

tunity to select a form of government suitable to their needs. I do not believe that up to that time there was ever any thought in the mind of the British House of Commons of any other form of government than the form which we now enjoy, that is Commission of Government, or responsible government.

I take you back to September 2, 1940: France had fallen in June, and Great Britain stood alone against the might of Hitler's Germany. The people of North America realised their danger, should Britain fall; they consulted the British government and began to look to their own defenses. On the above-mentioned date, the Marquis of Lothian wrote to Mr. Cordell Hull, and told him that in view of the interest of His Majesty's Government in the national security of the United States, and their desire to strengthen the ability of the United States to co-operate with the other nations of the Americas in the defense of the western hemisphere, that His Majesty's Government would secure the grant to the United States freely and without consideration for the lease of naval and air bases on the Avalon Peninsula and the southern coast of Newfoundland. The agreement for this lease was signed on 27 March 1941, and accompanying this agreement, and forming part of it was a letter from Mr. Winston Churchill to Mr. Winant. It has such significance that I give it in full to refresh your memories: "...it is the intention of the Government of the United Kingdom ... that, upon the resumption by Newfoundland of the constitutional status held by it prior to the 16th February 1934, the words 'the government of the United Kingdom', wherever they occur in relation to a provision applicable to Newfoundland in the said agreement, shall be taken to mean, so far as Newfoundland is concerned, the government of Newfoundland, and the agreement shall then be construed accordingly..." I ask you, was there any idea in Mr. Churchill's mind, at that date, but that we would eventually resume our former status?....

The wording of the Convention Act, the spasmodic and well-timed despatches from across the Cabot Strait, and the almost demoniacal fury of some of the protagonists of confederation in this country, will have convinced you that there is more in this thing than first strikes the eye. It is international and not a local issue. The war ended in 1945; the Americans are at Fort Pepperell,

Argentia and Stephenville; the Canadians are at Goose Bay. The diplomats of the world are writing the peace terms. Great Britain has had her economy disrupted, she seeks a loan of \$3.5 million from the United States and gets it. Canada lends her \$1,250 million. Great Britain financially is deeply obligated. The Big Four are endeavouring to write the peace treaties; Russia and the United States have not often been in accord, neither on the peace treaties, in the United Nations effort, nor with regard to disarmament; so much so that the United States and Canada start negotiations for a mutual defence pact. What more natural, than that the future status of Newfoundland should be taken into consideration. "Would it not be better", some might say, in view of this mutual defence pact which, by the way, was signed a few days ago, "if Newfoundland was completely under the control of the Government of Canada?" I say again that our status is now an international issue; hence the Convention Act as is, and hence the bait which is being constantly held out to us by emissaries from across the water.

But Britain has pledged her word to us by the Letters Patent, 1934, and we demand that if we are to go into confederation with Canada, we shall go only at the instance of a duly elected government of our own with a clearly defined directive from the people of this country. We know that there has grown up in England, and hence in the dominions, what is known as the doctrine of mandate, which has been sanctioned by the highest authority. That doctrine is that parliament cannot legislate on a new question of vital importance without a mandate from the people. It was the breach of this mandate which gave us Commission of Government. Mr. Alderdice assured the people, when seeking election, that his government would seek from the British government some way out of our difficulties, but he further assured the people there would be no change in our constitutional status until the question had been submitted to them by way of referendum; that was not done. But was not the question of the suspension of our dominion status of vital importance to Newfoundland? Was it not a question of vital importance to the British people? And yet we know that neither the British government nor our own referred the matter to their people, nor did they have any mandate from