

pendent living. Courage to face up to life and hew out our individual fortunes. And finally faith in our country, and in the great destiny which I am convinced lies ahead of us.

That concludes my address, Mr. Chairman, in this respect. Now, before I sit down, I just want to read for the information of the committee a reply which I received in answer to a question. The question was placed on the order paper on January 6, and I got the reply last night.

I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask His Excellency the Governor in Commission to ascertain from the United Kingdom government the latest date on which the recommendations of this Convention must be submitted to the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations in order to ensure the holding of a referendum in the Spring of 1948.

(2) In the event of the majority of the voters in the forthcoming referendum favouring a form of government other than Commission of Government, at what time and by what method will the change to the new form of government become effective. Now here's the letter written by Mr. Carew.

St. John's, Nfld.  
January 8, 1948.

Dear Sir:

I have to refer to the question asked by a member of the National Convention as to the latest date on which the recommendations of the Convention must be submitted to the Rt. Hon. the Secretary for Commonwealth Relations in order to ensure the holding of a referendum in the spring of 1948.

The Rt. Hon. the Secretary of State has already informed the Commission of Government that a period of at least one month will be required for the consideration of the recommendations of the Convention.

The Commission of Government have given consideration to the question of setting a date for the holding of a national referendum and I have been directed to communicate their views to the National Convention.

It is hoped that it will be possible to hold the referendum about the end of the month of May this year. It is impracticable to hold a poll during the period from early June to late September as so many people are away from their homes and may be disfranchised. Final

arrangements cannot be made for holding the referendum until the necessary legislation has been passed and steps in this direction cannot be taken until a decision has been made as to the questions to be submitted to the people.

The members of the Convention, familiar with the difficulties of travel during the spring months in sections of Newfoundland and in Labrador will realise that ample time must be allowed for the distribution of ballot papers and other materials for all polling booths. The matters preliminary to the voting will take place in the following order — delivery of recommendations by the National Convention; consideration by HM Government in the United Kingdom; communication of decision as to forms of government to the submitted to the people; final draft for publication of legislation for comment; passing of legislation; printing of ballots and other forms; setting up of polling stations and distribution of election material.

In order to permit sufficient time to complete the necessary arrangements and to ensure to all qualified electors of Newfoundland and Labrador the opportunity of voting, it will be necessary, if the referendum is to be held during the month of May, to have the recommendations of the Convention submitted at an early date. The Commission are unable to give any assurance that the referendum will be possible this spring if the recommendations of the Convention are not received by the end of the present month.

Yours faithfully,  
W.J. Carew, Secretary.

I will put this on the order paper, and it is tabled. There is another answer there also Mr. Chairman. It is immaterial, that's the most important.

**Mr. Higgins** Mr. Chairman, in addressing you and the members of the Convention this afternoon, I would like to point out that I do not intend to go over the ground which is very well covered by Mr. Hollett, Mr. Fogwill and Major Cashin in these admirable addresses which we have heard in the past few days, but I do intend to touch on the subject which I hope is noncontroversial, but at the same time is of real moment, and important to the people of Newfoundland, and to us of the Convention in particular.