

right. So now I am going to give you first-hand information as to just how sound the Labrador branch of the codfishery is at the moment — I shall call the play exactly as I find it, November 1947 edition. With the past I have little concern, rather I am concerned with what we shall eat and wear in the years that lie immediately ahead. So, with the indulgence of this House, I'll get district-minded and talk of things as they really are in my constituency of Bonavista North, and I understand this goes for all of the northeast coast, for, as said a gentleman speaking yesterday, "A country is as self-sufficient as its people." Now permit me to refer you to the Economic Report, page 30:

Summarising what we have said with regard to our fishing industry, it would seem that the outlook for the Newfoundland fisheries is anything but discouraging. Indeed, judging from the evidence available and the opinion of those qualified to speak, it would seem that we have entered upon a new era—the era of modernised methods, faster production and more profitable markets. And it is not unreasonable to say that the adoption of methods which have brought prosperity to such a country as Iceland, cannot fail but bring similar results to the 30,000 of our people engaged in the fishing industry of Newfoundland.

Now the junior member for "B Block" will have the temerity to give his frank opinion, based on first-hand knowledge of this phase of the industry. The economy of the Labrador codfishery is so shot to pieces that the individual fisherman at this moment is just one short jump ahead of the dole, and if there is to be any Labrador fishery next season, if the Labrador fisherman sails up the coast in a schooner, he will go only with a guarantee of his security, or, to put it plainer, he will go only with a guaranteed minimum salary at the end of the voyage. I have an interest in three schooners which this year prosecuted the fishery, and the 30 men on board these schooners each one declared the day he arrived home, "Not again brother, my last trip", and do you wonder? The season coming as the smashing climax to a cycle of three bad years, the fisherman is fed up. Schooners are being put on the block, codtraps are being auctioned. Is this encouraging? I'll pause here for a moment and

ask that question of my hard-boiled, industrious old friend, fishing master Capt. Billy Winsor of Wesleyville. He gave up the fight discouraged, after 40 years up coast, and he's as good a fisherman as ever trod a deck. I'll pause and ask that question of hard-driving fishing skippers, Capt. Malcolm, and Charles Rodgers of Fair Island; I'll ask that question of the shoremen in Cape Freels and at Musgrave Harbour, who wondered what they'd do with the fish when they told them about the convertibility of sterling. I'll ask the chap in Newtown with whom I talked ten days ago, who told me his summer's catch of fish was in his store, and he wanted flour and couldn't get it. Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'll ask them the question, and am well content to await their replies, and quite satisfied to abide by their decisions.

I am not suggesting that government or vested interest can make fish swim at specific periods in specific harbours, so that our schooners may secure substantial loads; but I do want to point out that the Labrador phase of the industry employs a lot of our people, and I am not satisfied in my own mind that the fishery generally is anything but discouraging. The Labrador fishery at the moment is flat on its back; some fishing skippers have lost everything, and sharemen-fishermen have given up all plans of going back to the coast. This is not exaggerated. Look up your papers and read the schooners advertised for sale. I am conversant with every angle of this industry, and if this house, or the Commission of Government wants some corroboration, they have only to have a look-see around the northeast coast of Bonavista Bay, and it will be put to them in very strong terms. Modernise your methods, centralise your fisheries, establish dollar credits, invoke the Marshall Plan, transform and refashion, my prayers go with your petitions in this respect, gentlemen of the Economic Committee, but your vested interests, or your government had better bestir themselves, for it is later than you think.

Allow me to summarise; 1947 finds thousands of our fishermen with an average seasonal catch of 30 quintals per man, valued at less than \$11 per quintal; 1947 finds our fishermen, all fine adaptable fellows, seeking employment in the woods, to try to augment their meager earnings; and the last straw that breaks the camel's back, this past week I talked with Labrador fishermen