

Supply

While the Progressive Conservative Government says that it is acquiring submarines to patrol our Arctic waters, we now know from the departing Hon. Member for Nunatsiak the real reason, that being that it has some fantasy about a military nuclear confrontation that it wants to be able to deliver on one of these days.

● (1300)

I say this to the Hon. Member for Nunatsiak (Mr. Suluk) who comes from Canada's North that the way to establish Canada's sovereignty in the North is not by putting nuclear-powered submarines under the ice. The way to establish our sovereignty in the North—he should know this, he ought to be preaching it but he is not—is to help the people who live in Canada's North to live a decent life, one of equality, one with equal services, one with employment, one with jobs, one with the dignity of a paycheque, because ownership and possession is 90 per cent of the law. Let us help our people who live in Canada's North, the people in his riding, live a quality life. Let us do that. Let us put the money into that, and the Hon. Member will not need to have submarines to protect an empty land because it will be a full and happy land, inhabited by the people who have not been forgotten by their Government in Ottawa and who have the same quality of life and the same services as the people who live elsewhere in this country. The Member should be preaching that rather than departing this Chamber with his tail between his legs, never to run again.

Mr. Suluk: You have never elected a Liberal in the North.

[Translation]

Mr. Robichaud: Mr. Speaker, I attended Question Period this afternoon and I heard some answers that made me angry. When I heard a Minister of this Government say that we could not defend the property and rights of Newfoundland fishermen for fear that it might harm some other region of the country, I felt angry because I believe that we are all Canadians from coast to coast. I think that this Minister owes us an apology. He should correct the statement he made this afternoon as soon as possible. I was just saying to my colleague, "Shouldn't the Prime Minister demand this Minister's resignation right away?"

[English]

Mr. Tobin: Obviously, Mr. Speaker, this is not a question to which I will have to give a lot of thought. My colleague says that when a Minister of the Crown puts forward in a nation, diversified but reconciled by unity, the notion that one part of the nation is expendable, then that Minister fails in the most basic sense to understand his responsibility as a Minister of the Crown. Of course he ought to come to his senses quickly. He ought to put his finger back on the pulse of this nation quickly or take leave of his responsibilities as a Minister of the Crown.

I hope that when the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) goes to France on May 26, when he goes to his next photo opportunity, he will find more than the backbone of a jellyfish accompanying him and that he will tell the leaders of France

in no uncertain terms that Canada is whole and unified and that parts and pieces of Canada will not be traded off like some chip in a monopoly game, because that is the case. Voices from every part of this country will be heard to say that we are not prepared to sell one part of Canada down the drain in some Machiavellian poker game which the Prime Minister and his Government think they are playing.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Pappas): Questions and comments are now terminated. Debate. The Hon. Minister of Fisheries and Oceans (Mr. Siddon).

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Mr. Speaker, as I begin my remarks, I can assure the Hon. Member for Humber—Port au Port—St. Barbe (Mr. Tobin) and all Members of this House that our Government does not intend to trade off any part of Canada or the interests of the people in any part of Canada as some kind of a bargaining chip, as the Member described it in this matter. Quite the converse is true. The record of our Government in advancing the cause of Canadian fishermen and asserting sovereignty over our fishing resources out to the 200-mile limit is unprecedented in the history of previous Governments at any time in the history of Canada.

I am grateful to the Hon. Member for Gander—Twillingate (Mr. Baker) for bringing forward this motion, which enables us to debate an issue of extreme importance to the Government of Canada, to all the people of Canada, but especially to the fishermen and the people who live in the inshore communities of Newfoundland and other areas surrounding St. Pierre and Miquelon.

On the other hand, I do not appreciate the distortions, the out of context allegations and pure misinformation which are reflected in the kind of diatribe which first emanated from the lips of the Hon. Member for Gander—Twillingate when he heard of a problem arising in the fishing grounds near the Burin Peninsula yesterday afternoon. What could be worse than having a government running this country made up of the Hon. Member for Gander—Twillingate, the Hon. Member for Port au Port—St. Barbe and the Hon. Member for Cowichan—Malahat—The Islands (Mr. Manly) who spoke for the NDP earlier? Their kinds of comments belie a shoot-from-the-hip action, "do not think but take an act first" approach to problems. This approach could have serious consequences for Canada and for the very people we are trying to help, the fishermen of these inshore communities of southern Newfoundland and all of Newfoundland.

The comments made yesterday inside and outside this House to the media by the sponsor of this motion, the Hon. Member for Gander—Twillingate, who seems to have left this House for the day, are absolutely irresponsible, as they have been in cases of his previous outbursts in reaction to events which have developed over the past year in regard to the Canada-France fishing dispute. Of course the Hon. Member for Port au Port—St. Barbe, the Leader of the New Democratic Party, and it seems all Members on the opposite side,