

*The Address—Mr. W. J. Browne*

The federal government has an army of ambassadors, consuls, and trade commissioners abroad. In paying taxes I presume the people of Newfoundland help to keep them there. What benefit are they to us unless they are going to help our trade? I hope they will help us out. I am very glad to be able to say—and I presume the hon. member for Trinity-Conception (Mr. Stick) will be glad to know this—that Spain has agreed to buy 200,000 quintals of fish this year. I raised that matter last year on several occasions, and I am glad to see that the deal is going through. I trust that trade will continue. It is an old trade which goes back 400 years. We should also have trade with Italy and Greece because those countries want our cod. The little province of Newfoundland only has 350,000 people, and codfish is a commodity which I believe means more to a larger number of people in Newfoundland than any other commodity means to the people of any other province of Canada. It will be very helpful to the people of Newfoundland if codfish can be sold in these countries. That means that dollars must be found for the sterling with which we will be paid.

I hope I am not unmindful of all the difficulties confronting the government, the huge expenditures involved in foreign affairs, the transportation system, social benefits, national defence, industry and agriculture. I believe the social benefits provided to Newfoundland by the federal government amount to over \$20 million a year which is a very sizable sum indeed, and we are certainly grateful. Nevertheless it must be remembered, and I think everyone will admit, that we have to pay our share towards these expenditures. Beneficial as they are, the welfare of any country depends more on the development of its agriculture, trade and commerce and other industries than on social benefits. It is not possible to tell how confederation is going to work out for Newfoundland, but it is not a one-way street. We pay taxes to the dominion also. On the purchase of goods we spend money which is put into circulation in the other provinces of the dominion. It is very difficult to estimate the amount of money which we pay in taxes. Of course the solution of the problem will depend upon the policy of the dominion in regard to the matters I have mentioned.

Finally, I trust hon. members will appreciate what I am about to say. When I came here last year I did not come with any special love for Canada. I admit that I was welcomed and received as a brother, and I appreciate that. I took the attitude that I would use whatever talent or ability I possessed to

further the interests of the whole nation. I can understand the feelings of my colleague as expressed in his passionate outburst the other night. I know how he feels about things. I believe I understand how he feels better than anybody else. We are only flesh and blood and we can be stirred to say the things that are deep in our hearts. I am prepared to work for the prosperity of this country in any way that I can with my poor humble ability.

Therefore, in all seriousness I should like to make the following recommendations as a concrete suggestion. Hon. members of the government may think they are extravagant, and they may find them difficult to accept. Nevertheless I recommend that now, and not eight years from now when Newfoundland has gone into a morass: 1. A royal commission should be set up under section 29 of the terms of union (a) to determine the annual grant necessary for Newfoundland to carry on its provincial activities, bearing in mind the revenue it can produce itself, and (b) to determine the freight rate structure. If they cannot come to a final decision at the present time let them make a temporary decision on the freight rate question. Let that be a subject into which the royal commission can go more fully at their leisure. (c) They should investigate how they can best assist the fisheries because these mean so much to the people of that province.

Then I recommend that the federal government do all it can to assist the development of agriculture. Last year the sum of \$80 million or \$90 million was spent on agriculture. What proportion of that was spent in Newfoundland? I suggest that it was very small, much less than we were entitled to. I also recommend that the federal government arrange for the provision of dollars for the sale of fish to the sterling area. The merchants of Newfoundland must carry on that fish export business. They have a nightmare and constant headache with 28,000 fishermen to consider. Think of how many families and how many thousands of people are involved in that proposition. That arrangement should be made by the federal government. They should create a national harbour at St. John's. There are national harbours in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, and there should be one at St. John's. The government should provide more funds for the construction and improvement of public and marine works which were neglected for so many years. The Minister of Public Works knows—I have drawn conditions in my district to his attention from time to time. He also knows he is spending a good deal of money in other districts. Wharves have fallen down and