

December 11, 1946

[The Secretary read the commission appointing Mr. Bradley Chairman of the Convention (6 December 1946), and a letter from Mrs. C. Fox]

Mr. Cashin Mr. Chairman, before proceeding with the regular business of the Convention, I, as senior member of what was once the House of Assembly, feel it is my duty, on behalf of myself and the other delegates, to say a few words regarding your appointment as Chairman of this Convention.

When it was indicated to us some three weeks ago that the Commission government were prepared to change the Convention Act to enable us to select and recommend our own Chairman, I felt you would be the logical person for such a position, and at our informal meeting held at that time, I took the opportunity of nominating you for this important post, to which you were elected unanimously by your fellow delegates. I realise that you have taken upon yourself a most difficult task, as from now on you will be called upon at times to make important and possibly far-reaching decisions. I feel confident you will prove equal to the task, and I am equally confident that any decisions you make will be fair and just. You are like all of us, a man of the people, and having known you for over 20 years in the political life of this country, I am sure you have the necessary parliamentary and legal knowledge to perform the duties of this important office with dignity and honour. Again, Mr. Chairman, I extend to you our most sincere congratulations.

Mr. Chairman Gentlemen of the Convention, I appreciate very deeply the very laudatory remarks to which Mr. Cashin has just given utterance. I appreciate the honour which has been conferred in elevating me to the Chair of this Convention. I am all the more appreciative of it when I realise that it has arisen out of the wish of the members of the Convention, they being the representatives of the people, for this is a people's house.

I realise also that this act does not arise only out of mere good will towards myself. I feel it is based upon some confidence you have in my ability to perform the duties of the office, and that

fact in itself increases my sense of responsibility. It impresses upon me the absolute need of bending all my energies to two things, first the maintenance of the dignity of this assembly, and second, the necessity for an absolutely impartial conduct of the debates. I do not mean that it is my intention to apply the rules of this House purely in their letter, but that there must accompany any such interpretation a sense of the spirit of the rule as well. I assure you I thoroughly appreciate the task which lies ahead, and hope I shall measure up to it as you expect me to.

I am very pleased to be able to welcome back two members who have been unable to be present with us for some time. Mr. Jackman has had a very bad illness, and I am glad to welcome him back, and Mr. Hollett also has been unable to be with us for two or three weeks. I regret to announce that Mr. Kennedy has had to enter hospital, and is suffering from some trouble which I hope will soon be cleared up, and I hope he will be back with us again when we meet in January.

Some of you are aware that Mr. Brown, who was stricken so very dramatically here over a month ago, has now returned to his home at King's Cove. I was at the boat when he left on Saturday afternoon, and he is much improved, and we all hope his improvement will continue.

There are one or two things that I wish to draw to the attention of the members. The first is that before the members leave town for the Christmas vacation I would like to see each individually; the second is in connection with the debates. I have heard complaints from the public that at times they do not know who is speaking. That, I fear, has been to some extent our own fault. I believe I have been an offender myself. When a member rises to speak I suggest that he should address the Chair and then remain silent until he is named by the Chairman. That immediately places the public in possession of the name of the man speaking. Otherwise they will be confused. If you will follow my instructions in this respect it will be better for the members themselves and for the public.