

had to put on a closed season to protect the fishery. After the season was opened they found, after four or five years, the same thing was happening. They were tinning lobsters and some of the fishermen were not altogether honest. They packed small lobsters and female spawn lobsters, which should have been left there. The government were considering another closed season when another Canadian firm came on the coast buying these lobsters fresh. They were not a large concern.

Mr. Smallwood Buying live lobsters?

Mr. Roberts Yes. They paid pretty nearly what the people were getting for tinned. Then Maritime Packers came in, they opened branches at Lark Harbour and Bonne Bay and after a couple of years, the co-operative business was introduced by the government. The field workers showed the people where they could double their earnings by getting the lobster to market and cutting out the middle men. The first year the co-operatives sold lobsters, they got 20 cents; the Maritime Packers paying 10 cents. They had a lot of expense. The co-operatives began to grow and in three years the whole coast had gone co-operative. Maritime Packers still held their plant at Lark Harbour and were not a branch of the society. Last year they paid 14 cents to 17 cents; average 16 cents a pound. The co-operative society at Rocky Harbour and Bonne Bay averaged after all expenses paid, or loss to the fishermen, 35 cents a pound. There is a great spread between 17 cents and 35 cents a pound. It means the fishermen are doubling their wages. It does not mean they are banking this money — they have more to spend and their standard of living is higher. Another good thing is this — it has centralised the industry. The co-operative officials or inspectors, when a boat comes in, go through the catch and the small lobsters and spawning lobsters are thrown overboard. They cannot be sold. Instead of the industry decreasing, it is increasing every year.

Mr. WattonI am quite in accord with the co-operative movement. I think it is a good thing, but I do not think it is a question of government. I am not very familiar with the co-operative movement, but I do happen to know a little about it and I am in accord with the fundamentals behind the movement. I know for a fact in some cases in this country what the co-operative move-

ment has done. People have come into communities where there are three or four big merchants, with this idea — that they will close every business house in the community. I don't think that's co-operation.

Mr. Bailey Mr. Chairman, I believe in the co-operative movement, and I think it was in the north where the first co-operative movement started in this country. I am sure it was a good thing, but unfortunately transportation was one of the reasons that it was killed. I don't know whether Rev. Burry is conversant with the way the Labrador coast was, back in the years when even if you had money you could not buy anything. Everybody that came along with a pedlar's pack went out of it with the pack just as heavy as when they came in. There was no limit to what they had to sell and the people could not afford it. Dr. Grenfell put in ten stores. The people were up against it, but the stores carried on until 1928 anyway, I don't know if they are still in operation now, but I believe if they had had the right system the people would have benefitted a lot.

The question was put here yesterday, "Was the government behind the co-operative movement"? Absolutely, I am sure of that, but an awful long way behind. I don't know whether the rest of the members of this Convention believe that the co-operative movement is a long time overdue in this country, but I certainly do. I don't see why we have to be at the beck and call of somebody else when we can get together and produce, and I believe the day will come when Newfoundland is going to come to the top, and every man that is interested will be able to market what he produces. I came in here in 1939 from a district that was suffering, and on the way home I met a bunch of lads and lasses between Winterton and Hant's Harbour and I was wondering if I could get a lift home. I asked who they were and they said they were the co-operative workers. I said the government needed to get the people interested in co-operation. I believe the government would have done a lot in those days with a clear, sane policy, when they had to give out the money to the people. There was not a village in Newfoundland that did not have a percentage of people on the dole. They could have taken a truck and gone to some central place and bought the food and divided it among themselves instead of buying from the retailer. You would have had the