonavista South, the regulation, and under (24) the authority is there to exempt any area of the province or any vehicle or class or description of vehicles from any or all of the provisions of this act. Is that not plain enough? Have they done it? The act as yet has not been proclaimed as far as I know to do this with, eh! So, what is the problem?

In Labrador or on the Straits and I agree perfectly with the Member for St. Barbe North, we talk about Coastal Labrador. What is the difference between the two areas? Fourteen miles, right? The same conditions prevail in the Straits Settlements, wherever you go along the Labrador side or along the St. Barbe side the same conditions

prevail.

AN HON. MEMBER: It is a long swim.

MR. MURPHY: It is a long swim but it is only four minutes ride in an aeroplane today, or just about, eh? Let us face it, I am not talking about distance or travelling but the same conditions prevail. We know, Sir, and I know, I have been in Goose Bay many times and the vehicles are parked outside the doors and in driveways the same as cars. People use them. Every one of these vehicles are not used for hauling wood nor for shooting game for food. We all know this. This is a great play on people's sympathies to say this, that and the other thing, but it does not apply in all cases, Sir, and that is why up to the time of these vehicles nature itself and the elements protected most game.

We got in there and I can go back many years, but the only way I could get up in the woods was to ski in the woods or some people used snowshoes in these days or as they do in Labrador, we had great dog-teams. I remember the year before last at the Winter Carnival down there I do not think we could get two dog-teams at the time to go into the dog-team race, which is perhaps something that is happening in the world today. We are getting a bit more modern but, Sir, unless and until someone puts some restrictions or some control on these vehicles, I am afraid, I am afraid that the natural protection that the wild animals had, our wildlife, is no longer there. The environment itself, Sir, the trees, whatever you want to call it, the blueberry bushes or anything else, with these machines going all over the place, it is just going to be too late when someone cries out; "Look! It is gone." Let us start now, Sir. I see no fear in this world today or in this honourable House of anything happening with this act. It is designed to cure a problem that is becoming very, very serious, Sir, and I will gladly support the bill one hundred percent.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable the Member for Hermitage:

MR. SIMMONS: Just a word or two, Mr. Speaker, before the minister closes the debate. I believe it is agreed that most of the points have certainly been made. I shall attempt not to repeat points that have been made but there are a couple of issues that concern me on

this matter which I gather from a cursory glance at the legislation, the 1973 Act, I gather the concerns that I want to raise are not taken care of there. Again I am quite aware that there is provision for regulations under the legislation and I mention this in the hope that the minister might take these points under advisement with a view to incorporating these concerns in regulations.

I gather from, as I say, just a cursory glance at the legislation that there is nothing here to restrict the operation of vehicles in close proximity to residences. This is a matter of concern to a lot of people, particularly people who live on the periphery of towns or live out in the country during the winter months and have their privacy invaded not only in terms of the noise but also in another real way, particularly if the property is not being supervised as in the case of the example quoted by the Minister of Social Services. You cannot build a fence high enough, I suppose, to contain your property during the winter to prevent access by vehicles.

There is a certain, I do not know if it is a certain psychology but there is a certain attitude of a lot of people who operate these vehicles, that somehow the whole world is their domain and many of them have no particular regard for private property or else they cannot discern what is private property because there are no fences and that kind of thing. But for whatever reason it appears to me now that in the absence of a provision in the act or in the absence of appropriate regulations a lot of people in this country operating those vehicles, and I am addressing myself, Mr. Speaker, to their recreational use - I believe my colleague from Labrador and others who are more qualified to do so have addressed themselves to the other use of these vehicles, the work use, if I may call it such - but I am talking particularly about the recreational use of these vehicles as that use applies, particularly on the island.

It seems to me that a lot of people who operate those vehicles for recreational purposes either appear to have or think they have some kind of a licence to trespass on private property, and some

kind of a licence to do wilful damage to private property. I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that regulations will take this particular concern into account. Just to sum up that aspect of what I want to say, there ought to be some kind of restriction in terms of how close people can operate these vehicles to other persons' houses, particularly. There ought to be some particular penalties provided for people who operate them without permission on other's private property.

I believe my colleague, the Member for St. Barbe North or some other person on this side has mentioned the terrible problem created by noise levels. Two aspects of this: First of all a lot of people in their own homes are being disturbed by operators going across their front lawns late at night and that kind of thing, but there is another concern too, the case of protecting the public against itself.

I am told that there is danger of permanent hearing impairment here in terms of the noise levels of some of these vehicles. Perhaps the time has come for a restriction as to the noise level, the number of decibels of sound I suppose, the noise level of the vehicles involved.

Mr. Speaker, I think the crucial thing that needs to be said here today is that we can spend all the time we want talking about new legislation, amending existing legislation. You can have all the enabling legislation you want on the books, if the department and government will not take the initiative, initiative provided in the legislation to draft the regulations, then all of it is just a waste of time and paper. There are no regulations, Mr. Speaker, and I gather by rumour or otherwise, I heard somewhere today, that someone in this House has indicated on behalf of government it is going to be another year before the regulations are ready. I mean this is madness, Mr. Speaker, sheer madness. If, Mr. Speaker, there have been some accidents already, but if there gets to be a serious accident, a real tragedy such as the one a couple of years ago in Quebec where one of the ministers of the Crown, his wife and three children, of the five I think three or four of them were involved fatally in an accident, because of the absence, I understand, of civil regulation at that particular time.

But whatever the reason, my point is insofar as it applies here is this, that if this winter or at some point before government gets around to drafting these regulations, which, Mr. Speaker, should not be that difficult to draft since the enabling legislation is here, this amendment my colleagues addressed themselves to it but in the overall provision of the enabling legislation this amendment does not alter the essence of much of what is already in the legislation and I do not think this amendment is what has delayed the regulations.

Mr. Speaker, I believe some priority ought to be given to the matter of these regulations because one of those days there is going to

be a serious accident and if and when it comes, and God forbid I hope it does not come, but when it comes I believe the minister and his department should be aware now that a large amount of the responsibility will rest with them for not having given this matter of regulations the priority that it deserves.

Another danger, to put it another way, another danger of the absence of regulations, even though there is legislation on the books and some of the more responsible citizens are aware of it, are those of us who are close to it are aware of it, the snowmobile dealers and distributors are aware of it, the average fellow operating a snowmobile is not aware of the existence of the legislation even. And if he were there is no particular regulation to restrict his activity. I could draw an example as did the Minister of Social Services where I, too, am involved in a property in the country that is not attended at all times and you go there on occasion and you find that all you know is that there are tracks in the snow and you know that some snowmobile has been around. You do not know who. You have no way of relating it to or connecting with any individual. Why? Just because there is no regulation which would require that operator to identify himself with his tracks by means of some kind of a number that becomes imprinted in the snow as he goes over the snow. With the speed of these vehicles, Mr. Speaker, it is very, very difficult to apprehend or to accost someone who is out to do some willful damage to property.

Mr. Speaker, I think the point I really want to make this afternoon is the urgency of getting some regulations and getting them properly policed in the interest of safety and in the interest of protecting private property.

AN HON. MEMBER: And get them enforced.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes and get them enforced.

MR. SPEAKER (MR. STAGG): If the minister speaks now he closes the debate.

MR. ROUSSEAU: Mr. Speaker, to close the debate I would like to say something. It has been a long while since I have been in the House for such a constructive debate as ensued in a period as occurred during the day.

The tone has been certainly one that we have not seen on many days previous in the House and I have listened attentively to all suggestions by honourable members and I would like to make a few points before I go about answering the questions.

I thought I made myself clear this morning, if I did not I would like to say it again, that I am aware and perhaps more so than most people would think because I would think that my District of Labrador West would have the most snow vehicles in the province and probably for a longer period of time. Because this is not a new thing to Labrador West. They have been up there now for years as well as the rest of Labrador. I only say that because there is a more concentrated population there. So I am well aware of ski-doo's and I am well aware of the points I made this morning about their use for recreation and pleasure or for hunting or for a means of livelihood or for a means of transportation. So I can assure honourable members who brought these points up today that I am aware of them. I thought I made it clear this morning that I was and certainly these considerations will be given in any ensuing action by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council on the recommendation of our department. So there is no question about that.

I can also assure honourable members that having the most number of vehicles in my district that I am very sensitive to the need for snowmobile regulations and the type of regulations especially in a recreation pleasure area with some hunting, of course, but mostly recreation pleasure area. While I am aware that my two colleagues from the other two districts of Labrador, the different use of snowmobiles on a greater scale in that area.

First of all in answering the questions this morning that we were doing something for one area and taking away from another area, as the honourable member for Labrador North suggested, I think what happened this morning at the beginning, probably, we took the amendment out of context and did not relate it to the actual bill that was passed previously. Because in that there are a couple of sections which have already been read in which

the Lieutenant-Governor in Council may exempt any area in the province, or any vehicle or class or description of vehicles from any or all of the provisions of this act.

So there are conditions whereby different areas of the province can be treated differently in respect to any given vehicle or any different area of the province, so it is not necessary that any regulation would cover the whole province. I think that question has been made. Now I can stand here and spend ten minutes going through an explanation of it but I say that that is there for the discretion of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council so that should not be a concern of honourable members.

We mentioned the age sixteen, I believe, this morning was mentioned and so on and so forth. The original act states sixteen unless otherwise prescribed by regulations. But it also states that it can, the act states anyway, that it cannot be anybody under the age of twelve. In other words, the minimum by enactment of this law that a person can operate a snowmobile or an all-terrain vehicle would be twelve years old. We are thinking in the area of twelve or thirteen actually in respect of the regulations. But where it is not covered in the regulations, the age would be sixteen. So the age is not necessarily sixteen. It is sixteen unless covered otherwise by the regulations and it is our intention to look into that.

I could say at the beginning that it is our intention in committee to drop section 2 of the act.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. ROUSSEAU: I want to do so in time for the honourable the Member for Bell Island, whose advice I am taking, so he can call a press conference, announce it to the whole province. Anyway, what government's intentions

in respect to that section will be reintroduced in the coming session of the House. Because our intention is to protect wildlife but it is not to absolutely forbid hunting. That was not the intention, it is in the drafting. The problem is a legal one which we have consulted our learned colleagues on this side, who are many and varied, is that, this section (?) cannot be covered by the regulations. In other words, it is a law and once that law is in actually, I presume if a man took a ski-doo at home and went to the woods to his cabin and then went out hunting it would be illegal because he would be using a ski-doo to go to hunt. And that is not the intention of the law.

AN HON. MEMBER: It is the wording.

MR. ROUSSEAU: Pardon?

AN HON. MEMBER: It is the wording of it.

MR. ROUSSEAU: It is the wording, so as a matter of policy we certainly intend to make a provision to cover this sort of thing in the act, but that will have to be done in the next session. But because of the fact now that it cannot be covered by the regulations, which we thought it could be, on closer reading, then we will move on second reading that this be dropped from the act and it will be reintroduced in the next session to provide the intent of what we want which is not the banning of absolute hunting. That was never the intent at the beginning.

So the magnanimity of the government is shown and from that

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. ROUSSEAU: We do not do that, you have to take our word when the Premier stands up and makes a commitment, and when I stand up and make a commitment if honourable members wish to vote against it that is their prerogative but I make certain commitments and the Premier does, you can be guaranteed...

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. ROUSSEAU: This amendment will be taken out. It will be reintroduced, though, under the intent of what we want in the future, but not to permit to prohibit anybody from absolute hunting. That is not the intention.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. ROUSSEAU: Okay! So that, in other words, will then

cover it in the regulations where in a certain area, if necessary, it could be permitted to hunt or where certain conditions could be set up.

To answer the honourable Member for Bonavista North, who is not around, it does not apply to all areas of the province. The regulations can be made in such a way as to preclude any type of vehicle or any area of the province. So what he suggests is in isolation from the actual bill itself. So there are no concerns there.

I got a great kick out of the honourable Member for Bonavista North. He is talking about the wonderful piece of legislation that it is and then he wants me to withdraw it. So I could not follow that but, I think, I could say unequivocally with the support of all my colleagues that this will not be withdrawn. The point of consulting individuals and groups on this, this has already been done in the province and it is certainly our intention to do so. I will talk later on that when I get to the comments of the Member for St. Barbe North, probably. So there is no worry for the Member for Bonavista North that this will apply universally and unequivocally to all vehicles all sorts of all-terrain vehicles and all areas of the province at one time. The power is there for the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council to take care of that.

I welcome the support of my the Member for Labrador South, and with this amendment, as I assume, that he will be satisfied to support the bill.

My colleague for Bonavista North mentioned about the age and the regulations adaptable.

AN HON. MEMBER: Bonavista South.

MR. ROUSSEAU: Bonavista South, I am sorry. The age and the regulations adaptable to all parts of the province. I think both of these are answered now. Unless otherwise specified at sixteen, but the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council may order twelve or over.

HON. MEMBERS: Carried! Carried!

MR. ROUSSEAU: Carried?

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROUSSEAU: Okay, I with great pleasure, and this wonderful piece of legislation - oh there are a lot of points here - but we will take these points into consideration when we are making up the regulations. So I have great pleasure, Sir, in sitting down at the unequivocally and universal wish of my colleagues here and all members of the House and wish everybody, too, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

On motion a bill, "An Act To Amend The Motorized Snow Vehicles and All-Terrain Vehicles Act," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House now, by leave.

On motion that the House resolved itself into Committee of the Whole on the said bill, Mr. Speaker left the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! Bill No. 121

A bill, An Act To Amend The Motorized Snow Vehicles and All-terrain Vehicles."

On motion Clause (1) carried.

MR. W. W. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I move the amendment of Clause (2) and the consequent renumbering of (3) and (4) as (2) and (3).

On motion amendment carried.

On motion Clause (2) carried.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shall Clause (3) carry?

MR. HICKMAN: Clause (3) is now Clause (2).

Motion that the committee report having passed the bill with amendment, carried.

On motion that the committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again, Mr. Speaker returned to the Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Stagg): Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole have considered the matters to them referred and have asked me to report having passed bill No. (121) with amendment and ask leave to sit again.

On motion report received and adopted.

On motion amendments read a first time and second time, bills ordered read a third time by leave.

On motion that the following bill be read a third time ordered passed and title be as on the Order Paper.

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Motorized Snow Vehicles And All-Terrain Vehicles Act.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, this concludes the proceedings for this phase of the transaction. His Honour the Lieutenant Governor is on his way in and will be in in a few minutes time to give assent to the measures that have been passed in this short session. I would suggest a short adjournment, but before so doing, I would like to thank the House, particularly today, I think the tone of the debate today was evident of the way the House should really be carried on, and it was a really good effort today. In my usual affable style I would like to extend to the members of the opposition, including the Acting Leader of the Official Opposition and the Leader of the Unofficial Opposition and all members of the House for that matter, and everybody connected with the House best wishes for the Season.

Now perhaps, Mr. Speaker, I know the Acting Leader of the Opposition will reveal himself in a moment, and probably wish to respond to it, whomever the Acting Leader may be. We shall hold our breaths in anxious anticipation to see which one of the five gentlemen over there will arise. But shortly thereafter we can perhaps break in a while to just wait for His Honour.

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Member for Bell Island.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, we are all equal on this side of the House, Sir, but I do want to echo the sentiments of my learned friend the Minister without Portfolio, Sir, in expressing sincere greetings and best wishes to all

the members of the House of Assembly and their families at this time of the year. On behalf of the Leader of the Opposition and my colleagues on this side of the House, I hope that they have a very happy Christmas, Sir, and a bright and prosperous New Year. In expressing greetings, Sir, I would like to, on behalf of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, express our best wishes at this time of the year to all the citizens of our province. If I have a sincere wish, Sir, for 1975, my sincerest wish would be that in the new session of the House of Assembly that we can roll up our sleeves and get down to work and try to find solutions to these destructive monsters that we have in our society today, namely, the high cost of living, record unemployment, vandalism, housing shortages and - what was the other one?

AN HON. MEMBER: The government.

MR. NEARY: No, Sir, not the government.

Sir, that would be sufficient. If we can tackle these problems in the New Year, Sir, I would say that ~~that~~ would be very worthwhile that this House will be then getting back to doing something about the real needs of the ordinary people of this province.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to make these few remarks and I do want to especially express sincere wishes for a happy Christmas and a bright and prosperous New Year to Your Honour and to the Deputy Speaker of the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. SPEAKER: I shall now leave the Chair for a few minutes until His Honour arrives.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Mr. Speaker, His Honour the Lieutenant Governor has arrived.

MR. SPEAKER: Admit His Honour the Lieutenant Governor.

MR. SPEAKER: May it please Your Honour the General Assembly of the Province has at its present session passed certain bills to which in the name and on behalf of the General Assembly, I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

A bill, "An Act Respecting The Licensing Of Trust Companies And Loan Companies."

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Condominium Act."

A Bill, "An Act To Amend The Motorized Snow Vehicles And All-Terrain Vehicles Act."

A bill, "An Act Respecting The Newfoundland Medical Association And Governing The Practise Of Medicine In The Province."

A bill, "An Act To Amend The House of Assembly Act."

A bill, "An Act Further To Amend The Department Of Health Act."

A bill, "An Act Further To Amend The Securities Act."

A bill, "An Act Further To Amend The Emergency Measures Act."

A bill, "An Act Further To Amend The Attachment Of Wages Act."

A bill, "An Act Further To Amend The Commissioners For Oaths Act."

A bill, "An Act To Provide A Pension For The Last President Of The Newfoundland Federation Of Fishermen And For Other Purposes."

A bill, "An Act Further To Amend The Income Tax Act."

A bill, "An Act Further To Amend The Financial Administration Act, 1973."

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Increase Of Pensions Act, 1974."

A bill, "An Act Further To Amend The Children Of Unmarried Parents Act, 1972."

A bill, "An Act Further To Amend The Adoption Of Children Act, 1972."

A bill, "An Act Further To Amend The Child Welfare Act, 1972."

A bill, "An Act Further To Amend The Social Assistance Act, 1971."

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Department Of Social Services Act, 1973."

A bill, "An Act Further To Amend The Automobile Insurance Act."

A bill, "An Act Further To Amend The Newfoundland Human Rights Code."

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Historic Objects, Sites And Records Act, 1973."

A bill, "An Act Further To Amend The Labour Relations Act."

HONOURABLE GORDON A. WINTER (Lieutenant Governor): In Her Majesty's name I assent to these bills.

MR. MARSHALL: Before I put the formal notice of adjournment, the Hon. Premier would just like to say a few words.

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Premier.

MR. MOORES: Mr. Speaker, I understand that we are a little bit late for this particular gesture, but I would hope not, seeing as there are still three or four days to go, and I would like to sincerely wish a Merry Christmas to the members of the Opposition, to the press, to all the people on the staff, your staff, Sir, in this House and hope that your wishes for the New Year will be availed of, that they will come true, that you will have a good New Year, that all these people will have a Merry Christmas and sincere wishes are certainly expressed by myself at this time.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Premier was not here when we exchanged greetings before so I want to say that on behalf of my colleagues and the Leader of the Opposition, we want to express our sincere best wishes

to the Hon. Premier and his good wife during this season of the year. I sincerely hope, Mr. Speaker, that we will all be here this time next year.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, by way of explanation, the formal notice of adjournment that I am going to give now puts the next sitting of this session over to Thursday, February 27 but that is just procedural because it is the intention of the government to call the House together sometime earlier in the New Year. It is necessary to have a certain amount of flexibility and that is why I am making the formal motion. Even though February 27 is mentioned, it should not cause any amount of confusion and if honourable members would like to know, our present intention is to call the House together earlier than that.

Mr. Speaker, I move that this House when it adjourns today stand adjourned until Thursday, February 27, 1975 at 3:00 P.M. provided always that if it appears to the satisfaction of Mr. Speaker or in his absence from the province, the Chairman of Committees, after consultation with Her Majesty's Government, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time than the adjournment, Mr. Speaker or in his absence, the Chairman of Committees, may give notice that he is so satisfied and there upon the House shall meet at times stated by such notice and shall transact its business as if it had been duly adjourned to that time.

MR. SPEAKER: It is moved and seconded that the House do now adjourn until tomorrow Thursday, February 27, 1975. Those in favour "aye," those against "nay." Carried.

I do now leave the Chair until tomorrow Thursday, February 27, 1975.