

can maintain such standards. And reasons can be given for such hope.

Take the matter of the fundamental character of our economy. It is still preponderantly an export economy. The national income is still for the most part derived from the sale of staple commodities abroad. But it so happens that the world today is temporarily more congenial to the well-being of an export economy than it has been for a long time. With the reconstruction of Europe to be accomplished, and a world-wide shortage of consumer goods to be filled, one would imagine that world demand for staple products will not be satisfied in a short time. So for the future there is some consolation in that. There is consolation too in the strengthening of our economy through the diversification that has been achieved in the fishing industry and in a lesser dependence upon that industry; in the reduction of the burden of the public debt; in the increment to the national income derived from services rendered at the military installations; and in the accumulation of not insignificant national reserves. These are the major factors that urge us to look with hope to the future.

But if there is reason to be hopeful there is also room for doubt. And I am not prepared to avoid this just because it may be held to be the proper thing to accent the optimistic view. You see, I belong to the generation that has never voted. We have grown up and come to our maturity without benefit of all the tender ministrations of shibboleth and political poppycock that other generations have enjoyed. In consequence, we are far less likely than were our fathers to give our allegiance to a cause for purely sentimental reasons. The mere injunction that we should have faith in our country is not enough to scare us away from insisting that there is a dark side to the future too.

Two years ago you could hardly get a man in this island to do an odd job. There was full employment. Wartime construction and the withdrawal of men from the economy to enter the fighting services were what led to that condition. It was not a matter of a sudden competency having come upon the economy to find a niche and a living for all. Now the war jobs are over, and those who fought are returned. I doubt that all returned men have found employment — and there are certainly others now without jobs. Our

economy has not been able to absorb the twin flow of manpower from the armed services and from the schools. And it is no answer to say that nobody need be without work these days, the unemployed can go to the lumberwoods. It so happens that not all of them can. Not all of them are suited for that sort of work. Technique with a bucksaw does not come naturally. In the last analysis there is no such thing as unskilled labour. If you don't believe that, you might try putting your average professor of psychology in a ditch with your average road labourer and see who digs the mostest ditch in the shortest time. In any case, the Christian position is that it is an inherent right of man to be free to earn a living at work of his own choosing and for which he is suited. Am I to understand that we must be satisfied to have self-support mean less than that? For it would seem that we are headed for more of less than that.

The Economic Report is hopeful of a continuing annual revenue for the future of \$30 million because this year we shall have a revenue of \$40 million. A pious hope, a goodly hope, but nevertheless a figure pulled out of thin air. And it might just as well have been \$20 million or \$50 million. And if I prefer to contend that the year after next our revenue will amount to \$50 million, I'd like to see anyone in this Convention undertake to prove to me that it could not be. It would be a most interesting manoeuvre to observe....

Propos of that revenue, there are two things worthy of mention. One is that it derives in part from not-so-efficient business management. During the war, goods were in such short supply that business firms began booking orders for this, that and the other thing over half the world. Orders were duplicated and triplicated and never cancelled. This year there has been a flood of goods emanating from these orders that should have been cancelled but were not. The revenue originating from this source may hardly be construed to have arisen from the normal needs of the people. Also there is a great deal of importing to satisfy what may be called an abnormal replacement demand. Many things wore out during the war years, which due to shortages could not be replaced. Indeed, in this island many things wore out during the Depression which people have only lately come to be in a financial position to replace. Much current importing is being done