

fact that Newfoundland was suffering because of her debt, and England was now suffering because of certain debts contracted because of the war, and so were we, but at the same time we were asking for something to be done; and on that same date the daily newspapers carried the heading "Lord Dalton declares war on war debts". Lord Addison had never heard of Alberta or Australian war finance. He had never heard of these things except insofar as Newfoundland was concerned, and Newfoundland was asked to pay.... The point is this: that the British government, and make no doubt about it, have already started to scale down these war debts, and in one way and another they will do it, and it is up to Newfoundland to see that our debts, no matter how contracted, which are having a disastrous effect, ought to have been put in the background. We were faced with an uncompromising, "This is a Newfoundland obligation, incurred by previous Newfoundland governments, and His Majesty's Government will naturally expect ... etc."

Now we turn to the interest-free loans. All we wanted to say was that by using these dollars over there Newfoundland would be helped and they would do the right thing by Newfoundland. "United Kingdom cannot undertake to pay interest on these loans". That's a plain "no".

I skip over the development loans — they are not really important at the moment — and come to the various base deals, and here I have no words to express my indignation at the way in which a government acting as trustees for the people violated our sovereign rights. Coldly they come back to us with this statement, "There is no reason to think that the United States government will be prepared to agree to any substantial variation." In other words, "Run along home. We did this and we are not going to find out if there is any reason." It was not like that in 1857.¹ The French fishermen were given a guarantee of an unlimited amount of bait. What happened then? The Newfoundland government protested strongly, and it resulted in a statement of an important principle. It reads like this:

The proposals contained in the Convention having now been unequivocally refused by the Colony they will, of course, fall to the ground, and you [the Governor] are

authorised to give such assurance as you may think proper that the consent of the community of Newfoundland is regarded by Her Majesty's Government as an essential preliminary to any modification of their territorial or maritime rights.

That's 90 years ago, and when we go to London on this occasion we are told that the Newfoundland government gave these rights fairly and without consideration.

Now the financing and control of the Newfoundland Airport. I have said before that there is no justification for asking Newfoundlanders to pay half the cost of services for foreign companies doing business in Newfoundland. It is wrong in principle. Then we get this statement which brought up all that I have heard for many, many years in my lifetime: "Oh but you get the labour". That's all Newfoundland has ever got. It is true that we got the labour, but if your deficit is \$250,000, you pay the full deficit.

I don't know that there is anything more I would like to add except this, that I have come back from London satisfied that there is only one basic principle for Newfoundland, and that is that if you want anything done, and done properly, you do it yourself — that you fight on behalf of yourself, your family, your country, and your nation until you get your rights....

Mr. Higgins Mr. Chairman, I don't know if the gentleman steering this report through could answer this question, I presume you could answer it yourself. With respect to the memorandum dealing with the United States bases.... It appears that your delegation must have discussed with the officials of the home office the question as to any changes that might be made in that base deal under a return to responsible government. I presume that's the meaning of the question and the answer?

Mr. Chairman It was a general discussion.

Mr. Higgins The answer given you by Lord Addison, wherein it states, "Article 28 of the Agreement provides that the Government of the USA and the Government of the United Kingdom agreed to give sympathetic consideration to any representations which either may make after this agreement has been in force a reasonable time, proposing a review of any of the

¹In 1857 the colonial legislature protested an Anglo-French convention affecting the French Shore. The imperial authorities backed down in a despatch whose key passage was quoted by Mr. Butt.