

commissioner, in which case the commissioners are not only willing but anxious to convenience you, subject to the conditions which I have been instructed to set before you.

Mr. Fowler Mr. Chairman, who gave members of the old House of Assembly the power to subpoena people?

Mr. Chairman Parliament. It was the old right of Parliament itself, that came down through the ages, and it was also a straight act. We have neither executive or legislative power to compel anybody to come before us. All our power is contained in the section of the act to which reference is being made in the National Convention. Well, gentlemen, shall we proceed?

[Sections 49 to 53 approved. The committee rose

and reported progress. On the motion of Mr. Cashin the order of the day was deferred]

Mr. Burry In reference to the questions tabled — the word “Newfoundland” occurred all through in reference to our great territory. Would that also — in the questions of Major Cashin, Mr. Smallwood and others — apply to Labrador?

Mr. Chairman Technically or specifically?

Mr. Burry Will we get information regarding Labrador from these questions? I want to be clear on that.

Mr. Bradley It provides for that, and in future it will apply to Labrador all the time. There is one that refers to Labrador specifically.

[The Convention adjourned]

September 17, 1946

Mr. Chairman The questions tabled at the last sitting were sent immediately to the various departments and answers have not yet been received. In connection with questions, it is natural to suppose that at the commencement of proceedings, all members may not be conversant with the rules of procedure as to the form and relevancy of the question. Some of these questions will have to be re-worded; and I feel I should advise with the members privately, rather than in public, because I feel sure that if a member wants to ask questions in the required scope, attention being paid to the rules, he will want to confine himself strictly to relevancy. Therefore, with your permission, we might have a private word at an appropriate occasion when I can outline the rules in regard to questions. Whatever information is required by the Convention will not alone be obtained, but questions in respect thereof will be in the prescribed form.

[Requests for information on a variety of topics were tabled by Mr. Smallwood, Mr. Hollett, Mr. Hickman, Mr. Vincent and Mr. Newell]

Mr. Smallwood If I might be permitted, under the heading of “Questions”, some newspapermen and radiomen asked me to make the point that in addition to the three copies of questions and motions tabled, it would be convenient if additional copies were made available to them.

Mr. Chairman Perhaps it might be better to have these questions available to the press on the day when they are asked in the House. The procedure requires that the member give notice of the question and on the following day asks it formally. One of the reasons for the 24-hour interval between notice and asking of questions is that in certain cases the question has to be reviewed by the Chairman, to take care that the question is in the correct form and is relevant. The day following, the chamber hears the question formally, that is, brought forward on the order paper. If copies were then available, as they appear on the order paper, it might be the appropriate occasion, as being the subject of interrogation on the following day.