

decision, it would appear futile to ask that government to initiate new proposals. Further, as a Convention we have not yet clearly defined our own status. I must confess that I read into our terms of reference wider powers than we as a body have yet assumed. This, although it has an important bearing on the question now before us, is a problem which will take more definite shape. In the meantime, I suggest that the committee's proposal be accepted unanimously and that we ought in the days before us clarify our minds as to how Newfoundland should proceed with the important question of seeking adequate returns for benefits shared.

Mr. Hickman This first report presented to the Convention is perhaps one of the most important on which debate will take place. I am not directly interested in the fishing industry myself, but am vitally concerned with the contents of this report inasmuch as it affects the welfare of this country as a whole. I have studied the report with interest and find that we have made some great strides in advancement in this particular phase of the fishing industry. From the original start, which covered only items such as salmon, blueberries and smelts, we have in a very short while through keen progressiveness reached the worthwhile figure of approximately 30 million pounds of fresh cod frozen in its various forms of fillets.

For this country to be economically sound and to continue as such, the economic welfare of the people and particularly of the primary producer must also be sound. This can only be in fact when we can have these dependent upon our first and largest industry earning an economic living wage. While the paper and mining industries may be the largest in certain respects, yet the fishing industry with its various types of production is the mainstay of the majority of the people in this island. While these larger industries provide employment and other sources of revenue, yet it is the primary producer who is the backbone of this country, even though there may be yet undeveloped mines and other natural resources which may come into operation within the next few years. There are approximately 25,000 fishermen directly employed in the production of fish and by-products, and if we allow them an average of four dependents to a family, that would give us approximately half of our population. We must not forget that in addition to these

producers there are many who derive their living from the necessary work involved in conjunction with the handling, packaging and exporting of our production, such as coopers, truckmen, longshoremen and other intermediary workers. These, together with the fishermen and their dependents give us an estimated half of our population who are directly dependent upon the various phases of our productive economy.

Although great strides have been made in recent years it is obvious that our production must not only include codfish, but other types of fish as well. I cannot give an accurate estimate of what the country's total production need be to produce a secure standard of living. But I imagine it would have to be raised to something over one million, to possibly two million pounds a year, so that a lower cost could be gained, and at the same time give the maximum return and benefit to the producer.

The most important point of the interim report is contained in the introductory remarks of Mr. Job. He reported that "The United States market is our main hope for the future." I consider that a very pertinent point. Tariff arrangements should be concluded with the United States that will assure us of being able to dispose of our fish products on a fair competitive basis, and I feel that an assurance or arrangement must be concluded for a length of time that will give us a source of security for the Newfoundland producer.

It may not be within the rights of this National Convention to recommend or suggest policy to our present government, but I do feel that our point, if unanimously adopted by this Convention, should be brought as strongly as possible to the attention of both our present government and that of the United States, as well as our Canadian friends. In the event of any negotiations coming from this recommendation it might be wise to point out to our Canadian friends that in this instance we would not wish to have any repetition of interference or blocking, as occurred with the Bond-Blaine treaty.

The whole future of this country depends upon this great industry and we cannot be too strong in our efforts to obtain security for the future. The decision of this Convention as to the form or forms of government which should be recommended to the people of Newfoundland must