

want in order to get what they do want, why the responsible government which they reject should be imposed upon them in spite of their wishes? Why, if a majority of Newfoundlanders want confederation today, they must be subject to responsible government which they don't want? Will somebody kindly explain that to me? Such a proceeding, sir, has about it a very strong smell of Hitlerism, of that dictatorship which these persons who advocate the idea profess to hate so utterly. It is coolly suggested that the people shall be forced to vote for what they don't want in order to get what they do want. If that is not the very spirit of dictatorship I do not know what it is.

Again, these anticonfederate addicts have another refrain. They tell us that the Ottawa delegation had no power to negotiate, and that a duly elected government would have authority to enter into a bargain with the Canadian government, and that therefore an elected government would get better terms. "Oh yes", they say, "these terms are pretty good, but an elected government would get better." Let us take a look at that theory for a moment. In the first place there are two alternatives involved in this idea that an elected government should get the terms. Firstly, that having got the deal with Canada the elected government would put that deal through without consulting the people. The people would then have no voice in the terms at all — none whatever. Is that what they want? Or second, the elected government would, after making the deal, submit it to the people, in which case they would have had no more authority to speak for the people than our Ottawa delegation had. And make no mistake about it, sir, it is the voice of the people of Newfoundland that the Canadian government wishes to hear, and not that of a government forced upon them by Britain or this Convention. And let no one imagine that Newfoundland's entry into the Canadian union is a matter of horse-trading, or that the statesmen of Canada, that greatest dominion of the British Commonwealth, are trying to put a shady deal over on this little people who are their own kith and kin. I well remember the words of Canada's Minister of External Affairs, the Right Honourable Mr. St. Laurent, who was chairman of this conference — words uttered by him at the very outset of our discussions: "What we are trying to discover", he said, "is whether union of our two

countries will work. Whether it will work to the mutual advantage of both. We must discover whether confederation under the British North America Act will actually work out in practice." And that, sir was the spirit that permeated all our discussions. Those are not the words of a truckling tinhorn politician, but of a statesman who is held in profound respect by all shades of opinion in Canada, a man who was never a politician, but who was called into his country's counsels in the early stages of the war because of his character, his skill and his unimpeachable integrity. And it is with him, and with statesmen of his calibre that it is suggested that a delegation sent by a responsible government no less, a responsible government forced upon the people perhaps against its will, might do a little horse-trading. Sir, I wonder if those who visualise the making of the terms of federal union as something akin to the chattering of a housewife over a basket of vegetables in the marketplace, I wonder if they appreciate the true Canada of today? Do they realise that this Canada is a great and a generous nation, the third largest exporting country in the world, whose generous policy towards the mother country, both during the war and ever since, is eloquent testimony not only to her great wealth, but to her realisation of the high moral obligation which rests upon her as a member of the Commonwealth. While the conflict was in progress she gave and loaned to Britain literally thousands of millions of dollars, and since then she has continued that policy, as well as the policy of supplying that war-torn and impoverished land with millions of tons of food at amazingly low prices. And yet this is the country that the anticonfederates would liken unto a housewife haggling over a basket of potatoes. Don't they realise that confederation is not the making of a merely commercial bargain between a couple of private businessmen? Confederation is a proposal for political union. A partnership between Newfoundland and Canada presupposes that we shall become one more among the provinces that constitute that union.

Far from being a trading corporation, those nine provinces are bound together by a constitution known as the British North America Act. This act, which was passed by the British Parliament 80 years ago, lays down the terms and conditions of that union, and this act must govern the entry of any country into that union, be it