

debate of six weeks on this issue of confederation, deny the people a chance to choose for themselves. It has been made abundantly clear by you, sir, and by many other speakers, that this Convention was elected to make recommendations on form or forms of government, and in my opinion any member of this assembly relegating to himself the right to think for another is assuming a prerogative that never was his. Mr. Higgins said the terms were fair; that is the opinion of a legal mind. Mr. Bradley approves and recommends them; again the opinion of a keen, legal brain. Great sections of the island have given their moral support to this issue, and yet we have members who will get up and say, "No, confederation has no right to be on the ballot." Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I can assure you in all sincerity, to make such a statement in my district would not only be sheer folly, but it would be positively dangerous, and as the elected representative for Bonavista North I demand that confederation be placed on the ballot. I have also supported the other forms being put there as well. Critics have been trying hard to build up a case against the people having a choice. They have, with great forcefulness, invoked the almost sacred covenant of letters patent, the act suspending responsible government. They might as well have read themselves a chapter out of Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*, it would have been more entertaining and much more humorous. The ordinary man, the fisherman, the common man (and he will swing the big stick next May), cares as much about that as he does about the value of a row of beans. What concerns him at the moment — and it is very important — is his freedom of choice, the right to make his own decisions.

Mr. Chairman, I am giving my unqualified support to the motion. I am giving it my unqualified support because I feel there are tens of thousands of intelligent Newfoundlanders who honestly want to see confederation on the ballot this spring. I support it because I am convinced that the terms offered by the government of Prime Minister Mackenzie King are the best we can reasonably expect, bearing in mind that the nine other provinces of Canada entered confederation under less favourable arrangements. I support the motion wholeheartedly since, I am a pro-confederate.

The future of this island lies within the orbit

of the western hemisphere. Today Canada and her great and powerful neighbour, the United States, probably have more in common than any other two nations in the world. No powerful machines of war patrol their lines of demarcation. No military barriers restrict the influx of citizenry of Canada into the United States. Our destiny must be with our western neighbours, not as an isolated unit assuming a false sense of independence that never was ours, but as a component of an economic interdependent union of the great western bloc of nations called North America. Somebody talked of sentiment. If I were asked to interpret Newfoundland, I would assert without fear of contradiction that for both realistic and sentimental reasons, our future lies with Canada. Our racial strains are the same as hers; our pride in the old order of British institutions is the same; our traditions, the age-old tradition of freedom for which our sons and hers have fought and died, will not change or be changed under union, and I, for one, would not wish them to. For I want the memories of the upsurge of British nationhood, of the growth through pain and peril of our Commonwealth, to remain as real and as strong as they are today.

Canada, occupying the third largest national space in the world, exceeded only by Russia and China, with a population of only 12 million, still has a long way to go. Does the future look black for Canada? I do not think so. Only today, I read in a very reliable journal that United States citizens have more than \$5 billion invested in the Dominion. Does that infer her future is dark? Canada is a creditor nation. Since the end of the war she has loaned England \$1,250,000,000 and a further \$750 million for export credits to Europe and Asia.

The terms of union are attractive — old age pensions and family allowances offer much to our people. I very earnestly recommend them to my constituents and to the country generally, for, Mr. Chairman, I am fully convinced that in concert with the nine other provinces, and with the friendliness of our big southern confederacy the United States, our people will advance into a brighter era, and in the world of tomorrow will find a still more honourable and effective role to play.

Mr. Chairman, by way of concluding, and I shall be very brief, I would like to pay my respects