

April 1, 1947

Election of the Ottawa Delegation

Mr. Chairman I have this afternoon received the following communication from His Excellency the Governor, which I will ask the Secretary to read to the Convention.

His Excellency the Governor has been informed by the High Commissioner for Canada in Newfoundland that the Canadian government will be happy to receive a delegation from the National Convention of Newfoundland at a mutually convenient date.

The Canadian government is of the opinion that the questions to be discussed with the delegation are of such complexity and of such significance for both countries that it is essential to have a complete and comprehensive exchange of information and a full and careful argument of both parties of all issues involved, so that an accurate appreciation of the position may be gained on each side.

The Canadian government is confident that the friendship and co-operation which have marked the relations of our two countries should provide a firm basis for our discussions. The delegation from the National Convention will be warmly welcomed in Ottawa.

Government House, St. John's, Nfld. April 1, 1947.

I take it that following the precedent of a few weeks ago, the next matter is to resolve the Convention into a committee of the whole for the purpose of electing this delegation, if someone will now make a motion to that effect.

Mr. Ballam Mr. Chairman, in my opinion, before any such delegation is elected we should have the findings of the delegation to London first, in order to get a complete picture of the whole set-up.

Mr. Chairman The matter is entirely in the hands of the Convention, but I suggest that this delegation has a very substantial amount of work to do before they can leave to discuss the question of confederation with the Canadian government. It is not our desire to unduly prolong the length of this Convention, and in all probability the delegation to London will have returned by the

middle of May, around which time the delegation to Ottawa should be ready to leave. In the meantime it is perfectly obvious they will have a tremendous amount of work to do. We have asked the Canadian government to receive a delegation, and they have accepted the idea. It is obvious now that we must get ready for that delegation to go. I am not going into any details now, but I suggest there is a tremendous amount of work to do locally. They have to take up the possible repercussion of the change from the Newfoundland to the Canadian tariff, the amount of the revenue that will be left to us, what amount would be required to run a provincial government, where these monies will have to come from, how much of our money will have to be taken over by the Canadian government, etc. All these questions require considerable figuring, in the course of which deliberations the delegation will have to have the assistance of some of the financial advisers of the government, the Assessor of Taxes and others. In fairness to whoever the delegation should be, I suggest that they should be appointed immediately, but it is for you to decide.

Mr. Hickman There may be something in what you say, and there may be something for them to do before they go, but I don't see any immediate rush to do it today. I would like to see this report cleaned up first, and with that in view I will make a motion that the election of the delegation to Canada be postponed until we finish this Public Health report.

Mr. Ballam I have much pleasure in seconding that.

Mr. Chairman You have heard the motion. Is there any further discussion?

Mr. Hillier I see no objection to electing the delegation to Canada immediately, but I also see no objection to delaying it until this report is finished. Seeing it has been moved and seconded I am prepared to accept it.

Mr. Chairman Is the Convention ready for the question?

Mr. Smallwood Suppose the report finishes today, according to the motion the election will follow the completion of the debate on the report. Is that what you have in mind?