

surance. If the value has increased, as this shows it has ... the effect is very important on our economy as I consider it. When I was a member of this Finance Committee considering this Economic Report I stated at the start that I did not think it necessary to introduce a budget. I was asked to draft a report, which I did — a very short report. It took me two days to do, but I produced this report at the Committee and Major Cashin said that he did not want to introduce it. He said that he wanted to make up this report and produce it. I did not blame him a bit, but I could not agree with what was going into it, and I simply withdrew. I thought it was read very well, was well prepared, and the only objection I have is that it may mislead people. In the short report that I prepared there were one or two things that are not in Major Cashin's report, and I would like to call your attention to them.

I would like to read first of all my reasons for leaving out the estimates. My suggestion was that the difficulty of furnishing really valuable figures was so great under present world conditions that any forecast might be considered a waste of time.... We know what the present situation is, and we know that the situation we can see immediately ahead is very good, but I don't think we can really forecast actual figures. One of the things that makes it clear, one of the points of difference, is what has recently occurred in connection with the saltfish trade — the difficulty of getting exchange. A few months ago, before there was any question of the exchange, we all felt very happy about the situation. That situation has been temporarily solved by the government advancing the money themselves, but that is only a temporary cure. I am not, however, at all pessimistic about the future of the fishery; and I believe that the fresh fish plants and the possibility of central curing stations, will make a great difference in our fish situation.

....One of the points that I thought should have been brought out very strongly was that the standard of living of our people today is a very different thing to what it was in 1934, or 1944 rather. Today we find the average Newfoundlander enjoying undoubtedly a much higher standard of living than ever before. My friend Mr. Smallwood over there read a letter from an individual fisherman, and Mr. Hollett rightly pointed out, I think, that we always have some

people in trouble. It will always be so. You can find the same thing in any city, but I think the general condition of our people today is very much improved. I think the people are becoming more accustomed to thinking for themselves, and this is largely due to factors such as the circulating regional libraries, the adult education movement, the co-operative committees, the agricultural societies, the Jubilee Guilds, the Junior Red Cross Association, and our Memorial University College, and I should not fail to mention the increased intelligence and diligence of the various unions all over the country. It is making people think more than they used to do, and that is one of our chief assets, a sign of improvement for the future. I think it helps us to look at the future in a more hopeful way than we have done in the past. Undoubtedly the taxable capacity of the economy has been increased to where it can produce revenues which, in addition to being able to defray the normal costs of government, can support more public and social services than we have ever hitherto had, and yet leave a surplus of perhaps a million or so to spare at the end.

...I would like to refer to the comment in this report on the question of trade with the USA. This to my mind is the vital question in connection with our future economy unless we can do without the fish trade, but it is the vital point in connection with all the future of the fish trade.... I have had the idea for a very long time that if we could get some round table conferences between representatives of Canada, Great Britain and the United States, we would get somewhere. Now this report indicates that would have to be done by a government of our own, and it might be so; but supposing for the sake of argument that the country did elect to continue Commission of Government, I don't see any reason why, if there is a proper agitation, Commission could not have such a conference. But this report indicates that it would have to be done by a constitutional government. That might not be necessary. Of course in case of confederation the thing would simply fall through. It would be impossible.

I would like to wind up by saying I have great pleasure in supporting the concluding paragraphs of the report, as I believe that we are self-supporting, and that we will continue to be self-supporting for very many years ahead....