

consequences of default to the Island itself and to pass over the effects which default by a part of the British Empire would be likely to produce on other parts of the Empire and even elsewhere. The people of Newfoundland would not, we are sure, be prepared to ignore this latter consideration as a matter of no concern to themselves. As we have said, default by a British community would be without precedent, and such a step would at once retard the general recovery and tarnish the good name of the British Commonwealth. Alike in its own interest and out of loyalty to the Commonwealth, the Island should take every possible step to avert so great a misfortune.

I would draw your attention also to paragraph 551 of the report, which I quote to you:

After much anxious consideration, therefore, and in spite of a strong pre-disposition in favour of the maintenance of established representative institutions and of responsible government, we have been forced to the conclusion that only by a radical change of regime for a limited period of years can the Island be assisted to effective recovery....

And also paragraph 557:

After examination of all the alternative courses that have been put before us from time to time and of the variants that have suggested themselves to us, we have no hesitation in saying that, in the circumstances now prevailing in Newfoundland, the proposal that a system of "Government by Commission" should be established for a limited period of years affords the best hope of enabling the Island to make a speedy and effective recovery from its present difficulties. We proceed, therefore, to outline the plan of reconstructions which we propose to recommend, a plan which has been specially devised to meet the present emergency and which is based on the understanding that, as soon as the Island's difficulties are overcome and Newfoundland is again self-supporting, responsible government, on request from the people of Newfoundland, would be restored. And also the summary recommendations contained in paragraph 562:

1. The suspension of the existing form of government until such time as the Island may

become self-supporting again....

6. Your Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom would, for their part, assume general responsibility for the finances of the Island until such time as it may become self-supporting again, and would, in particular, make such arrangements as may be deemed just and practicable with a view to securing to Newfoundland's reduction in the present burden of the public debt.

And further to sub-paragraph 3 of paragraph 634:

It is essential, if this object is to be achieved, that the country should be given a rest from party politics for a period of years, and we have no hesitation in saying that, in the circumstances now prevailing in Newfoundland, the proposal that a system of "Government by Commission" should be established for a limited period affords the best means of enabling the Island to make a speedy and effective recovery from its present difficulties.

And also to sub-paragraph 4 of paragraph 634 sub-paragraphs A and G:

A. The existing form of government would be suspended until such time as the Island may become self-supporting again.

G. It would be understood that, as soon as the Island's difficulties are overcome and the country is again self-supporting, responsible government, on request from the people of Newfoundland, would be restored.

To go further in this description, in January 1934 the Legislative Council and Assembly, in a joint address to His Majesty the King, requested suspension of the Letters Patent, and the issuance of new Letters Patent to provide for the administration of the island until such time as it became self-supporting again. On January 30 1934, by the Newfoundland Act, 1933, provision was made for the administration of Newfoundland during the period whilst the operation of the former Letters Patent was suspended, and so Commission of Government was brought into being.

You will thus see quite clearly that it was the intention of the compilers of this report and of our House of Assembly and Legislative Council, and furthermore of the British government, that Commission of Government should only be a temporary measure. I should like to give you my opinion, for what it is worth, on the legal position