

to satisfy such abnormal replacement demand. It so happens then, that significant proportions of the \$40 million we shall likely realise this year derive from extraordinary rather than the ordinary needs of the people. Since such is the case, it could be that \$30 million would be a more appropriate figure from which to begin to figure....

However, my major concern for the immediate future is rooted in the uncertainty that hangs over the whole world. If everything goes just right with the world everything will go all right with us. If it doesn't, I prefer not to think of the consequences. Two months ago something did not go right — England froze the convertibility of sterling. Overnight we were no longer so certain that we were self-supporting. We needed \$7 million to tide us over the crisis and the winter. Such was the meager measure of our much-vaunted self-support. And had it happened that we were not able to dig down in our own pocket for that, a great many of our fishermen would be finding little evidence of self-support in their open receipts.

For the future, of this much only can we be certain — that if everything goes just right in the world we will manage to get along. If the Marshall Plan goes into effect; if the world's exchange problems can be solved; if the Geneva multilateral trade arrangements come to be ratified and extended; if the US won't up the tariff on our fresh fish; if the world price of newsprint stays put; if a hundred and one things go just right, then all will go all right with us — if at home the fishery doesn't fail. For the fishery is still important, and a fishery failure will still mean hungry people. And will the nations of the world take care to conduct their affairs so as to serve our best interests? What is your guess? And don't forget that my guess is as good as yours.

I do regret it if my attitude appears unreasonable, as I know that it must to some. But resolution of the question of self-support at the national level in terms of present and anticipated revenues in excess of expenditures appears to me too simple a solution. I keep seeking a conclusion in terms of the ability of the little fellow to carry on — the little fellow who hasn't got a Cadillac to his name, and who never gets to attend a community concert, but who nevertheless makes up the fibre and sinew of the nation. And I am not so

certain that right at this moment this little fellow enjoys as great a measure of security as he did during the normal times of the past. He has, it is true, a higher income. But it is a question if it means as much to him in terms of the necessities of life as his incomes in the normal times of the past have meant. He has an enormously increased cost of living to contend with. And in that respect, please don't remind me that his salt pork comes in duty free. He also has to have a shirt for his back on which he must pay 40% duty — plus profit, plus profit on the duty. And incidentally who wants to eat salt pork all the year round? I grant you that he may have come to enjoy a measure of precarious self-support. But whether or not he can continue to enjoy in the normal times of the future such meager-enough standards of living and social services as he now knows, is not something on which we can pass judgement at this moment. It is something at which we can but guess.

As has already been pointed out by several speakers it is not our business here to take the optimistic view of the future. It is not our business to take the pessimistic view. It is our business to take the realistic view. And the realistic view is this: if all goes just right with the world we will manage to get along. If not — the deluge.

I am not prepared to accept as conclusive evidence of self-support less than satisfactory evidence that we can hope to see the paltry standards of living and public and social services we now know, maintained for the normal times of the future. And there are far too many imponderables in between now and even this time next year, for anybody to give me categorical assurance of any such thing. I am consequently compelled to an attitude of economic agnosticism. I am convinced that the only thing of which we can be certain is that we cannot be certain. So I cannot join in a categorical assurance to the Newfoundland people that we are self-supporting. The possibility of a precarious self-support I am prepared to admit. But I cannot join in such an assurance as sees no shadows on the road ahead. If others can, be it upon their own conscience. It is a matter of conscience since it cannot be shown to be a matter of fact.

I note that the Economic Report quotes for our edification the late President Roosevelt's famous dictum — "We have nothing to fear but fear