

being practiced with the hope that its weaknesses will gradually be overcome. It can be right in principle and imperfect in practice, but not wrong. By making such a statement the gentleman is being very naive. He is making the sort of statement that has no meaning in real life. Why it was made, people can judge for themselves.... It is not self-government that is wrong, that has its weaknesses, it is we who have the weaknesses, the men and women who in the last analysis make it what it is. But I happen to believe in Newfoundland men and women — no better, no worse than other men and women in their ability to progress and improve and work out a destiny for themselves. For the same reason I believe that that system of self-government can progress and improve. Otherwise I would not advocate it. I believe men and women no longer are satisfied with government which gives political freedom but denies freedom to carve out in an intricate world a means of making a decent living. Why should we assume, as has been done so often, that self-government is to be a stagnant, reactionary, dead thing? Does it not exist as a means of implementing the wishes of the people? When we are asked what is the good of a vote to a man who has nothing to eat, the answer is, "It is no good." But the question itself does not make sense. A man does not want a vote instead of food. Nobody ever argued that. Neither does he want food at a price which will bring the loss of his self-respect, his power to develop and live more fully. In short, most men who are men at all feel that they are entitled to both. And I think they are right. I think also, under self-government that they have at this moment in our history the best opportunity of getting both. Otherwise I would not be advocating it.

"But", says my timid friend, "who will guarantee that he will get both? Who will guarantee that his interests will not be forgotten? Who will guarantee him against inefficiency in government, corruption among politicians, preferment among certain classes? That is a \$64 question." It is indeed a \$64 question. And the answer is, "Who other on this earth but you and me, sir, who other but the little fellow, the fisherman, the farmer, the logger, the teacher, the office clerk?" He and his fellows must see to it that the politicians they vote for — or even more effectively sometimes, the politicians they refuse to

vote for — the economic planning they agitate for, the values they would set store by, will be implemented; and if we ordinary citizens do not see that this is done, then forms of government in themselves are meaningless and all our work and talking in this Convention for the last 20 months, in my personal opinion, futile.

If we as voters do not want corruption, we must throw out those who practice it. If we are offered the kind of candidates whose integrity does not satisfy us, then we must organise to replace them by others whom we the people will prevail upon to offer themselves, at our request, to the service of their country. If politicians, on the other hand, do not want to be hampered in their desire to be statesmenlike by job-seekers, by incessant requests to spoonfeed certain communities, then they must initiate certain safeguards against such weakening paternalism.... The people must encourage the formation of decentralised government through councils, boards and municipalities.

In discharging my duty as a member of the Convention as a result of no little study and thought, by giving my opinion on the question of forms of government, I am in honour bound to say something else which is of great importance. Whilst I think that Newfoundland and Newfoundlanders have most to profit from a form of government which is free and independent, I am duty bound to say that I believe that that form of government does not necessarily offer the easiest way. I believe it demands more sacrifice, more native ability, more self-administered checks and responsibilities than any other form considered in this Convention so far. I feel it would be wrong to recommend self-government to the people of Newfoundland as the easiest way out. But just because it is not the easiest way out, and because of the future potential of this country, I feel, after 20 months of study, that given the effort, the results will be the most rewarding from self-government.

In speaking to another motion a short while ago, a gentleman here said, on the same point to which I have just referred, that another form of government would not necessarily mean that we would not have to struggle for an existence. I would like to bring that in to emphasise the last thing I propose to say and it is this: that only by knuckling down to our problem, by doing it our-