

Government Orders

this country that has done more for the province of Newfoundland than this government.

Those are the figures that he has to use when he stands on his feet. I think this maze of figures that he steps through and the confusing way in which he delivers them is not portraying an accurate picture at all.

Mr. Simmons: Mr. Speaker, I used to be a teacher before I became an actor and I thank the gentleman. I say to the gentleman from Carleton—Charlotte that we learned to tailor the message to the audience so I will try it one more time for that particular audience. I will make it very simple.

What I said, and I apologize to him if it was confusing, was that in the 10-year period from fiscal 1986–87 to 1995–96, Newfoundland will be down by \$845 million in payments for EPF, lower than it would have been if the government had not changed the act with the 1986 budget. That is what I said.

I then amended that with the \$31 million that the government is putting back in this year. I later said that it is now of the order of \$800 million or \$820 million or something like that. I am sure he can do that bit of subtraction.

Now he says that the transfer payments represent 44 per cent of the budget. He is absolutely right on that. What he did not say is that it is down from 48 per cent. Before this government became involved it was 48 per cent of the provincial budget.

Per cents aside, you heard the key phrase: Newfoundland is getting from other taxpayers. Now let us listen to that phrase. Is the member telling us that the taxpayers in Newfoundland do not pay federal income taxes and all the other taxes? Does he not know that the Government of Canada pot is in respect of all the taxpayers in Canada and some of that 44 per cent is out of the pockets of Newfoundlanders? Of course it is. This suggestion that somehow the other nine are keeping us on pogeys all the time, I resent that. It is the old welfare argument that says take it but be quiet about it.

Why are many of my fellow countrymen in Newfoundland on UI these days? Why are they out there? Because the government of which this member is a supporter has allowed the Spanish and the Portuguese to pillage the stocks. The overfishing started in the first fishing season after this government took office. There was no overfish-

ing up to and including 1984. None, not one fish. Starting in 1985 the European Community took eight times their quota. In 1986 it took 12 times their quota.

The French had not overfished until 1984. In 1985 they took three times their quota, in 1986 they took three times their quota and the pillaging has gone on and not a peep, not a word from that crowd over there. Why are thousands of my fishermen in Burin—St. George's drawing UI? Because they cannot fish. Why? Because they are lazy? No, because that man over there and his clique have allowed the Spanish and Portuguese to pillage our way of life and our fish stocks. Therefore, they have to stay home, sit on the wharf instead of going out to fish, which is what they would like to do.

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair): Mr. Speaker, I listened with considerable interest to what I thought was a report of the critic on the Liberal member's acting ability.

I was impressed with the hon. Conservative member's ability to extend for almost infinite time so little in a question. He must have taken lessons from the Prime Minister.

My question to the hon. member is simply this. Sometimes we talk about the impact of cutbacks on EPF and other transfer payments somewhat in the abstract. The hon. member has done a very good job of giving some concrete images to the policies of this government and how they have affected the fishers of Newfoundland.

I would be interested in having some specificity lent to the impact on post-secondary education in Newfoundland as a result of the cutbacks in the Established Programs Financing that this government has perpetrated since it came into office. Perhaps the hon. member could extend that to cover the whole of the \$11 billion that have been cut since 1982–83.

Mr. Simmons: I thank my friend from Windsor—St. Clair for the question about post-secondary education. I was just beginning to get into the mood of that subject when unfortunately my time ran out.

One of the amazing things about Newfoundland over the last two, three or four decades is the numbers of people as a percentage of total population and in absolute numbers that went to university. I remember when I went to Memorial University, the one university in Newfoundland, there were about 1,100 students there.