

was a fact-finding body. It is unfortunate, therefore, that it fell into the realm of fortune telling. It cost us a lot of money to have our palms crossed. It is even more unfortunate that although a special section of the preliminary report is devoted to the Atlantic provinces, the best decision the commission could arrive at with respect to the far eastern section of Canada was this—and I shall read from the report itself:

What is required is a positive and comprehensive approach to the problems of the Atlantic region. With this as the objective, it is suggested that the people of Canada as a whole might be willing to assist the people of the Atlantic provinces in discovering, developing and making the best use of resources in that area.

It says "might be willing". The report continues:

If it should turn out that there is not the necessary combination of resources in sufficient quantities to permit a substantial rise in living standards in the Atlantic region, generous assistance should be given to those people who might wish to move to other parts of Canada where there may be greater opportunities.

And here a note of sanity pervades the atmosphere:

But even if assistance is provided for those people who might be willing to move elsewhere, many people undoubtedly would prefer to remain where they are, despite the handicaps referred to.

That is a profound conclusion. The report continues:

People who so choose should at the same time be prepared to accept a different kind of life, or certainly life at a different tempo, and lower levels of income, though not necessarily a lower standard of living in its broadest sense, than people in certain other parts of Canada.

Honourable senators, I have tried hard to look upon this recommendation with a tolerant eye, but I must say that I have no alternative other than to believe that what is proposed for the people of the Atlantic provinces by this much talked about report is something in the nature of an economic concentration camp. It is hardly flattering to the people involved and it is no more flattering to the authority in this country which was responsible for the setting up of this royal commission.

Honourable senators, this commission which could easily peer into the future for 25 years to determine the trend of the whole Canadian economy, could not see 25 minutes, even 25 seconds ahead in the case of the people of the Atlantic region. Help them if you like, it says in effect to the people of Canada, but if there is nothing there, bonus them to move out. It is a most lamentable document and one to which the people of the country where I live will not take kindly.

I would remind the commission that humans are members of the upper animal kingdom

and not the lower animal kingdom; that it might be possible to move cattle and pigs in mass migration, but certainly not the people of a free country, and certainly not the people of Nova Scotia. It is true that we have a little province with an economy which does not compare with other sections of Canada, because nature was not so kind to us, but we have in that province the descendants of those who succeeded the original inhabitants.

Our people in Nova Scotia are of English, French, Scottish, Irish, and Hanoverian ancestry. I should have put the French first, because they came there first. However, that is the sturdy stock that is now represented in Nova Scotia. The foreign population, as it is generally called, is negligible. I want to stress that in our province the people, whether Christian or Jew, are first Nova Scotians, and that nothing short of a giant tidal wave could ever dislodge them from their habitations. Certainly, honourable senators, nothing in the nature of a report from the Gordon Commission, or any other commission, could do so. These people have their roots deep in the soil. There they are, and there they will remain. I trust we shall have no more nonsense about this business of migration. If there is a desire to help, let it reflect itself in the application of the remedies that are needed to cure our economic ills.

Honourable senators, I had resolved to be as dispassionate in a discussion of this matter as have been my honourable confrères who spoke before me. However, I have strayed from the path. I shall therefore endeavour to get back to what may be regarded as near normalcy.

My purpose in speaking is to propose several things which in my opinion, if entered into without loss of time, will greatly improve the economy of Nova Scotia and dissipate any possibility of mass migration. The first that comes to my mind is one of the great national natural assets of that province, namely, the Port of Halifax. Some may think that the Port of Halifax is a parochial issue, and some may assume that the improvement of the port could only benefit the city of Halifax. May I point out that a goodly part of the economy of Nova Scotia is dependent on the prosperity of the Port of Halifax. Not only the people of that city would benefit, but virtually everybody with a livelihood to make. In fact, almost everybody who is in business derives some measure of benefit from a successful Port of Halifax.

Honourable senators, prior to 1867 Halifax caught the attention of the Canadians of that day, who recognized it as one of the great