

paradoxes of history — the paradox which drenched this world in blood and at the same time was the means of giving our people enough to eat, and placing a few dollars in their empty pockets. Yet we are asked by this report to believe that our swollen revenues are due to anything but war. During those terrible years of conflict and their aftermath, Mr. Average Fisherman has enjoyed a turn of comparative prosperity and again I use that word "comparative" advisedly. Let no one imagine that he has been living the full life during that period. He had a long leeway to make up to regain what the latest period of privation had taken from him. His home was dilapidated and in serious disrepair. Household utensils and essentials of all kinds, the very clothing on his bed had worn thin or disappeared altogether. Even his boat, his traps, his net, his engine, those things which claim priority of attention, for by them alone he could hope to live at all, suffered sadly. Yes he had a long leeway to make up. And it is a source of satisfaction to know that to a large extent at any rate he has been successful in that endeavour. And for that, wartime scarcity of food, high wages on transient defence works and high prices for his staple products have been fundamentally responsible. That, sir, is the story of the Newfoundland fisherman as I have known him intimately for over 40 years. And yet, we are asked to believe that our present levels of comparative prosperity and our revenues are due to anything, anything but the war.¹

That story is the acid test of the economy of Newfoundland — the way of life of the fisherman and of those directly dependent upon the fishery, the bulk of our people. And the same story with obvious variations holds true in all essentials for the logger, the labourer and the miner.

Mr. Jackman Point of order. Does Mr. Bradley mean to say that these conditions are peculiar to Newfoundland only?

Mr. Chairman What is your point of order? What irrelevancy are you referring to?

Mr. Jackman The conditions that exist in Newfoundland exist everywhere else...

Mr. Bradley That is not a point of order. If Mr. Jackman, or any other member disagrees with what I say he will have an opportunity to state his opinion later on.

Mr. Chairman Quite.

Mr. Bradley Not balanced budgets, not satisfying surpluses, not trust and sinking funds, not these things, but the way of life of the people: *that* is the supreme test of our economy. Truly has it been said by a great British statesman that Newfoundland has been the sport of historic misfortune.

We have had a great deal of chatter about optimism and pessimism and realism, and the more we talk the further away we seem to get from the simple realities of the situation. We bandy about figures of millions and hundreds of millions, and roll our tongues over our industries and commerce; we talk of Marshall Plans and of exchange problems — and the more we talk of these things the further away we get from the simple truth, a truth so simple that it is lost in the mountain of figures over which we pore so painfully.

This country is not made up of budgets and deficits and surpluses. There are 300,000 living souls in the land, and they are Newfoundland. Not the soil, the rocks and the water that constitute the island; nor the great companies and corporations; nor even the government itself. Are these 300,000 living souls the slaves of that government? Do they exist for the primary purpose of paying taxes and balancing the government's budget? Or does the government exist to serve them, the people, who make that government possible? 300,000 living souls, fashioned in God's image, for whom all material things in this land exist. *They* are the yardstick of value, and the only yardstick. Anything which benefits them, anything which serves them, stands justified. A company or corporation is good for Newfoundland if it operates to the benefit of Newfoundland's people. Natural resources are valuable only if they serve the people's needs. A government is good if it functions in the people's interest. Under God our people are supreme over all in this island, and any institution or interest that does not serve their welfare stands condemned in the sight of the Almighty and in the sight of all just men. The people's interest, and their condition, are the acid test of this country's economy.

Sir, that is how it should be: that is what divine law ordains it should be. But that is not always what it has been in our history. Our companies

¹The section taken from the recording ends here.