So Long, It's Been Good to Know You

I've sung this song and I'll sing it today,
About a place that I live out in Notre Dame Bay,
On the island of Pilley's, in the cove of me name,
And here's what all of the people are saying

Chorus:
So long, it's been good to know you,
So long, it's been good to know you,
So long, it's been good to know you
The jobs are all taken, the good times is gone,
And I'll have to be moving along.

When elections came round, we all cast our vote;
Some came by pony-cart, some came by boat;
As for casting our votes, you can take it from me,
We might as well cast them right into the sea.

"Well, there's work on the fishplant, there's work on the dam:
Me boys, there'll be two jobs for every man.
The future's assured, boys, me conscience is clean—
I've sold the whole Province to Johnny Shaheen!"

Well, the young folks were eager to try to new life;
So we loaded the boat up, meself and the wife.
When her mother said, "No, boys, I'm going nowhere'',
We hauled her out screeching in her rocking chair.

Eric Morey came home from a spell in the Pen,
All ready to start his life over again,
But instead of a welcoming face on the shore
He found an old paper pinned up to his door (it said)
Well, we came with our boxes, we came with our boats,
We came with our chickens and whatever would float.
When we came to our senses, our money was spent—
And we all found out just what resettlement, (it meant)

Two sweethearts walked out on the wharf one fine night,
Climbed into a dory and they held each other tight.
They cuddled and cuddled, they hugged and they kissed,
But instead of getting married, well, they talked like this: (**Darling,

Now Welfare's a word that sticks in me throat;
And U.I.C. payments they just get me goat.
Times is so hard I can scarce keep afloat—
Twenty years ago Joey told us, 'Go burn your boats!'"

Now 'twas Confederation that started the ball—
They brought in the highways and Medicare and all.
On its twenty-fifth birthday they held a big dance—
They had to borrow the money from Household Finance!

Well, the fish price is rising wherever you looks,
So I'm turning me back on those history books.
With me dory and traps I shall do very well
And all of those politicians can go to mainland or hell!

(tag after last chorus: Yes, I'm having to move off along.)

This is Jim Payne's version of the famous Woody Guthrie song. For our readers outside Canada, here's a few notes: v.3 Johnny Shaheen—an American industrialist whose oil refinery at Come-By-Chance is now bankrupt. v.5 the "Pen"—the penitentiary (prison). v.6 "resettlement"—the policy followed by longtime Newfoundland Premier Joey Smallwood of moving islanders from the remote outports accessible only by boat to industrial centres in the province, and the consequent shift away from fishing, Newfoundland's main occupation. v.8 U.I.C.—the Unemployment Insurance Commission, the "pogey". v.9 Newfoundland joined the Confederation in 1949. Household Finance—a loan company.

Jon Bartlett