

Government Orders

come clean with this House and introduce those bills so we have fair time to debate them.

My colleague from Carleton—Charlotte asked about those cheques. Mr. Speaker, you have heard some petty arguments in your day. Sir, do you seriously believe that a government that could ram a GST bill that is gouging \$14 or \$15 billion out of the Canadian public every year, that managed to ram that bill through with its majority by stacking the Senate and everything else in a week or so, do you think that if it really wanted to ram this bill through it could not get it through? That it is now going to tell us that cheques that are due a couple of weeks from now may not get paid? Where is my hanky? I am going to cry.

It will get its cheques through. If it wants to get this bill through it knows how to do it. However do not count on my support on this particular issue.

Mr. Dan Heap (Trinity—Spadina): Mr. Speaker, I was very interested to hear the hon. member for Burin—St. George's speak about the loss by Newfoundland of certain manufacturing industries which it had, and the loss associated with the iron mine at Bell Island.

I regret that during the time I grew up in Winnipeg and lived a large part of the time since then in central Canada I never learned that. I did not learn it until my son went to Newfoundland 20 years ago. When we went to visit we saw Bell Island and we learned something about that, and we became more aware of the other industries including the former manufacturing industries.

I agree entirely with what he said about the significance of those industries and their disappearance in the deal with Canada.

There was a rich fishing industry for several centuries—it is having problems now—and the fishermen got a living out of it and the fish processors got a living out of it. Where did the rest of the money go? Did it go to Newfoundland or elsewhere? There was a rich timber industry that built ships. Who got the ownership of those ships? The men who cut the timber and built the ships got some wages, but who got the benefit of owning those ships? Was it Newfoundlanders mainly, or others?

There is now a large pulpwood industry, and I would ask him the same question. Does the profit go to Newfoundlanders or to others?

Mr. Simmons: I thank my friend from Trinity—Spadina who knows the Newfoundland situation better than most of our colleagues not from Newfoundland because he has, as he indicated, a son there and has had occasion to visit there on a regular basis. I thank him for his question.

Let me deal with the last part first. In so far as the pulp and paper industry is concerned little has changed in that respect. There were some pretty rich deals made way back around the turn of the century with respect to the mills at Corner Brook and Grand Falls. I think Grand Falls was around 1905 and Corner Brook around 1910, or the other way around. Big British companies, who have since been succeeded by the North American conglomerates, were able to get from the government of the day great, embarrassingly large, timber concessions. They were locked away in perpetuity in some cases, certainly for very long periods of time in other cases.

The short answer to my friend from Trinity—Spadina is that as far as pulp and paper are concerned, other than the jobs that are provided, the people who get the return on the invested dollar, the return on the forests is as it always was in Newfoundland not the local people whose land it really is. That has always been a matter of great controversy in Newfoundland. I think he can tell from my response that I am on the same side of that issue as he is.

Let me return to the other issue, that of the fishing industry. We had merchants as middle men and so on. Indeed, the gentleman from St. John's West is known sometimes, not kindly among Newfoundlanders, as a fish merchant. It is a term of derision which has been passed on to us because the fish merchant was not only the middle man in the process but was often seen as the person who took undue advantage of the fishermen.

These were the days before cash incomes and that is a long story in itself. However to get quickly to the point, while the fish merchants of the day had an undue share of the pie, a lot of the benefits, particularly in the period just before Confederation with Canada, more so than is