

this: that with all the taxes he mentions, the greater part of the commodities he listed will be purchased under confederation very considerably cheaper than they are at present. Let me illustrate.

During the Christmas recess I was approached by a very intelligent fisherman. Walking into my store, he greeted me with, "Merry Christmas, profiteer". I had long ago joined "the customer is always right club", so I couldn't say a thing about it. In his hand he carried copies of a Montreal daily and the *Maritime Merchant*. "What have you there?", I asked. "Something for you to carry back to the Convention", he rejoined, and then he let loose with a barrage. "Is this correct," he asked, "*Maritime Merchant* — flour, 98 pound bag, \$4.75 at St. John, New Brunswick?" I tried to explain the subsidy. He then quoted "Hay, \$30 per ton". This was November 8, 1947. "What are your prices?", he asked. Flour \$10; hay \$60. He pointed to a footnote which said a subsidy of \$2 had recently been removed from flour; the earlier price was exactly \$2.78. He then quoted retail prices from page 6 of a Montreal daily — emperor grapes, 8 cents per pound. "What's your price?" he asked. "Only 30 cents," I said. I tried to explain disparity in prices. My only reward was "swindler", and I might as well have tried to swim the Atlantic as to convince that fellow. I trust you will pardon me, sir, for talking about such mundane things as grocery prices, but since we all must eat, grocery stores are very important places, and it is in the grocery stores and fishing boats that the government of tomorrow will be decided. Mr. Smallwood may not be a mile and a year ahead of his noisiest critic, as someone has written, but if he can intelligently show that confederation means a lowering of the cost of living, then those big bad wolves with no teeth, called excise taxes, luxury taxes, etc., just won't scare anybody, for the ordinary fishing Joe and farming Jack are not so much concerned with what goes up the river as they are with how much more cheaply things will come down the river.

"The 15% tax on transportation will cost this country \$200,000," says Mr. Fogwill. Mr. Smallwood explains, and no one has satisfactorily proven him wrong, that add on that 15% and transportation will still be very considerably lower than at present. And since I feel that every member is concerned chiefly with the most good

to the masses, he will at least admit that if this is so, then confederation will mean a big advantage; for a railway ticket reduced by 2 cents a mile will mean much to the lumberman making five trips a year to the Millertown hinterland. All this has been said before in this house, so it is a needless waste of time to go on expounding this and that, but I cannot refrain from saying again that charges that the proposals should be thrown out the door and other derogatory statements, are altogether unfair to our people, and unjust to this Convention. I may or may not vote for confederation, but in justice to the good people I have the honour to represent, and conscious of my duties as an elected representative of this assembly, I am going to weigh the issue dispassionately, basing my conclusions as to its merits or otherwise on the findings of this Convention, and not at all upon the pet opinions of some would-be aspirants to political greatness shouting hysterical hal-lujahs to the skies. I submit, Mr. Chairman, that the Canadian proposals should be intelligently studied by every Newfoundlander.

Major Cashin and Mr. Higgins recently made two fine speeches, both of great length and signal distinction. The Major said, in so many words, that the Canadians want the Labrador. In this connection will someone tell me just how many Newfoundlanders have gotten work in our big northern dependency? Actually, Mr. Chairman, as far as I am aware, Bonavista North sent its first deputation of labourers this past summer, when through the kind office of my good friend, Mr. Claude Howse, a number of our fishermen secured work at Knob Lake with a Canadian company doing preparatory prospecting in that area. Major Cashin has already stressed that this was a Canadian company interested in the development of Labrador. That, to my mind, sounds like a very good argument for the affirmative of the motion. The Major further stressed, with a rather alarming use of superlatives, the very awkward position which, in his opinion, Canada finds herself at the moment. So far as I am concerned, that was simply the Major's opinion. I was particularly struck, however, by his application of the term "immoral" to the Canadian system of family allowance. I am quite sure that the Major was not at all serious when he used this, for surely a subsidy of \$60 or \$70 per year that will ensure some worried mother the