

international conclusions or results.

In mentioning this I have a particular aspect of our future in mind. I am convinced that our economic future, or some security of it, lies with the USA. I say this for obvious reasons. The USA is one of the largest purchasers of our products, particularly of our newsprint and fish products. The USA, in turn, can supply practically all, if not all of our requirements. The USA is the most powerful and richest country in this world. There is still a tremendously large undeveloped market in that country for our products, a market that, if assisted by an economic union with the United States (under which there would be reciprocal arrangements), might mean unlooked-for developments of our industries, particularly processed fish of various kinds, a development that could mean much to our country. We could buy a lot more needed goods from that great country in return. We have the Americans here now in the bases they have established, and in return for a beneficial arrangement with them, I see no reason why these bases and facilities could not be further extended, thereby providing an increased volume of employment for some of our people, and in return giving to the US a more beneficial defence system and a less restricted action in the planning of defences, which would be to our advantage as much as to theirs. This would be a negotiated agreement, only possible through a government of Newfoundlanders elected by the people. In addition to the possibility of an economic tie-up with the US, I believe it would be possible to re-open discussion on the question of the present bases which they have in Newfoundland today. It is impossible for the Commission of Government to do this, as they, through the British government, signed the original bases agreement and to them the matter is closed. Our own government would, however, be in a position to ask the consideration of the US to the question of discussion between them and our own elected government on the matter. I have reason to believe that Newfoundland, through a government of the country, would receive a sympathetic hearing, and in the light of our desire to negotiate an economic union, and to further offer them extension of or increases in bases, it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that we could secure some yearly rental for the bases now already occupied. Even a rental small to them

would be of no small assistance to us. The USA does not have to re-open the question of the leases, but I believe that there is a great possibility of their so doing, for the reasons I have just mentioned. Some members will endeavour to tell you that this suggested economic union is not possible, because the USA has favoured-nation treaties, whereby any facilities or benefits in duties or import restrictions of goods going into their country, must be offered to these other nations, on the same basis as negotiations might be concluded with us. That might have been true not only in fact, but in effect in 1939 and prior to that year. Today, conditions and world problems are different from those of prewar days. Newfoundland's strategic position, while perhaps realised, has never been acknowledged so openly as today. The advancement in war tactics as well as the discovery of such terrible weapons as the atom bomb, have made not only the USA but every country extremely conscious of their vulnerability, and the USA has realised and appreciated this fact for some time. Consequently Newfoundland, in its geographical position, is of tremendous importance to North America. This factor has changed the conditions of 1939 and prior to that, and for that reason alone they might very well consider, and be anxious to do so, the question of an economic arrangement with this country. There is no need for me to further outline the benefits to our industries, both in Newfoundland and the Labrador, that could well materialise from such a union with America, if we had a government of our own to make the negotiations, as the USA could not enter into these discussions until such time as the people of this country have responsible government restored to them.

Before concluding, I would like to tell you, in addition to the above benefits of responsible government, the form and the type of responsible government I would like to support. I realise that many fear, perhaps, a return to a similar type of government which they experienced in earlier years. I consider that a responsible government should consist of say, 16 or 18 members.

Mr. Chairman That would not be possible, unless the redistribution of 1933 were amended.

Mr. Hickman We do not need and do not want any government of 40 or 45 members such as we had in the past. The large number of members