

sovereignty and independence is inviolate and indivisible. Members on all sides of the House unanimously agree with that principle, even if we may disagree about how to uphold it.

In this case, our disagreement concerns the conduct of international negotiations. While we may disagree on how they are conducted, we do not disagree with their purpose. Our motion simply states that the Government has made a mistake. It should not bargain away the well-being of its own people and the integrity of its own territory in negotiations with other nations.

Perhaps if we were at war or were under extreme pressure such negotiations may be acceptable, but we are dealing with a power that has been friendly for years and allowing it to encroach upon our national integrity and nationhood by providing it with extra quantities of our resources that belong to Canadians. That is why my leader moved this motion, your acceptance of which we appreciate, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker has ruled that this matter is serious enough that the House should take it into consideration and the Government should recognize its importance. The intent of the motion is to suggest that the Government has bargained mistakenly and should reconsider what it has done. Surely the Government should have learned something from its experience with our neighbour to the south during the past 18 months. There will be ample opportunity to discuss those free trade negotiations in the future, but the issue here is the principle of our integrity and sovereignty which all Canadians support.

We are not attempting to criticize any Hon. Member in the Government, but we sincerely felt compelled in the name of sovereignty to move this motion so that the Government would reconsider the issue. After listening to the Hon. Member for Bonavista—Trinity—Conception and the Hon. Minister of Transport, I believe they share that concern. It will be to the Government's credit if it reassesses its action and decides that it was mistaken.

Before the Government proceeds further with this agreement, which has only been initialled, it should listen not only to some of its own members, but to the fishermen and their unions, and the fish plant owners and operators and some premiers. I do not suggest for a moment, however, that the premiers are 100 per cent correct. Surely there is sufficient ground to reconsider reopening negotiations with France.

Mr. Speaker: I thank the Hon. Member for his intervention. The Hon. Member for Mission—Port Moody (Mr. St. Germain).

Mr. Gerry St. Germain (Mission—Port Moody): Mr. Speaker, let me begin by saying that those of us who come from constituencies with fishermen who earn their livelihood from the ocean understand what we are facing here tonight.

Let me also say a few words about Newfoundland members of our Party and their concern, dedication and devotion toward their province. I speak of the Hon. Minister of Transport (Mr.

Crosbie) who so eloquently put forward the case of Newfoundlanders as it really is. He did not preach fear or use scare tactics, but represented the people of Newfoundland and Canada as he has done so well for so many years.

● (2420)

The Hon. Member for Burin—St. George's (Mr. Price) rose in this House tonight to speak to the plight of those Newfoundlanders who live along the southern part of Newfoundland and who are so impacted by any adjustments made to the Newfoundland fishery. He is concerned, and has a right to be, and he spoke well in this House. He represented Newfoundland proudly.

The Hon. Member for Bonavista—Trinity—Conception (Mr. Johnson) also rose in the House to represent his riding. I was present at a meeting today when he spoke of the ocean and of fishing and of the people of Newfoundland. He is a captain by profession, a man who has lived on the ocean from which he has sought his livelihood.

Mr. Speaker: A skipper.

Mr. St. Germain: A skipper, as you point out, Mr. Speaker. He is a man who understands every problem related to fisheries which affect Newfoundland and other parts of this country. As the Hon. Member pointed out, there is not a family in Newfoundland which has not lost a son, a father or a friend to the ocean. Yet they continue to eke out their existence from the ocean.

Those who spoke before me are very well qualified. They put forward the case of Newfoundland better than anyone could. As I pointed out earlier, Mr. Speaker, they did not rise in this House to preach fear, scare tactics or to maliciously attack. They are not fearmongers. They are very, very concerned Members of Parliament from Newfoundland.

The New Democratic Party, the Socialist Party, moved the motion for debate. Its Leader rose in this House and advocated armed insurrection against a friendly nation. He said we may have to resort to a military resolution. The Hon. Member for Regina West (Mr. Benjamin) called it a friendly power. I do not believe that Canadians, regardless of whether they are from British Columbia, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, or wherever, would advocate the use of arms. That is the type of rhetoric we have heard here tonight. It is insincerity. It is not that which Canadians want. We are looking at a situation in which our Government has faced the fact that the quotas and very livelihood of some Newfoundland people has been reduced because of overfishing in the oceans which surround them. That is unacceptable. There has to be a resolve. There has to be a method of controlling the fisheries so that we as Newfoundlanders, Nova Scotians and Prince Edward Islanders—we as Canadians—can have first right to the fisheries and do not have to cut back our quotas or allocations. That is the reason it is so important we try to establish some form of agreement with the country of France in dealing with this very important issue.