

day and also for our children's children. But in order to be sure of getting three meals a day, we must first put forward some form of constructive or workable plan or plans; and, further we must try and bring into being some kind of insurance scheme whereby, when the labourer can no longer work, there will be a little nest-egg to tide him or her over when nearing the eventide of life. Therefore, we must, of necessity, have some definite fixed plan or plans so that our people can earn their daily bread.

We must have economic security and resources, in order to ensure security for our people, and we have that security on land and sea, especially in the sea and around our coastline; but so far we have not as yet developed or exploited our resources. Why? Because we have no highway running across our country! Mr. Chairman, when east has met west by highway then, as follows night the day, so will follow in large quantities from the various harbours, bays or districts of this country, great quantities of live lobster, fresh salmon, fillets, smelts and blueberries, etc. to the Gander airport to be flown to the great, unlimited western markets of the world in a matter of only hours, not days. All we want is to give that great republic, America, the products they ask for and in the way they should be delivered — strictly fresh quality stock guaranteed number 1. Then it will not be a matter of price, but, "How much can you sell us?"

Therein lies a great deal of prosperity. When once a highroad through this country is completed and the important settlements connected to it, there will be sold by the thousands, cars and trucks and the like, not to mention the extra millions of barrels of gas; all of which will turn into this country a tremendous amount of revenue. Then will follow machine shops, garages, restaurants, hotels, log cabins, fuelling stations, farms and many other unknown things and the Industrial Development Board and Tourist Board will more than be repaid and have its hands full catering to the many and various requests and demands made upon it.

So this is a step in the right direction, and we should give it very careful consideration, as roads are the life of any country. Let us go forward together to build a new Newfoundland that can, and will stand up against the many, many storms

that will beat against and around our shores, and may it be further said of this Convention and of our children, that we have built a firm and solid foundation; and may it bring lasting peace, contentment and prosperity to our shores for all time.

Mr. Jackman I refer to page 4,¹ "The Department estimates that some proportion between 70% and 80% of the annual road maintenance expenditure consists of wages paid to highroads employees." I ask the Committee if the department has a minimum wage rate?

Mr. Smallwood I think the smartest thing I could do is to ask Mr. Fudge — he is the president of the West Coast Labourers' Union and was involved in the wage rates. I think labourers' rates were brought up, and maybe Mr. Fudge can give us the rates in pay on highroads during last year?

Mr. Fudge I might say I am not here to give away any secrets from the organisation which I represent. This is not a secret now, but it may be valuable information to someone seeking further increases for labour. Last year, the organisation I represent took up the matter of low rates paid to workmen, which was 40 cents an hour. Our union secured 58 cents an hour for labourers, and 61 cents or 64 cents for truck drivers. The labour rate is 58 cents in the Humber district. Of course we have good men over there, who may be worth a little more.

Mr. Jackman That is not answering my question. Has the government a minimum basic rate for labourers throughout Newfoundland?

Mr. Smallwood No statutory minimum.

Mr. Jackman Are they paying an equal rate throughout the country? I happen to know some of the men are getting only 20 cents an hour. A highroads labourer in Bell Island gets 40 cents. The government issues a cost of living index for a family of five at \$34.80 a week. How can a man earning \$24 a week live, when the government itself says it costs \$34.80 a week? There is discrimination. I do not see why in one section common labour should be given preference over another part. I congratulate Mr. Fudge in getting this increase for labourers in his section. Why should any government discriminate against its own employees? That is not government, it is mis-government. There should be equal privileges for all.

[There followed a brief discussion of snow clear-

¹Volume II:87.