

and comment. Now, with regard to the Economic Report,¹ there is nothing to stop the Finance Committee from preparing it. I am only one member of the committee — there are eight or nine others. I cannot see why the load should be thrown on me to prepare the Economic Report when there are eight or nine members just as competent as I am. With regard to the Finance Report, briefly, it is divided into four portions. The first relates to the government from 1909-1920. If my memory serves me right, it shows that in that period, under responsible government, we had a surplus of some \$7 million. The next section deals with the government from 1919-20 up to the time Commission took over in 1933-34, and it shows we had an average deficit, if my memory serves me correctly, of \$2 million a year. Then it goes from 1933-34 to 1939-40, and it shows the deficits had increased, even though a reduction in interest annually had been made of \$2 million. Finally it winds up with the period 1940 to March 31, 1947, and it shows we had surplus in cash of something over \$30 million. In other words, the Finance Report was a cash book, and showed we had available at the moment surpluses of around \$30 million. The report covers the railway from the time it was taken over by the government in 1923 to the present time, and shows it cost \$30 million in deficits and capital expenditure. It shows the taking over of the Newfoundland Hotel — we paid \$450,000, and up to the present time it has cost considerable additional money. It is not an economic report. The position of an economic report, as I understand it, would be the presentation of a budget. Well, I am going to take the position now that this House, under the terms of reference, has not any power to prepare a budget, and that is what an economic report is. Last year, when this Convention opened, Mr. Wild told us it would cost from \$23-23.5 million a year to administer the affairs of Newfoundland. Now we have another budget which shows that Mr. Wild was wrong.² He did not know what he was talking about. They have raised it up \$4 million. We find today, according to the Commissioner for Finance, that it is going to cost \$27 million, in addition to which there is to be an expenditure on capital account of \$10-12 million. For the life of me, I cannot see how

anyone here, under these circumstances, can prepare an economic report, because we have no stability; there is no one in the government with the stability to foreshadow a budget. We cannot be sure it is going to be carried out, because the Commission will not take advice from us.

The London delegation went away to England trying to find out if we could get anything on which to build a budget. We were told to mind our own business and come home. We were told, "We will give you an order for fish, if we feel like it; we will give you an order for iron ore if we feel like it." Personally, I feel I would not be able to prepare an economic report on my own, and under the circumstances I have to plead I am unable to do it, and I challenge the fact that anyone else is able to do it. We know we are self-supporting. Lord Addison told us we were self-supporting; Mr. Wild told us we were self-supporting; Mr. Attlee in the House of Commons in December 1945 said so; Lord Cranborne said so. Better authorities than I am have told us we are self-supporting. Whether we will be self-supporting in years to come, no one knows — not even me, not even Lord Addison or anyone else; not even Mr. Smallwood. We have been assured that if we had a government — any other form of government — we would have power to find out whether we are able to sell our fish; whether we are able to sell ore. We know we can sell newsprint — it is a private business — and there is a big demand for it. The three major industries in Newfoundland are, today, fish, iron ore, Buchans and pulp and paper. We know where we stand in regard to pulp and paper; we know there is a big expansion going on. A motion was brought in to send a delegation to Washington to try and find out about sales of fish and iron ore, and we were told it was not within our terms of reference. Why does not the government of the country do something about it? The government cannot do it because we were told in London that the British government is not in a position to approach the United States and ask them whether they could give us any concessions, and they will not allow the people of Newfoundland to do it. That is the position also with regard to iron ore. "We will take it if we can." They told us in 1930 that our iron ore was not suitable for their fur-

¹Volume II:425.

²The 1947-48 budget, prepared by the Commissioner for Finance, R.I.M. Jones.