

the economic condition of the people here.

Mr. Chairman My position is, I have only to concern myself with expressions of opinion by members on motions before the Chair. I am therefore not concerned with expressions of opinion outside this chamber, from members of the public to members who comprise this National Convention. I am afraid, Mr. Smallwood, in consistency with the line of demarcation I have drawn, I cannot allow you to read the letter.

Mr. Smallwood I will not read the letter, but I shall proceed to give a description of the conditions as they exist on the island of St. Brendan's. *[Applause from the gallery]*

Mr. Chairman This is not a matter for applause. Mr. Smallwood, would you please address your remarks to me and not play the gallery. If you want to express an opinion on St. Brendan's or on any part of the island, it is your right.

Mr. Higgins Providing it is based on facts.

Mr. Chairman Not being inspired and therefore not knowing what is coming, I cannot make a pronouncement upon what is going to be said. It is Mr. Smallwood's right to express his opinion on any question pertaining to any section of the island covered by the Economic Report. With that in mind, you may proceed.

Mr. Smallwood St. Brendan's Island is one of the largest islands on the coast of Newfoundland. It is entirely a fishing settlement. The people do some inshore fishing, some Labrador fishing and some squid fishing. This year they were encouraged at the outset to concentrate on the squid fishery. They were offered 35 cents a pound for dried squid, and many of them dropped everything else and went at the squid fishery. They did very well, but having caught and made the squid, they now find they cannot sell any of it whatever; that no buyer will take any of it; no shopkeeper will trade any food for it, and these people cannot get any food whatever for their squid. They are living, many of them, on the kindness of their neighbours. They have no food for the winter. There is now no flour in St. Brendan's and the people are at their wits' end as to what they are going to do. They cannot get any labour; they cannot get work at Gander; they cannot get work in the lumberwoods; they cannot get it in St. John's; the fishery is over; the fish is useless to them; they have no food; they have no money, and yet these people are told it is a prosperous

country and that its future is assured. The people down there, as in many other places in the island today, are wondering what is going to happen; whether they will be driven back on the dole, the thought of which they hate, or whether work will be found for them; or whether some arrangement will be worked out whereby cash can be put up — if not cash, then food — for the product of their toil all through these summer and fall months. I have no intention of making a speech. I was not permitted to read a letter describing at first hand the economic conditions among these hardy and very fine people on the island of St. Brendan's. So I have given you a description of it and now the country knows it.

Mr. Hollett Could I ask Mr. Smallwood the authority for that factual statement he has just made?

Mr. Smallwood I will be happy to give the authority; it is Mrs. Ed White of the island of St. Brendan's.

Mr. Butt ...I have listened attentively to the debate for the last four or five days, and whether this man is an optimist, whether this man is a pessimist, whether this man is a realist, and all the other words which can be so contentious; but I always ends up with the feeling, "So what"? Since we have been an island, our people have suffered. The millennium has not come for Newfoundland any more than for any other country, and I beg leave to express my doubts on the future of Newfoundland. I express my doubts on the future of UNO. I express my doubts on the welfare of the United Kingdom in the years to come. But what do I do? I sit down and think what I can do about it. I do not allow myself to get into the doldrums. I face up to the situation as I see it, hoping to God that I may be able to do something about it.

If I had written this Economic Report, the wording and the approach might have been somewhat different; but in the end I should have wound up by agreeing with it substantially, and I would not think of myself as either an optimist or a pessimist in ending up that way. I would have looked at the terms of reference and found that what we are supposed to do is to discuss the changes that have taken place in the financial and economic situation of the island since 1934.... I would have asked myself, what was the position of the fishery in 1934 and what is its position