

the people requested it. Of that there can be no doubt whatever, and it is also true that Newfoundland, at least in the official sense, is self-supporting today — we do not presently require grants from Britain to pay our government bills. But just where and how has that promise of Britain been broken? Is there not to be a national referendum? Are not the people of Newfoundland to vote at that referendum? Will not responsible government be one of the forms for which they may vote on the ballot at that referendum? And if the people of Newfoundland, by a majority, request a return of responsible government does anyone here suggest that Britain will refuse to carry out that wish? Where, I ask you, is the broken promise? What then is it that rouses the ire of these responsible governmentites almost to the pitch of frenzy? I will tell you. It is not that Britain has failed to carry out that promise of 1933, but that she has done more than honour what these people are pleased to term her bond. She has not only undertaken to give us back responsible government if we want it, but also to give us any other form of government (within reason, of course) which we may request.

Let me put the position to you by a very simple illustration. Let us suppose a man takes his young son to a house which he, the father, owns, and says, "Son, when you are 21 years of age I will give you this house if you want it." The boy reaches the age of 21, and the father now says to him, "Son, some years ago I promised you this house if you asked me for it when you became 21. You are now 21, and I intend to keep my promise, but before you ask me for it I want to show you two other houses that I own." Thereupon he shows the young man these two other houses, and says, "Now you can have your choice of the three." Has that man broken his promise to his son? He has not, he has enlarged it, he has extended it. In exactly the same way Britain has fulfilled her so-called bond to the people of Newfoundland. She says to us, in effect, "You Newfoundland people may have a return of responsible government if you want it, or if you prefer you may have Commission government, or confederation; or tell me what you do want and I will give you anything within reason." Britain has given us more than she promised. And so we see that the real complaint of these followers of responsible government is not that Britain failed

to honour her promise, but that she fulfilled it pressed down and running over. She has given us more than she agreed to give, and it is that *more* to which the responsible governmentites object. They don't want anything but responsible government. "Give us what we had", is their cry. In their hearts they want no Convention, no recommendations, no referendum, no choice for the people. In fact their real desire is to thrust a return of responsible government on the people, whether the people want it or not. They see in this free choice a grave danger that their own faith may be cast out. They stand in deadly fear that it will. These people who profess the democratic way of life, and who would destroy the referendum by a resolution if they could, and thus wipe the people out of the picture, complain bitterly that Britain has broken her promise, and is false, and is not to be trusted, because she has given the people more than she agreed to give.

Let us have no more of this stupid, and in some instances I fear, dishonest chatter about Britain having broken faith. Responsible government will be on the ballot. The people can, if they wish, request its restoration. And if they do it will be restored. And if anybody holds that confederation should not be discussed, let him not blame the British government, nor the Commission government, nor the Canadian government. It was this Convention, I remind you, that voted 24 to 16 to send a delegation to Ottawa to ascertain conditions of union. Let no one be blamed for what we did ourselves by a substantial majority. And even more fantastic is the misconception that has been stated again and again here and elsewhere, that we must get responsible government before considering confederation at all.

There are several points that are overlooked by those who repeat this absurd contention. First, what guarantee have we that the people will vote for responsible government? And yet they must, according to this contention, before confederation can be considered at all. If a consideration of confederation is to be postponed until our people vote for responsible government, then it will be a very, very long day indeed before we come around to a consideration of it. And again, assuming that the people want confederation, will some one kindly explain to me just why they should be saddled with, why they should have forced upon them, a form of government which they don't