

position of any particular kind. He has still managed not to state a position. He was just given an opportunity in the House. Let the record show that he has no position on this issue.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. An opportunity was also given to the hon. parliamentary secretary to confine his remarks to the motion.

Mr. Crosbie: Stop trying to overtake your cabinet colleague. You are not getting anywhere, Roger. Rompkey is firmly attached to the cabinet table.

Mr. Simmons: He is doing very well. The Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Rompkey) is doing very well despite the vicious attack on him this afternoon by the hon. member for St. John's West.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Simmons: I quite agree that it is difficult to do two things at one time.

Mr. Waddell: You are doing it.

Mr. Simmons: It is difficult to address oneself to this bill and to respond at the same time to the irrelevancies raised by the hon. member for St. John's West. If I erred in that respect I am genuinely sorry. I was attempting to respond to some of the issues he raised, but they were so far off the subject at hand that in the process I got fairly far afield in my response. One mistake the hon. member for St. John's West makes repeatedly—

Mr. Waddell: This is not the Newfoundland legislature.

Mr. Taylor: Keep trying, you will get a seat in the Senate.

Mr. Simmons: Which is more than you can hope for; the cutoff is 75.

Mr. Crosbie: Pitfield for Newfoundland!

Mr. Simmons: Hon. members opposite are in an euphoric mood. None of their leaders is here today, so they can afford to be somewhat euphoric.

Mr. Nystrom: Crosbie is here.

An hon. Member: That is what he said, that there are no leaders over there.

Mr. Simmons: When I am not praying that the present leader will continue as leader, I pray that the hon. member for St. John's West will be the leader because he would be the second best thing for us on this side.

Mr. Crosbie: Thanks for the publicity.

Mr. Simmons: One of the mistakes the hon. member for St. John's West often makes—and he made it again in discussing

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the item before us—is the old “them” and “us” dichotomy. Members of his party do it generally. They talk about the Government of Canada as “them”. It is part of the opposition mentality which I suppose they have grown used to over the years. They never see themselves, the Tories, as government. Aside from that they have developed an adversary role that somehow the Government of Canada is out there, is “them” and that the provinces are “us”. Who does the hon. member represent here? If he wants to be in provincial politics, let him be in provincial politics. Indeed, he was there for some years with somewhat of a reputation.

He talked about Newfoundland being the last in earned income in Canada. He was a Liberal minister for a couple of years in Newfoundland. Then he got tired of that and he was a Tory minister for five years. Is he saying that those seven or eight years were all for naught, that he made no contribution toward raising Newfoundland by its bootstraps? Is that what he is admitting to the House in this particular instance, that his eight years as the great white hope in the Newfoundland cabinet was all for naught? Is that what he is telling us this afternoon?

Let me take a look at the comments of the hon. member for St. John's East on this particular bill. It is to his credit that the hon. member for St. John's East gave us his views on the bill. The hon. member for St. John's West gave his views on just about everything but the bill. The hon. member for St. John's East made some fairly pertinent comments on the issue we are supposed to be addressing this afternoon. I will respond to several items in no particular order. Perhaps it will be the order in which he mentioned them or the reverse order.

He talked about ownership controlling the rate of development. Certainly he did not really believe that. There are all kinds of examples around him, both in this field and in other endeavours, where ownership per se does not control the rate or nature of development. That is another one of those red herrings which gets dragged in to support motherhood causes.

● (1710)

In the process he tells us about how his leader, the then prime minister, the hon. member for Yellowhead, went down with a letter in which he articulated several points as a proposal. We do not dispute the accuracy of that particular statement. We all remember that the letter of proposal was put to the Premier of Newfoundland. But what the hon. member did not tell us about, and what the hon. member for St. John's West did not tell us about, was the other meeting between those two leaders, the Premier of Newfoundland and the then prime minister. They did not tell us about the meeting which took place during the first week or so of February in the Confederation Building in St. John's. In that meeting the then prime minister was asked, in public, in front of the press, by the Premier of Newfoundland whether before the election he would put in writing, not a proposal, a set of ifs, but a commitment. That is where the bluff was called. To his credit, the Premier of Newfoundland called the bluff.