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CLEVELAND RUBBER COMPANY.

The Exporters' Conference.

MR. HEPBURN.—Regarding Italy. I think it has always been a mistake to confine sales to Mr. Hawes, and as far as our firm is concerned, we believe the proper course for the Advisory Board to adopt is that suggested by Mr. Sellars, viz. that we should be at liberty to sell through whom we like. If the prices named by the Board are recognized by us, then we should be free to sell how we please, provided we stick to the price. Respecting claims; I admit it is the most important of all. A competent man appointed to settle claims would meet the whole difficulty.

MR. H. J. FARLE.—It is not exact, but clear to me this evening just what you are discussing, but I presume you are dealing with the selling of our fish to Italy, and the appointment of Col. Bernard as Trade Commissioner.

THE CHAIRMAN.—The subject is Italy in general.
MR. FARLE.—Then I would like to state that I am totally opposed to that part of it whereby I am compelled to sell fish through a Govt. agent. I want to have a free hand. I am quite willing to meet you and others respecting prices, but I would like to feel more comfortable, than I do now. I do not wish to attribute to any man any suspicion of wrong doing, but at the same time we know that temptation comes strong to us, and in the position in which the Minister of Marine and Fisheries is now placed, I would not have the slightest hesitation in placing everything

in his hands—if he were not an exporter. He is an exporter of fish to all intents and purposes, and I do not feel at all satisfied in my mind that things should go on as they have been going for some time past. Unfortunately since my arrival in town I have heard that we have been transgressing somewhat down north. That I hasten to assure you, Mr. Chairman, was not intentional. I presume whatever mischief has been done can be rectified; but at the same time I do not think you quite understand the position of affairs with us in loading an early cargo, particularly in a year like this. We may be able to load without difficulty a cargo of small shore fish, or of some part large medium, but to put in two-thirds of large in a business like ours is most difficult. We would prefer therefore to be allowed to ship by half. In relation to Italy; if the Government is determined upon placing a man there, I would prefer to have a man of some experience. It would be the last thing in my mind to place a man in any position to carry on my business unless he had some considerable knowledge of it. Col. Bernard may be a good man. We know he has acted very well in the war; but that does not go very far towards making him a good judge of fish. Difficulties are bound to arise, and you will find before long that he will be calling out for instructions as to what to do, all of which will mean considerable trouble to all concerned. I have had a lot of dealings with Italy in the

past. I know we made mistakes with our fish. But Italy is not the market for large fish after the end of the year, and therefore I would give advice to everybody shipping fish, to keep in mind, whenever they have any large fish, by all means keep it clear of Italy. I have not thought this matter of regulations over. Several matters connected therewith are very puzzling, but I presume when all the speeches made by the various speakers are published, and the country is enlightened, we may be able to find out just how we stand. I would like to have a free hand to sell my fish where I please. Like everybody else I am only too glad to give good value in what I sell, but I must have a free hand to place it where I wish. Then there is another very important matter; and as I said before, I do not wish to impute any wrong doing to any man. But suppose, as last year, that the price of fish was fixed say at 80 and we try to sell at that rate and cannot succeed. Then I hear by cable from the Board at St. John's that the price has been reduced 5. It so happens with us that our wire between St. John's and Beaverton is out of order; but assuming that we may not have the information conveyed to us quickly enough to avail of that 75 being realized even then, because it may so happen that I immediately cable to those gentlemen across the water, and they tell me "Thanks very much for your price now, but our orders are filled and we do not want your fish." It would be very awkward to hear afterwards that some people in authority had sold their fish at that price that I was trying to get 75 for and could not succeed. That is one of the objections I would like to have removed. You say you only want to give the matter a fair trial. I would be only too happy to have you do so, but I must protest against that part of it whereby you would force me to sell through a government agent.

MR. J. CAMPBELL.—I think we should settle the price as quickly as possible for Italy. We have enquiries from one or two parties and will have to go away before the end of the month, if not before that. If it will help you to arrive at a price, I might say that the difference in the freight rate on bulk cargoes would be about one half per cent. It is very important we should fix the price this afternoon if possible. I presume the intention of the Export Commission to Brazil is unrestricted sales, as far as selling fish through any channel we please is concerned. If you have 75 for Portugal, then 80 plus the difference into and out 80-5. But if Brazil market, the insurance would give you some indication of what you should ask in Italy—say 82½ to 85. That is for prime No. 1.

MR. JOB.—I have some figures here which may possibly affect the discussion. Shore fish in bulk in Italy, based on 5 freight. Assume the actual cost of that fish is \$10 per qt. Then the full cost allowing for cartage, etc., would be \$10.50. I presume we ought to be entitled to receive a profit of a qt. On the present rate of exchange the cost of that fish is 3.57. Based on my figure of \$3.55. We will have to negotiate. We cannot get a price but we can fix a price as the basis of negotiation, and my idea is that we cannot ask more than 90. It might be No. 1 Italian and 85 for No. 2, for bulk cargoes and casks, as casks can be landed just as cheaply when sent by steamer. It is hard to judge what we should pay shore fish to here. You present calculation, based on the selling price of fish is, that in order to yield 39 here, we will have to get 80 according to present rate of exchange. That might be shaved a little, possibly.

MR. JOB.—I think we should fix a minimum price, and then leave the matter to the buyer. My figures are based on a quarter of a cent discount and two per cent commission, and the 15th September rate of insurance. MR. LEFEVRE.—Regarding Halifax fish, it is not quite agree with you that it competes with ours. I just returned from there where I visited several stores. The fish they got from Newfoundland is placed in driers and redried. That fish is sent to southern markets and they claim we do not dry the fish enough. When they are through curing it, it is like a piece of board. By placing \$12 a qt. on Halifax fish, you simply say to us "You cannot ship any fish." When I was in Halifax I didn't know there was any price fixed, and when I was told it was \$12 a qt. I did not credit it. A day or so afterwards I saw in the Trade Review that \$12 had to be obtained. It did not mention No. 1 or No. 2. I asked if they expected to buy our fish and they said "No." They intended to buy the Lunenburg catch at \$9.25. If our fish went from here to Halifax and from there to Brazil to compete with ours, it would have a very damaging effect, but seeing that Halifax fish is sent to other places, then if we are not allowed to sell to

Halifax under \$12, we will have to export our fish abroad, and it will still compete with our regular shipments. I do not think it is fair to set such a high price on Halifax fish. All fish sent to Halifax from the West Coast is so much sold and kept out of our other markets. Regarding the West Coast, I may say that I refrained hitherto from saying anything because I have just returned from Canada. I have heard Mr. Patton speaking and he has ably set forth the view of shippers on that section of the coast. However, I will read the following message from the Burin Board of Trade:

"This Board protests against regulations as they stand. Any thing in best interests of country will have our support, but law of supply and demand must rule. As you know our sentiments express them on behalf of Board."

The first meeting in Burin over this matter resulted from the answer to the message of enquiry to the Board sent by Messrs. W. & G. Hollett. They asked for some particulars as to regulations and intended to start loading a vessel. In reply to that message an enquiry a letter came over the signature of the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, which I saw, stating that \$9 had been fixed as the price for No. 2 for Portugal and \$11 for No. 1. We discussed these, and also the information we had received just at the same time from Portugal saying that it would be impossible to get regulation prices there; and that it might be possible to get 60 for small and 65 for large. In the face of these prices we could not pay \$9 and \$11 to the fishermen. After a meeting or two we discussed the matter fully and wrote the Board. I presume they have that letter. In that letter the exporters of Burin plainly set forth that they appreciated the effort on the part of the Advisory Board for the better standardization of fish. They also agreed with the cull and inspection; but they did not agree with the fixing of prices particularly as the price to be paid the fishermen was based on the price ruling in the foreign market, and we had good reason for fearing that, because last fall many shippers sent fish whole, and could not realize the price set forth in the regulations. In no wise was any condemnatory word spoken against the standardization or inspection. I hope the Commission takes the matter up they may reconsider their decision respecting the Halifax market, because I am convinced our fish for Halifax does not go into competition with the Brazil market.

MR. LONG.—Regarding Italy. Is it the opinion of the meeting that the prices suggested by Mr. Job, 90- for No. 1, 85- for No. 2 and 80- for Labrador, should be fixed?

MR. SELLARS.—I move that the price be fixed as follows: No. 1 Shore, 90-; No. 2 Shore, 85-; Labrador, 85-.

THE CHAIRMAN.—I think it would be unwise to decide this now. It would be better to let the matter rest after this meeting. It is all right to have an expression of opinion and I think the Board would be in error of 90- to 85- and 80- in the Brazil market, but if a vote were taken. The last word of course rests with the Board, and even if they recommend it, the Governor in Council might not fix the same price.

THE CHAIRMAN.—You can judge what the feeling of the meeting is. So far as Portugal is concerned, there will be outright war, and nothing else. That is my opinion.

MR. PATEN.—I take it that is the trend of opinion, but I am against the whole thing apart from standardization. I totally oppose the fixing of prices and compulsory sales through any agents. In speaking in this manner I do so on behalf of the shippers I mentioned before.

THE CHAIRMAN.—I should like very much if the 40,000 fishermen interested could listen to the discussions going on at these meetings. They would make up their minds that everyone present felt satisfied that the fishermen had done their part, and that they were all satisfied to have the fishermen prove the quality through standardization, but you all seem to balk when it comes to your own turn to keep prices up. We seem to be very selfish. We are all apt to look at the matter from our own viewpoint, and few consider the general interests of the country, and what will benefit the people as a whole. In my position I in no case place my own personal interests or private interests before those of the public, and in all my connection with the Fisheries Department, you will find that I have been a sufferer rather than a gainer. I look at the matter from a general point of view on behalf of the Colony, and only because I look on it in that way are you here today, and it will take you all your time and patience and effort to endeavor to maintain standardization if you continue to exhibit the attitude which some of you at least have been displaying for the past couple of months. There seems to be too much politics and too much selfish interests mixed up with the matter. All agree with standardization. The part the fishermen has to perform, but as exporters you act as though you had no intention of doing your part, which is to find a way to secure a price that will permit the fishermen to exist. They must do their part, but some of you pray to be excused from carrying out your part of the bargain. There are two sides to this matter as well as to every other. The fishermen will do their part if you do yours. I am here to see standardization carried out and also to see that prices are maintained in order that the fishermen may have a living wage.

MR. LEFEVRE.—That is the point with us in Burin. Mr. Monroe said that standardization should be tried for a year or two before people are fixed. Every thinking man must certainly agree with that point. We have been catching fish for so many years and shipping it in the same way year after year, that it will mean a great wrench to make men change their methods almost overnight. The foreign buyers would resent being forced to pay a fixed price. But if, after a year or two, we keep sending them a good standardized article, they will see they can trust us, and know they will be getting the quality they pay for. Just now you cannot expect them to pay the prices asked because they are not sure of the quality. This is the whole trouble.

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8076 Wallace Prasuyon	St. George's
1223 J. L. Devereaux	621 Victoria Rd., Sydney
1941 Alphonsus Hynes	Fortune
1107 Pte. James Power	7 Duggan St.
3322 Martin Power	1 Hamilton St.
4193 Walter Stoodley	Fortune

Mrs. Annie Murphy, wife of No. 5246 John Murphy, 8 Colonial Street.
Mrs. John V. Ross, wife of No. 1210 John V. Ross, Portugal Cove.
Mr. T. Pardy, mother of No. 5102 J. J. Foley, Burin North.

ROYAL NAVAL RESERVE.

Elias E. Cutler, 691X, 61 3rd Avenue, Maisonneuve, Montreal
Peter Hinks, 2318X, Three Rock Cove, Port-au-Port
Abbey Milley, 2153X, Twillingate
William McFatriage, 2118X, Sandy Point
James Paul, 1715X, St. George's
Patrick Power, 1328X, Marysvalle
Henry C. Simms, 2254X, 12 Convent Lane
William Harvey, 21, Pleasant Street
John Miller, father of late Harold Miller, Portugal Cove.
Mrs. Elizabeth Martin, mother of Cecil Martin, 124 Gower Street.
Mrs. Norman Matthews, wife of Norman Matthews, 70 Patrick Street.

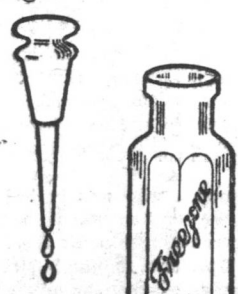
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THE CHAIRMAN.—Regarding Greece. Has anyone any remarks to make? Board be recommended to fix prices at 90-, 85-, and 80- for No. 1, No. 2 and Labrador, respectively.

MR. CAMPBELL.—What about No. 2 Labrador?

THE CHAIRMAN.—That is fixed at \$1.50 less than No. 1.

MR. MONROE.—I would move an amendment to Mr. Sellars' resolution. I think we make a great mistake in putting too high a price on soft-cured Labrador fish. Those who listened to Capt. Kean's address to the Board of Trade must have been struck with his observation that it took only 60 fish to make a qt. of Labrador, whereas it took 100 to make a qt. of dry fish. He pointed out that if the price of Labrador was \$9, the price of Shore should be \$13. We have generally had a difference of only about \$2 a qt., and, during the war, Labrador was selling at about the same price as Shore. The result has been that more people are making slop Labrador all the time. Wesleyville men who used to make the best quality of shore cured Labrador for food are not doing so to-day. Every one on the French Shore is making Labrador slop. If your figures are correct, Mr. Chairman, and there will be a shortage of 600,000 qts. this year, I would estimate that three quarters, if not all of that shortage will be in Shore and not Labrador. A mistake will be made if you put a price on soft cured Labrador at anything like the same price as second quality shore. I argued that before when we were fixing prices for steamers. I can quite realize the force of the argument—"If you can get a good price, why not take it?" But the result of so doing will have a very bad effect on the fishermen. It will result in a much greater supply of Labrador in proportion to the catch than ever before, and it will increase year by year until it is general all over the country. If there had not been 100,000 qts. of Labrador fish last year the result might have been disastrous. I would therefore move this amendment: that prices be fixed at 90- for No. 1, 85- for No. 2 and 80- for Labrador.

MR. BOWRING.—I said I would second Mr. Sellars' motion if he made the prices 90-, 85- and 80-; and if he is agreeable I will do so; but I will not second it if he makes the prices 90-, 85- and 85-.

MR. SELLARS.—No. I think we can get 85 in Italy.

THE CHAIRMAN.—They are prepared to pay 70 in Liverpool. To send it from there to Italy would make the price 85.

MR. JOB.—I take it this is the minimum price, and we can sell for more afterwards.

MR. RYAN.—We must consider that we are selling fish to poor countries and it would be a mistake to start off with too high prices first.

THE CHAIRMAN.—If we can get 85 it would be foolish not to do so.

MR. CAMPBELL.—I beg to second Mr. Sellars' motion.

THE CHAIRMAN.—Then put the amendment as proposed by Mr. Monroe to the meeting and it was carried. The motion stands "That instead of 90-, 85- and 80- per qt. for No. 1, No. 2 and Labrador fish respectively, the prices read 90-, 85- and 80- in the same order, and that anyone can get as much more as he is able for his fish."

(To be continued.)

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