

Ranger disaster. It is possible that lives could have, I do not say would have, been saved. That will have to await the report of the Royal Commission into the sinking of the *Ocean Ranger*. I understand it will issue a report shortly on the adequacy of search and rescue as it impacts on that particular tragedy.

I make the case to the House that it is about time the Government dealt with this and not wait until there is another tragedy. Why should we have to wait for another tragedy? Why should we wait for more lives to be lost to stand in our place in this House and raise these questions with the Government?

If we build a subdivision in one of our cities, the first thing we do is ensure that there is adequate fire protection. So we build a fire station. We make sure there is access to hospitals and that there is adequate ambulance service. We have not taken into account what is happening on our East Coast in terms of offshore drilling and exploration. We have not made provision to deal with that new fact of life, not to mention our ability to be able to protect our mariners and fishermen. It is in the interest of saving lives that I once again make the case and support the position put forward by my colleague, the Hon. Member for Richmond-South Delta.

I understand the motion that I was going to move has already been moved by the Hon. Member for Burin-St. George's (Mr. Simmons). In any event, if it is in order, I would move:

That all the words after the word "Canada's" be struck out and the following added thereto:

"East and West Coasts".

I presume that motion would be seconded by the Hon. Member for Burin-St. George's, who is now rising in his place.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): It is moved by Mr. McGrath, seconded by Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich):

That all the words after the word "Canada's" be struck out and the following added thereto:

"East and West Coasts".

Hon. Roger Simmons (Burin-St. George's): Mr. Speaker, I wish to say a few words on the motion, and in particular on the amendment. I am surprised that my friend from St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) felt it necessary to move the amendment, given his concluding remarks in which he said that he understands that very soon the Royal Commission on the *Ocean Ranger* tragedy will be addressing itself in an interim statement to the very issue that he would embody in his amendment.

I am a firm believer that if a study can achieve some worth-while result, we ought to have it. If a study can answer some questions that are not being addressed elsewhere, we ought to have it. The House will agree that the most expensive, and hopefully the most thorough, inquiry into a marine disaster is now under way. It is being funded jointly by the Government of Canada and the Government of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. I refer, of course, to the *Ocean Ranger* inquiry. As the Hon. Member just pointed out, that inquiry will soon address the very matter that he seeks to have

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embodied in the resolution. The issue for which he shows some concern is already being addressed in a fairly expeditious manner, I would hope, to the point that he can inform the House that we are about to hear the results of it in so far as search and rescue adequacy on the East Coast is concerned. After we hear that, if he has some further concerns, let him come back to the House and we can perhaps look at the question at that time.

The motion addresses itself to alleged deficiencies in search and rescue on the West Coast of Canada. While my friend from St. John's East did not spend much time addressing himself to that part of the motion, the rules of the House require that we do that, at least in part. At the same time, I would like the same liberty that he exercised to say something about East Coast search and rescue.

The search and rescue program is and has to be of vital importance because, in the final analysis, search and rescue is concerned with the saving of lives. This Government has long been committed to making sure that the Canadian search and rescue program meets that objective so far as is humanly and reasonably possible. The nature of this undertaking is such that it is always easy to point the finger. It is always easy to talk about what might have been, what could have been done that was not done, how things could have been different if there was a different arrangement for search and rescue capability at any time.

The Hon. Member for St. John's East knows, as all Members of this House know, that the *Ocean Ranger* tragedy is a subject which is very close to the hearts and minds of every Newfoundlander, indeed every Canadian who is aware of the impact of that tragedy. Because the Hon. Member for St. John's East is so aware of it, he ought to exercise all the more care when talking about that tragedy. It is all very well to refer to that tragedy when making a point as long as in the process we do not misuse that tragedy or misrepresent our point. He knows full well, Mr. Speaker, that we do not need to wait for an *Ocean Ranger* inquiry. He knows full well that we do not need any new inquiries to tell us what the awful result would have been on that night a year or two ago. He knows full well that if the entire search and rescue capability of St. John's and St. John's alone, the nearest point of land to the site of that terrible tragedy, were mustered that night, the result could not and would not have been any less tragic.

● (1740)

Mr. McGrath: That's not true and you know it. Helicopters need to operate from St. John's and not Gander. There are no helicopters in St. John's and I am surprised at your ignorance of the facts. Tell the truth for once.

An Hon. Member: You shouldn't be surprised at that.

Mr. Simmons: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. McGrath: You should know all the facts about that because it is your constituency.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): Order, order.