

vention, and on that score, gentlemen, I may be accused of not possessing that doubtful asset, an open mind. Be that as it may. I am content in the knowledge that I had the courage of my convictions and publicly made known my views well in advance of the Convention election. Every person in my district who did me the honour of voting for me, did so with the full knowledge of my intentions and desires. I therefore feel that my decision in this matter is not wholly personal, selfish or unsupported.

Mr. Starkes Mr. Chairman, I am not going to make a long speech on the two forms of government now under fire in this House. First because we are not here to make any decisions, and secondly because the decision that is to be made will be made, so we are told in the National Convention Act, by the electorate of this country at a national referendum. I am supporting the motion now before the Chair....

I am not voting to try and force any one form of government on the people. I personally realise my responsibility. What can we do, Mr. Chairman? The National Convention Act tells us that we have to make recommendations to the British government. We have to recommend what forms of government will be submitted to our people for the referendum. This motion is now doing just that. I am in favour of supporting this resolution as it is now, so that the people may have a chance to decide the form of government they think best, and I am happy to leave the choice of our future government in the hands of our people. I am glad that we, as a National Convention, are not asked to make the final decision on such an important question. Mr. Chairman, I do not want to be misunderstood in this thing. I will be voting to recommend that these two forms of government should be submitted to our people for their choice. I am not now called upon to vote for any one form of government, but when the referendum is held, and I have to cast my vote like all the rest of the people, I will certainly give it some deep thought before I vote for either responsible or Commission government. Both myself and the people have seen quite a lot of both kinds of government, and I would certainly never vote for either of them if I had a chance to vote for something better. There is one thing I am sure about, and it is this, that our people certainly want something better than we have had under respon-

sible government and in fact under Commission government as well. Our people have long memories, they remember what things were like under the dying days of responsible government, and also under Commission of Government for the first six or seven years until the war started, and our prosperity improved considerably, through the war. They still remember, and what they want now is some form of government that would give them a better chance to live than any we have yet had. We have been told a lot about the Amulree royal commission and about Letters Patent, and all that sort of thing. Mr. Chairman, our people do not worry their heads about such things. All that is now past, and our people are not worried about legal documents made years and years ago. They have more important and personal matters to worry about. Their hope is that they will be able to get three square meals a day for themselves and their families, and a dollar in their pockets when they want it. What our people are worried about is how they are going to get a form of government that will give them a better chance to live. They are worried about what is going to happen when world depression comes back again. They are worried what is going to happen to them should the price of fish take another fall in price.

I suppose, Mr. Chairman, that every member has made up his mind by now what form of government he likes, and what form of government he thinks would be best for the people of this country, and so have I, but that has nothing to do with the motion before us today. We are asked to say what form of government we favour. The motion does not say that no other form of government cannot or should not be submitted to the people, but that these two forms of government should be submitted to the people. Some of the people who will be called upon to make their decision at the national referendum will be the sons and daughters of fathers and mothers who had to exist, through no fault of their own, on dole through the dying days of responsible government, and for six or seven years after the present form of government was borne into the country. Some of the people who will be called upon to vote are men now who were boys then, and were at that time suffering under the burden of poverty through no fault of their own in most cases, and who were compelled to live in some cases with