

strategic importance gave the country revenues undreamed of before, and are we going to thank Commission of Government for this? Surely, no right thinking person would.

**Mr. Smallwood** Hear! Hear!

**Mr. Fowler** I contend, gentlemen, that if we had had responsible government during this boom period we would be in a far better position than we are today. Any body of Newfoundlanders would have had the interests of this country more at heart, and would have made the most of the many opportunities which offered to further the interests of their native land. But what happened? This dictatorial Commission played Santa Claus to all and sundry with utter disregard for the people's future welfare. They have collected undreamed of revenues, and in the last two or three years in particular they have gone to great pains to spend every last cent and if possible to create a deficit. In my opinion, any government with the interests of the country at heart should have curtailed expenditures at this time and built up a greater surplus, in order to adequately tide us over the recession period through which the world is bound to pass during the transition from a war to peace economy.

Mr. Chairman, there is but one sane course open to the people of this country, and that is to become masters in their own house by returning to responsible government. Then, and not till then, will they be free to give expression to their beliefs without fear of outside interference. We all know that governments in the past were not perfect. No government is, but gentlemen, democracy reveals the virtues of the people as well as their vices, and it is because their virtues are greater than their vices that democracy has become the form of government to which the most progressive nations of the world adhere. Surely, we can do nothing but honour the memory of those great Newfoundlanders who nearly a century ago won for this country the right of self-determination. They realised and appreciated the freedom of democracy; will not we, in this our hour of trial, prove that we too are equal to the task and will sustain them in their historic decision to be free? We know the errors of the past, and would undoubtedly profit by them, and I contend that under a responsible government set up along the lines suggested by Mr. Hickman in his masterly address, we could

have nothing to fear. We have the men, let us give them a chance to prove their worth.

These, Mr. Chairman, are briefly my views on the matter of forms of government, or at least on the forms within the compass of this resolution. They have been my views for a long time, sir, long before I heard of this Convention, and as this Convention draws to its inevitable end, I feel a sense of satisfaction in the fact that during our deliberations I have found nothing to cause me to change my views, but on the contrary, I have found much to confirm and substantiate them. Among many things which tended to strengthen my belief were the findings of the several committees, the statements of the many prominent men I had the privilege of meeting and the hopeful and optimistic attitude of the majority of my fellow delegates.

Mr. Chairman, I want to draw the attention of this Convention to the fact that the cost of living has been increasing in all North American countries at a very high rate. Newfoundland has not been exempt in this respect. However, I want to draw to your attention the fact that recently the members of the Civil Service Association have been negotiating with the Commission of Government with regard to obtaining an increase in their salaries to cope with this advance in the high cost of living. Their request has been practically ignored by the Commission. Do you think, Mr. Chairman, that such an action can be termed fair or honest, particularly in view of the fact that less than two years ago the Newfoundland members of the Commission had their own salaries increased by \$2,000 per year, or an increase of 25%, whilst at the same time the salary of the Chairman of the Commission has been increased by nearly 40%? Another point in respect to this matter is the fact that the British members of the Commission receive a sustenance allowance of around \$4,000 a year annually, and other British civil servants receive preferential treatment with regard to subsistence allowances. Mr. Chairman, I consider such treatment of our own Newfoundland officials nothing short of scandalous, and whilst I appreciate that many of the civil servants receive substantial salaries, I also know that the great majority of them are receiving hardly sufficient to keep body and soul together.

I said, sir, that I had fixed ideas of the matter of governments prior to my coming to this Con-