

people of Newfoundland, taking our assets and giving them away for 99 years, and Newfoundland not reaping any benefit. It has been pointed out by members that the least we should have received was a *quid pro quo* in concessions for our fishery products.

They went out and, I state deliberately, gave indirect instructions to the American contractors not to pay our people the same rate of wages as the Americans and Canadians. They are doing the same thing now in the Gander territory. There are Canadians and Americans out there today who are getting more money for doing the same kind of work; and they are doing the same thing at the Torbay airport. Our men are getting 45 cents an hour today, and the lowest rate paid in St. John's, if I am correct, is not less than 50 cents to 60 cents an hour; but the Canadian government, backed by the Commission government, are paying our men 45 cents an hour.

Expenditure went to wing. Expenditure in 1940-41 was around \$6.5 million, and it is up today to \$40 million. That is what we are going to have, and we are going to have a deficit this year — we are told that. I charge the Commission government now with deliberately attempting to dissipate the treasury of Newfoundland. When this Convention opened, September 11, 1946, I made a statement that Mr. Attlee stated in the House of Commons, when he was bringing in this White Paper which created this Convention Act, that his understanding would be that under no circumstances would any change of government take place in Newfoundland under ten years, because the Commission government had a programme that they wanted to go ahead with without interruption. Well how far out was I? It is three years now. There will be no change in any wise until this fall, and it may not even take place then, because we are a powerless group with no courage. Would you mind telling me, Mr. Chairman, how long I was on?

Mr. Chairman You have half an hour to go.

Mr. Cashin Thank you. Now reverting again to the passing of this act, these resolutions that went over to England to be confirmed by the British government. I don't intend to read the full resolution, but I will draw your attention, and the attention of the house and of the country to it; I have drawn it before, but I am going to do it again,

because I am suspicious of Commission government, and of those who brought it into existence. If you take the annex to the resolution, sub-section 8, it says definitely: "The existing form of government would be suspended until such time as the island would become self-supporting again." That is sub-section 8. Turn to sub-section G, which is the last one. What does it say? "It would be understood that, as soon ... and the country is again self-supporting, responsible government, on request from the people of Newfoundland would be restored."¹ Now sir, why was it necessary to stick in sub-section G when they had the thing covered in sub-section 8? I have very suspicious ideas about that sub-section, and I have talked with many gentlemen who were in this House at that time, and they understood that when Newfoundland was self-supporting responsible government would be handed back; but now they stuck that in, in the last section. I have seen funny things happen in this House once in a while. I feel that "there's something rotten in the state of Denmark" in connection with that sub-section.

I think therefore, Mr. Chairman, that in a general way I have outlined what brought about Commission government — we were poor. But that was not so in 1931 and 1932. It took another government to come in here and barter it away — I call it the great betrayal of 1933-34. I have heard people say, "What could we have done?" What did the British government do? What did the Government of Saskatchewan do? What did other countries do? They defaulted. And weren't we as much entitled to default as they were? Couldn't we have carried on and paid six cents a day dole on our own? Why Professor Plumtre said that Newfoundland would have been justified in defaulting then! And whilst this report I am referring to was being written, which said that no British dominion had defaulted, it is a fact that Great Britain herself had defaulted to America three months previous to the writing of that report.

What happened in 1894 in the bank crash, and in 1895? Did the politicians of those days accept a royal commission from Great Britain? Certainly not, because they knew what was behind it. But we did not have courage enough in our government in those days. It was take the line of least

¹Great Britain, *The Newfoundland Act*, 1933, 24 Geo. 5, Ch. 2.