

in Latin America and in a number of other countries which every time run the risk of witnessing individuals tearing at each other. That is the last thing we want to see happening between Canada and France, obviously.

So this evening I heard something I knew already, but still I listened to all the speeches, I repeat, all the speeches of my colleagues, and we do have a major problem on our hands. It is unbelievable, simply unbelievable.

• (0200)

[English]

It just cannot be that a group of people can be so unhappy. I am talking now about the fishermen in the Atlantic provinces, especially those in Newfoundland. There must be something wrong somewhere. That is why I wish to attract the attention of the House and the attention of the Government to this issue. The Government must be extremely careful.

Yes, it is true that in 1984 Canadians had enough of the Liberal Party. We were severely rejected. But that is democracy.

Mr. Forrestall: Why don't you talk about fish?

Mr. Prud'homme: Canadians made their choice but the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) said: "I want to offer you a program on this and that. I want to have a new era in federal-provincial consultations". We were told in 1984 that the Liberals were arrogant. We were told that the Government always wanted to have its way. There may be some truth in that. At any rate, Canadians saw fit to reject the Liberals. But the Prime Minister was elected on something that he keeps repeating. Everyone knows that the Right Hon. Prime Minister is a friend of mine. I would not attack him. But I do remember one thing because I had to face that election. As a matter of fact, it was my best in 23 years, but that is on *en passant*. It was my easiest election. It seems that that was not the case for some of my colleagues.

The Prime Minister talked about a new era of federal-provincial consultations. So I ask myself: Why is it today that the Premiers of Newfoundland and Nova Scotia are so unhappy? No one can deny us asking that question. How is it that the fishermen of Atlantic Canada seem to be so concerned and so unhappy? Why are we here tonight? Why is it that Members opposite had a chance to participate in this debate? It is because I asked that the debate be allowed to continue. That is why the Hon. Member for Dartmouth—Halifax East (Mr. Forrestall) is still in his place. We would have sent him home at 12 o'clock if I had not asked for this extension. I asked for it because I wanted to listen to all of the Members from Atlantic Canada, not only those Members from the New Democratic Party who asked for this debate. I wanted to know where each Member from Atlantic Canada stands on this issue. I wanted to learn what there was to learn for the best interests of the Maritimes. So Members opposite participated. Why should we cut the debate off at midnight when Members opposite may want to put their views to the public?

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, I think it is my right. Would you kindly ask the Hon. Member to settle down? Indeed, I am about to conclude—

[English]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Member for Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme) has the floor. I am sure Hon. Members will listen to him since he has approximately 10 minutes remaining.

Mr. Prud'homme: Truman said something along the lines of: "If you cannot stand my speech, it may not be the best I have made, you have the option to go home". So I suggest that perhaps, Mike—

Mr. Forrestall: I have been here all night.

Mr. Prud'homme: I know. The Hon. Member for Dartmouth—Halifax East has interrupted everyone tonight.

Mr. Forrestall: Except for those who were speaking.

Mr. Prud'homme: And the Hon. Member is still doing it. I am trying to find the riding of the Hon. Member on the seating plan. I know him so well by his first name which is Mike. He is a friend of mine. He does not change, he is always the same. I ask him in the name of our long friendship to be calm for a few more minutes.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say first of all that I greatly admire your patience with the Government's provocation tactics. Of course they aren't used to being on the Government side and since it won't be long before they are back on the Opposition benches, we can't really blame them for taking advantage of some of the trappings of power, and heaven knows some are doing more than their fair share in that area nowadays. Mr. Speaker, I think the subject of this debate is far more serious than we think.

[English]

Politics is like that. We know when it is a serious debate and when it is a frivolous debate.

I wish to conclude my remarks by thanking all the Members who participated tonight. I want them to know that I have learned a great deal. I am very delighted and happy to have listened to them all.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Prud'homme: I wish to emphasize the fact that it is not because some of us come from Montreal or western Canada that we have no interest in what is going on in other parts of Canada. I did not come here as a Quebecer. I came here as a Canadian from the Province of Quebec to participate and learn what is going on.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!