

Mr. Valcourt: Oh, yes, but you see this is a Grit, both sides of the mouth, but it does not work. People will not buy it. Atlantic Canada has received more attention from this Government, not the lip service they were used to from the Grits. We have been given the tools and provided that Atlantic Canadians want to pull together things will happen. Instead of being a bunch of pessimists and prophets of doom and gloom, they should come up with positive recommendations and work positively in their communities and we will all be better for it.

Mr. Harb: Mr. Speaker, I was having a coffee and watching the speaker on the television screen. It made me jump about two and a half feet to see the level of discussion going down that low. This is not an issue of Liberals against Tories or NDP against Tories. This is not an issue of the past versus the present or the future. This is an issue of Canadian people, some of whom are suffering due to disparity, some of whom are looking for some sort of an initiative on the part of the Government.

I have to commend the Hon. Minister for his initiative and his commitment to Atlantic Canada. However, I have to deplore some of the statements the Hon. Member made passing on the blame to the Liberal Party of Canada of 1980s, 1981s, 1982s and 1983s. This is not an issue of free trade versus the issue of non-free trade. This is an issue of great importance. That is why this motion was brought to the attention of the House so we can debate it and discuss it on a non-partisan basis. The unfortunate thing is that there are people who at every opportunity like to score points by passing on the blame to the Liberals or to the former government. I do not approve of that. I do not think this is the way we should be addressing this particular issue.

I wish that the Hon. Member could have spent five minutes attacking past government actions and then spent another 15 minutes addressing the issue at hand. I hoped he would try to make suggestions on how we can deal with the issue of higher employment in Newfoundland and other parts of the country, of how we can encourage economic development in those parts of the country and how we can get people back to work rather than shouting from one end of his speech to the next. This is very unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, and I hope that

Supply

after I sit down that the tone of the discussion will change so that we can provide alternatives, so we can state facts.

If we are not doing enough for the Government, fine. If the people of Atlantic Canada say that we are not doing enough, then let us say, that we are going to do more. Let us acknowledge the fact. If Atlantic Canada is happy about what is taking place, then why would Hon. Members on this side of the House stand up in order to ask the Government to do more? Why would someone from another part of Canada where his or her territories are prospering not bring in a motion to the House?

Obviously we as an Opposition have a role to play. That is, every time we see certain parts of this country not prospering, not flourishing, and are passing through a difficult time, it is our mandate as an Opposition to bring the issue to the attention of the House. It is the responsibility of the Minister to say to the House what he is planning to do. Members from all sides of the House should stand up on a non-partisan basis and either defend the action of the Government or at least make a statement in order to recognize what is taking place.

We have to stop passing on the blame. We have to start living in the future and present rather than the past. If you look at the actions of the Conservative Government in the 1900s and thereafter, or the Liberal Government in the 1930s and thereafter, we could spend days, hours and years talking about the past. We have a responsibility and a mandate as Members of Parliament to start living in the present and move on toward the future. When we recognize a certain part of this land passing through a difficult time, it is our responsibility to stand up and be counted whether we are Tories, Liberals or NDP.

It broke my heart, Mr. Speaker, when I was reading in the paper that there is a quota now limiting the number of fishermen who can go out and fish. It broke my heart when I realized this is a part of this country where they have to depend on one single industry in order to survive. It is our responsibility as parliamentarians to provide them with alternatives, to start other industries, to encourage economic growth. Then when certain parts of their industry are not doing so well, they can move to other industries and do well elsewhere.