

be able to do this. But I came to the reluctant conclusion, after speaking with the people in so many of these areas who have fished and lived off the sea for so many decades, for centuries, that this was not possible.

• (1040)

To try to do that would be cruel. It would mean uprooting the people from the villages, from the areas, and taking them elsewhere, destroying a way of life. Why? Because of what the member from Burin—St. George's has lead the charge for in this House of Commons, preservation of the fish stock particularly in the face of foreign overfishing.

To me, it is a tragedy coming to be realized when we see these great human beings with their way of life taken from them. I urge members in this House from every part of the country—and I come from Toronto, North York, Willowdale. But to me, to see these Newfoundlanders deprived of their way of life through the short-sightedness of national policies and international overfishing, we must bear the blame.

It is not their fault. It was in our hands. We made the treaties and we enforced them. We are the ones who have been negligent. We owe it to them. We owe it to ourselves to ensure that we take the steps proposed by the member for Burin—St. George's.

In conclusion I ask him, if his resolution is passed, how long does he feel it will take before the fish stock can be restored to the level that Canada needs?

Mr. Simmons: Mr. Speaker, let me come directly to the last part of the question first. Here I seek the camaraderie, the support of my friend from St. John's West because I think he has voiced some frustration with some of the findings he has had from scientists.

Certainly part of the problem has been some of the guessing. Do not forget that trying to measure how many fish are out there is a very inaccurate science at best. So the regeneration period, the restoration period before there is a healthy fish stock, the answer given will depend on the scientists talked to and often when it is that they are consulted.

Some say that we can do it in the short term. I will not get into numbers, but I will say that I have not heard anybody, not Dr. Harris in his report or Mr. Dunne, the director general in Newfoundland of DFO, in his report or any others, none of them have said, the minister has

never said that it is gone. Nobody has ever said: "The game is over".

Everybody has said: "If we do the right thing". Let us stop my talking in code. If we take control of the fish stock, because we have managed the stock inside the limit with reasonable good sense, although there have been some lapses of good sense. If we had been able to manage the stock that is now under threat, we would not be debating this resolution today.

I say to my friend that everybody who has scrutinized this problem believes there is a solution. It is surprising who is getting onside on this one. I just saw a newspaper in Windsor, Ontario. I see editorials across the country. I see people who have studied this industry for years. I see the heads of the great fish companies, National Sea and FPI now saying in the last few weeks that there is only one solution. That is to extend jurisdiction over the nose and tail of the Grand Banks.

Everybody is saying that. The minister, in various forms and sometimes by allusion, has said the same thing. Nobody argues the validity of the solution. What the minister I am sure will say in a few minutes is that it is going to be difficult, and I understand that.

I have one further point in response to my friend. He mentioned having visited communities like Ramea, Grey River, Gaultois and so on. The cry out there is: "Create some jobs".

Does it not strike you, Mr. Speaker, does it not strike the minister that the jobs we want to create are not painting cemetery fences or putting people on buses to Cambridge, Ontario? The jobs we want are right under our noses, except they are being performed by Spanish and Portuguese. Let us give them back to the people who had them in the first place.

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, very briefly. In his powerful speech, the member for Burin—St. George's made reference to something that is of some significance. He spoke of the senseless slaughter of fish stock. Would he elaborate on that term so as to give us some elements as he sees them.

Mr. Simmons: I thank my friend from Davenport. Yes, it is easy to elaborate on that. The figures are well known. There is an organization called the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization, NAFO, which has been together as an organization since 1977-78, which has had 12 signatories, 12 members, 11 countries in the European Community. Canada is a member of NAFO.