

I'll take the report of the Fisheries Post-War Planning Committee first. It says, "Foreign trade is the very life blood of Newfoundland and every effort should be made to co-operate with other producing countries in endeavouring to find solutions for the numerous problems which will face the saltfish trade in the post-war years."¹ It goes on to say that Newfoundland has no bargaining power with most countries consuming her saltfish, and consequently it was to the British government that Newfoundland had to look for protection. We have had bargaining powers in the past. Did we use them? I cannot understand why we, a maritime race, had to look to Britain in the past; before steam at the end of World War I forced our sailing vessels from the sea we were in a more fortunate position than we are today. Now we have had two world wars; wealth, as we knew it in 1914, has been practically blasted from the earth. All nations have become creditor nations either to their own peoples or outsiders.... We today are a fortunate people if we face and plan for the future....

I don't think the saltfish business is dead, but I firmly believe the time has come for a rejuvenation, and a nation with a backbone instead of a wishbone can do just that. This country has the resources to feed its people and could feed, clothe and house ten times as many more in a manner comparable with any frontier people. This will mean very careful planning unless we are going to continue in the same old *laissez-faire* way. If so, then heaven help us. The time has definitely come to call a halt and we must get busy and seriously co-operate along entirely different and more progressive lines if we ever hope to become economically independent.

There is not one market that we had and lost that would have gone out of our keeping if we had shipped the proper quality fish, except those markets wherein the people have built their own ships and caught their own fish. Ever since I can remember I have heard it said that everything is OK if the quintal of fish buys the barrel of flour. It is when the price of flour is up and the fish down that the people worry. What steps have we taken to ensure our people that we can sell fish and buy flour? Not from 1931 to 1940, however. Look at our exports of fish in 1936-37, 965,699 quintals — a drop of 766,688 quintals below the

1908-09 score of 1,732,387 quintals. Now that should make one wonder how our people were fed. Bread from British mills, mostly from Spillers, bakers in Cardiff. Why did we get flour from there? Because Britain was supplying manufactured goods to Australia, Argentina and Canada and was getting wheat from them. Is it possible that with 150,000 square miles of this earth we could not find anything to trade with those countries to get wheat to feed 280,000 people? What was wrong? Let us examine the situation closely. Just where were those superb young seamen that the British Admiralty called for in October 1939 for boarding boats' crews? On the crossroads of every village in Newfoundland, their hands nearly worn off through keeping them in their pockets so long, because somebody could not operate a merchant marine as cheaply as other countries. We had no ships. Who, when we were borrowing money by the millions, would not allow five ships to be built for the trade of the colony, who was to blame? Who in a changing world expected to carry on in the same old way? But look what we got. Now, the path is ahead of us today, a thorny path if we take the wrong turning, but a path that will give our people freedom from fear and freedom from want if we do what can and should be done. We have it in our hands today, let us plan wisely. Today we have no deadwood and we have a backlog, if I may use those terms. By that I mean we have no fleet of sailing vessels, the deadwood, like we had after the last war, which high insurance and low freight rates made obsolete in a few years. To enable us to enter the maritime field the people of Newfoundland, through the government, have nearly \$40 million, that is what I meant by the backlog. We have no obsolete ships like Norway and Iceland. We can start from scratch with all modern improvements in the ship of today, and this is where this island home of ours can begin to live. In the past we had to sell our fish in cheap markets and buy our food in dear ones, we had no chance to barter. The lack of a merchant marine has done that to us, for no country today, no matter how willing they are to sell for cash, can sell to a country when they have no cash. Formerly you could sell to one country for cash and take that cash to another country and buy goods, but that is impossible today. There-

¹Volume II:246.