

a measure of financial benefits from our geographical position in the last war, we will suffer being the front line battleground of the next, and we will pay both in manpower and cash. All this we are only too conscious of, and it would be folly on our part to ignore these unpleasant facts. I presume this Convention will, in due course, bring in an Economic Report based on the substance of the findings of the various committees.... Regardless of how critical we may be over the construction or interpretation of certain actions by the powers ruling us, we do agree on the main basic principles. As far as the cost of government goes, this has increased in every country out of all proportion to what the people should be called upon to pay. Newfoundland is not the exception and the public are only too conscious of this unpleasant fact; but it is the duty of the next government to cut not only the number but the cost to a minimum, more in harmony with the requirements and earnings of our people. We have studied the figures for over a year, and believe it or not our people are interested in hearing our conclusions and have expected this whole business to wind up long ago. Nine out of every ten of our listening public are well informed on the cost of all governments and none of the whole 100% would do much better if they were there. Newfoundlanders generally are wondering, "Where do we go from here?" If I were given the privilege of moulding a plan for this country, I would first restore to Newfoundland full dominion status....

Mr. Chairman We are not discussing forms of government at this time.... Let me again please remind members that the primary duty of the Convention, and you are now engaged upon it, is to consider the financial and economic position of the island as and from 1934. Then after that you will go on to consider the question of future forms of political institutions. I must ask members at this time if they would confine themselves strictly to the Financial Report....

Mr. Vardy I respect your ruling and I will drop a paragraph. I have heard other members discuss forms of government and you did not interfere.

Mr. Chairman If the inference is that I have discriminated in favour of certain men, I can only apologise. I am merely attending for the fourth time. It will take time to get a working grasp of what goes on.

Mr. Vardy I understand that. You will agree with me it is also difficult for us; after all, we are only laymen. It is difficult in discussing the Finance Report to avoid touching on the political side. However, I will drop out a paragraph. Now it would be monotonous to the public for every member to get up to repeat these figures we have heard the past few days, and I propose to give a brief resume of the present position as I see it after giving the whole matter exhaustive study and consideration.

Mr. Chairman, if our cash balances were applied to our liabilities, our per capita debt would be in the vicinity of something like \$115 per head — a very healthy position indeed. Two of our staple industries, paper and mining, never were in a healthier condition. Our fishing industry has received an unexpected setback, as it was generally felt the past spring that prices would be as good as last year, but in reality, apart from the matter of exchange, the average price received by the fishermen is really about \$2 less, \$1 directly on the price and at least \$1 on the cull. I fear the price of fish will gradually come down; but I am optimistic enough to believe that great strides will be made in the matter of modern curing, handling and marketing, and the millions from the fish-eating countries who have migrated to the central and western states will be reached with our fish products packed and cured under the most modern and sanitary conditions. The Marshall Plan will, if accepted, leave many millions of American dollars in Newfoundland for herring and other sea products to be shipped to Europe in a similar manner to the UNRRA pack, and replacing it in perhaps a bigger way. Our lumber industry has taken a temporary slump, but we have no surplus of lumber to cause any real anxiety in this respect. New industries are cropping up in many of the larger outports as well as St. John's, absorbing many of the men who have been left idle through most of the base works being finished.

The general overall picture is as bright for us as for any other country we know. Yet I would not say that Newfoundland will always run as a separate entity in the British Commonwealth — it may even in the very near future unite with her neighbours on the continent — but looking back at the manner in which our country's pride, wealth and territory have been needlessly sacrificed