

say in his heart that present tendencies will not bear me out.

For such reasons I intended to have no part in it. If it was to be a trick, as some have called it, I would not be one of the tricksters. If it was to be a Tower of Babel, I would not be one of the "divers tongues". So I reasoned, in a vain effort to persuade the thin, small voice of conscience that told me I was shirking the very responsibility that I was urging on my fellow Newfoundlanders. In the end like Jacob I wrestled with an angel whose name was reluctance and at 5 pm on Thursday, the 30th of May, 1946, I decided I would put my name in nomination the following day. Even then I felt my chances were very slim, as the opposition in St. John's (City) West was tremendous from the standpoint of the calibre of the other 11 candidates.

I have said all these things merely to underline the fact that the district that elected me knew what I stood for. Indeed, I will go so far as to say that the country knew it. But now that I was into the fray, I left no stone unturned in order to keep the minds of the electorate clear on what I represented. In the month and a half preceding the National Convention elections, I was engaged in writing a column for the St. John's *Sunday Herald*, under the caption "Looking Ahead." In one of my columns I wrote, "The more one considers that clause of the statement relating to the National Convention, which suggests that candidates should have an open mind, the more one is inclined — especially a candidate — to come to the conclusion that it is either a very stupid clause or a very clever one. It has put every candidate in a somewhat embarrassing position, to say the least, and it has put the voting public into more confusion than previously existed." In the light of past developments I am forced to the conclusion that it was a very clever clause, in the shady meaning of the word "clever". Far better would it have been if every man could have gone out and campaigned on his own particular belief; when the election was over, we would have had a pretty good idea of where the country stood. The delegates who did that, although against the spirit of the Convention as alleged, were by far the wisest of us all.

In another weekly column during the same period subtitled "Confederation" I wrote:

There's a lot of loose talk in certain

quarters about confederation. Proponents of the union are busily engaged in setting forth facts and figures... endeavouring to make the proposition look attractive to a degree. They have a perfect right to do so.... But one right that some advocates of confederation are assuming, which does not belong to them, is to make the National Convention a possible instrument of achieving their aims. It is no secret that some candidates to the National Convention have every intention of making the Confederation issue a paramount one.... The National Convention is not, and never can be even a remote equivalent of a national government.... Before Newfoundlanders can seriously consider confederation they must be free, independent people, in the sense that they will be represented by a government which has been elected by a majority opinion. It certainly cannot be negotiated by an assembly elected by every shade of political belief, and theoretically without any beliefs or opinions of their own; representing no national majority, and in many cases, possibly, representing only local minorities....

It was that belief, strengthened by subsequent events that caused me to adopt my uncompromising attitude in the debate last fall on the motion to send a delegation to Ottawa.

On June 14, one week before election day, over radio station VOCI in a campaign speech, I said: "Ever since the announcement of the machinery of the National Convention, and even before whenever the question arose, I followed the same line of reasoning, both in my Barreman radio program, and my editorials in a local newspaper. First, we have to make a decision as to whether we wish to retain the present commission form of government or to return to self-government. If the decision is to return to self-government, then the second step is to decide as a people what form of self-government we think best for our needs — the 49th state of the American union; the tenth province of the Dominion of Canada; a status like that of Northern Ireland with control in London; or to remain under responsible government as from 1855 to 1934." My views are no different now than they were when each of these statements was made. If anything, I am more certain now that I knew then what I was talking about.