

Government Orders

that all four of these men went into this exercise with their hands tied behind their backs because, you see, they had to negotiate a deal within the parameters of the 1988 Statement of Principles.

I recognize that the Minister of Energy and the Minister for International Trade not only had their hands tied behind their back, but participated in the tying a couple of years ago. The project does not give to Newfoundland all the largess that one would be led to assume by listening to the rhetoric in the House in the last hour or two. Newfoundland, under the Statement of Principles, got very badly robbed on the issue of equalization. It is robbing Peter to pay Paul. It is taking it out of the left pocket to put it into the right pocket. Never let it be misunderstood for a moment. We were very unhappy and I sat in the Newfoundland chamber at the time when the premier of the day, Mr. Peckford, came back with the Statement of Principles. We were very unhappy then and we continue to be unhappy with the parameters on which this whole agreement has been built.

This is not a day for recrimination or for talking about what might have been. I just wanted to get it on the record. But having said that, I laud without qualification with what the Minister of Energy has done in respect to bringing this to a final agreement and what the gentleman from St. John's West has done and, of course, my colleague, my friend from St. John's East, I am sure has played a role in this. I laud that and it is a good day for Newfoundland. It would have been a much better day for Newfoundland had it been done right in the first place, but that is a story really for another day.

I want to raise a an issue or two with the Minister while we have a few minutes.

An hon. member: Ask him where it is going to be refined, Roger.

Mr. Simmons: It is one of those days when I need a good script writer. I am going to the gentleman from B.C. He has a job articulating these ideas, but he puts them on paper well and one of these days I am going to turn to him—if I ever can afford him—the smart, transplanted lawyer from Toronto who found a good thing in B.C. and stayed there. Now, Mr. Speaker, getting to the subject at hand. I hope the minister at

some point, maybe at third reading, will address something that was not really adequately addressed in the agreement. That is the possible impacts. On this I really want the minister's attention, just for a moment. I hope he will address the possible impacts on the fishery should the unthinkable happen.

In that respect, he will know that in the last few weeks there has been some effort by the fisheries union to open some dialogue on this particular subject. I know he cannot negotiate in public, but I hope he would give it some indication of the framework in public. Will he tell us in at least some general terms what kinds of safeguards there are because this is an industry that is going to be with us for 20, 30 or 40 years.

We have an industry that has been with us for 500 years. I have in my riding alone 17,000 people, men and women, who make their living either in the boats or in the fish plants throughout the riding of Burin—St. George's, 17,000.

They are just part of the total number throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, so it would be a disaster not only in economic terms but in cultural and way-of-life terms too. This would be an unmitigated disaster. I want to have on the public record some of the preventive steps that are being taken and some of the compensation, if you can ever compensate should the unthinkable happen. I want to hear in some detail from the minister what the ministry and the government have in mind should all not go as well as one would like.

There is another issue here that I want to raise. I am covering several subjects quickly because I am not going to be in the Chamber tomorrow. I will be in my riding. I am not sure when the bill might get through. If it is around next week, I have some other things I want to say. I want to get one of those in the record. I hope we have not tied our hands behind our backs in another respect. I hope in getting a labour piece agreement for this project, and that in itself was a commendable effort, I hope we have not short-changed the opportunities for people with skills who are close to the project in terms of where they live but who happen not to have a particular union card. That is going to be a very difficult, frustrating issue if there are people whose only sin is that they do not belong to a particular union.