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comes to the cost of these submarines. I would advise him to listen and to learn.

We on this side are asking the Government to put both the Airbus and the submarine contracts on hold, to freeze the negotiations in respect of those acquisitions.

If by some circumstance—one that I cannot imagine—the forests of British Columbia were being held ransom in an international dispute, I am sure Newfoundland would rally to that cause; if the oil and gas resources of Alberta, through some circumstance, were being held to a ransom in an international dispute, I know we would rally to that cause; if the hydro power of the Province of Quebec were being held up to ransom in international dispute, I know that each and every other part of this nation would rally to that cause; and if the mining resources of northern Ontario were held to ransom in some dispute, each and every part of this country would rally to that cause. And, Mr. Speaker, I know in my heart of hearts, notwithstanding the fears and the paranoia of the Secretary of State for External Affairs, that as Atlantic Canada, and particularly Newfoundland, and its resource, the backbone of its economy, is being held to ransom in an international dispute, each and every Canadian from coast to coast will rally to Newfoundland's cause.

I invite the Government of Canada to have the vision and the courage to do the same.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The Hon. Member for Nunatsiak (Mr. Suluk), on questions and comments.

Mr. Suluk: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Hon. Member in relation to the purchase of nuclear submarines by Canada.

I know that the New Democratic Party would prefer that Canada continue to rely upon three diesel powered submarines. I know that the New Democratic Party would prefer that we not acquire new and modern submarines.

Given the renewed interest in Arctic waters and the question of sovereignty, I think most Canadians understand that the acquisition of nuclear powered submarines is no longer an issue that is subject to question.

This past winter, I heard the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Turner) say that he was not interested in acquiring a nuclear submarine fleet; that he would consider cancelling any such acquisition. However, given the troubles that that Party already has, I would think that to be unlikely. My question for the Hon. Member for Humber—Port au Port—St. Barbe (Mr. Tobin) is whether the Liberal Party has changed its position in respect of the acquisition of a nuclear submarine fleet.

Perhaps the Hon. Member will take this opportunity to clarify whether he is now in agreement that Canada should in fact acquire a nuclear submarine fleet, thus enabling Canada to grow stronger, and ensuring that, in the future, should we ever have to confront other nations, we have sufficient power to back up the words of the politicians.

An Hon. Member: What you want is a war!

Mr. Suluk: I know that the New Democratic Party would like us to just give in, whether it be to the Soviets or to other nations of the world. I would like to know where the Hon. Member stands in that regard, and particularly whether or not there has been a change in the policy of the Liberal Party in respect of the need for a nuclear submarine fleet.

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Hon. Member for Nunatsiak (Mr. Suluk) for his question. I know he will want it answered at this time, given that he has already announced that he will not be running in the next election. As a result, this may be his last opportunity to ask me that question.

Mr. Suluk: So . . . ?

Mr. Tobin: I am merely pointing out that obviously the Hon. Member is not too enamoured with the process that he has been a part of on that side of the House.

Mr. Suluk: Just answer the question.

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, I shall make two points in response to the question of the departing Member for Nunatsiak—a decision he has taken, obviously, because he does not enjoy the political process in the Progressive Conservative Party. There are two points that I shall make in response.

First of all, he has lost sight of the issue. The issue is not one of submarines or airplanes. As it happens, submarines and airplanes happen to be the subject matters of two sets of contract negotiations in which the Government is involved with France. It is not something that involves the private sector. I have not asked that Canadians stop buying French wine, or any other product. The airplanes in question are being purchased by a Crown corporation. That is Government. The submarines are to be purchased by the Department of Defence. Again, a purchase by Government. Here we have two areas where our Government can respond. That is why we talk about submarines; that is why we talk about airplanes.

The issue is Canadian sovereignty and the protection of our fishery, a renewable resource. We raise the issue of submarines and airplanes in that context. It could have been a purchase by this Government of billions of dollars worth of toothpicks. As it happens, the contract negotiations involve submarines and airplanes.

On the larger question of submarines, we in the Liberal Party are opposed to Canada acquiring nuclear-powered submarines for the purpose, in the words of the Hon. Member, of "backing up our words with military might". We do not suggest that the solution to this conflict is that Canada ought to confront France militarily. We suggest that the solution is to hit France where it hurts, in its pocketbook. That is the difference between the philosophy of the Liberal Party and that of the Progressive Conservative Party.