

the government. I have my suspicions and they're dirty enough. But I do know that whatever the reasons, the Commission of Government did keep the wages down and lost this country, the people of this country, from \$30-40 million.

Mr. Chairman It doesn't follow that the Commission of Government may or may not have influenced employers of labour in this country into keeping wages down below what they otherwise would have been, as a result of pressure exerted by any particular class in the community including the merchant class. I have no brief for the merchant class or any other class here, but I do think that if questions which are calculated to produce class warfare, if you will, are going to be introduced, then their foundation must be statements of fact, not merely conjecture or opinion or speculation or anything else.

Mr. Jackman I feel that it is right to rise here this evening, to talk on this matter because I feel we are dealing more or less with the Financial Report.... I hold no brief for the Commission of Government, never did nor never will. But at the same time I believe in giving credit where credit is due. I have had a number of occasions in the past to have interviews with the Commission of Government regarding the condition of labour on Bell Island.

Mr. Chairman In your official capacity as a labour leader?

Mr. Jackman Yes, and during our conversations the question of wages at the bases were brought up. And I wish to say here and now that whilst the Commission of Government was the instrument in pegging the wages, they had to do so through outside pressures. Vested interests demanded of the Commission government that...

Mr. Chairman Who?

Mr. Jackman Vested interests.

Mr. Chairman Who?

Mr. Jackman Dominion Steel Company, Bowaters, AND and the rest of them.

Mr. Smallwood Let's have it.

Mr. Jackman Well, that's it. That is exactly the situation. At that time, when the Americans first came in here, we were ourselves trying to get a little extra money in the pockets of our workers. I haven't any doubt whatever now that if it wasn't for the advent of the Americans in here, we wouldn't have been as successful as we were. Sir,

we did get an award from an arbitration board which was chaired by a good Newfoundlander, in my opinion anyway, Judge Dunfield, who gave us an award, 18 cents above the wages paid at Argentina and other American bases, and also an award above the amount paid by the Highroads Commission. Now last year right here I asked a question regarding the rates paid by the Commission of Government to their employees. When I asked the question I knew at the time what they were paying. They were paying insofar as organised labour was concerned, 18 cents below the rates; and they stepped it up 10 cents more after my question was posed here in the House. I have since been informed, I haven't checked on it, but I have since been informed they have dropped back to the old rate of 40 cents. Now it's not my point here this afternoon to attack Commission of Government or any form of government. I realise the time will come for that later when we get to forms of government. But since the labour question was brought up, I can verify this much and produce evidence if necessary, that the Commission of Government was not wholly responsible, yet in my opinion they were because a government is supposed to look after the needs of the people first. But the Commission of Government in regard to pegging wages for Newfoundlanders on the bases was directed by outside influences, that is the big corporations in Newfoundland. That is the situation. If the Commission of Government, I say again this in their favour, were not pressed to keep these wages down, I have no doubt whatever that the very rate which the Americans wanted to pay would have been paid. But it was by the vested interests in this country that the wages of labour were kept down and not the Commission of Government. They were only the agent.

Mr. Fudge I think Mr. Smallwood said that he knew all about it. That may be correct. But I think there's a few things that Mr. Smallwood has not been acquainted with just yet. However, I shall not take time to explain it because the thing is past. But I would like to say that when the Americans and Canadians came here, the rate of wages was set at 30 cents. Along with the Federation of Labour, the President of the FPU and the Lumbermen's president, there might be another, we had several meetings with the officials of the Americans, Canadians and the government. We