

engaged in the fishing as in the pulp and paper industry, which page 32 gives as 25,000 people with earning power of \$50 million. There is something wrong there; not in the report, but in the circumstances which have produced these figures. The answer is, I suppose, in the fact that the countries buying our newsprint are wealthy countries, and those buying our fish are poor and from all accounts will get poorer. The answer is obvious. We must get fish markets in rich countries, and that can only mean the United States, by some kind of reciprocity, a trade agreement which the Committee stresses and to which I will return later.

In connection with the use of the estimated surplus for succeeding years, I find myself in agreement with the delegate from Bonavista Centre on one point only, namely the matter of old age pensions. I don't think we should fall into that state of thinking which suggests we must have surpluses before we can increase the old age pensions and lower the age qualification, and the widows and orphans allowances too. We must write that into our budgets as something we must finance....

Like other speakers, I cannot subscribe to the theory that our continually increasing revenues are due to the war. Anyone who heard Mr. Hollett's capable discussion on that point will agree. And for that matter, even if they were partly caused by that fact, isn't it oppositely true that our expenditures are also high for the same reason, and that a decrease in one will mean a decrease in the other?

I don't think either that this report tries to claim that all is right with the world. But it does show, as well as it can be shown, that things look pretty good for Newfoundland. I grant you that there are genuine cases of hardship in the country. There are lots of men unemployed in St. John's today, besides fishermen in our bays who may not have made a good season. But am I to say Newfoundland is not financially sound and has good prospects because of these facts? It is the job of government to provide avenues of employment for its people, and if there are more hands in St. John's than work to go around, or if the Labrador fishery is failing, then it is up to the government to give the necessary leadership for people affected by these conditions to turn to other sources of industry, or other areas.

Perhaps in connection with the development of the fisheries, some thought might again be given to a scheme successfully tried in Trinity Bay in the 1890s, the Dildo fish hatchery. Who knows but that something along these lines on the Labrador coast might inject new life in the Labrador fishery.

I am no financier, and can offer very little comment on such complicated matters as the servicing of the public debt and sinking funds and so on. But even a blind man can see the wisdom of saving a million dollars, which appears can be easily done by the conversion of the interest-free loan from 3% to 2%. If that is so, and I can take the Committee's word for it, with the evidence given, then it is criminal if advantage is not taken of such a move.

I should like now to refer to the conclusions of the Committee. They state that Newfoundland is a self-supporting country, based on sound economic factors; and that all the evidence available to us indicates that this position of self-support will continue in the foreseeable future. In my opinion the Committee's second conclusion is of far more importance than their first. As the Committee hinted in the winding-up section of the Economic Report, this was a foregone conclusion. Here is their evidence:

- (a) The statement of the Secretary of State in the House of Commons, 1945.
- (b) The statement of Commissioner Wild to this Convention, 1946.
- (c) The statement of Lord Addison to the London delegation, May 1947.
- (d) The conclusions of the Finance Committee based on reports of this Convention.

To discuss this first conclusion of the report is merely to labour the obvious. I think it safe to say that the majority of delegates when they came to this Convention had a closed mind on this subject. They believed, I know I did, that the country was then self-supporting, and I feel sure that a great many of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador believed it also. However, while I did not exactly have doubts, I did have a lack of understanding as to just how far this condition of self-support was due to wartime conditions. I confess I was eager for enlightenment on this score, so that even the financial bugbear might be removed from the minds of our people and enable them to make up their minds on the wisdom and