

of a hasty decision. If I had worded this resolution I would have said:

1. Be it resolved that this Convention recommend to the United Kingdom government that the wishes of the people of Newfoundland should be ascertained at the earliest moment as to whether it is their desire that a revised form of self-government of not more than 15 men elected from 15 districts to constitute the local government of Newfoundland, be restored; and that, in view of our important strategic position and the un-retrievable commitments of the Commonwealth Office with respect to American and Canadian bases in Newfoundland territory, an international committee of three be appointed from the respective governments of Great Britain, the USA and Canada, to take charge of our foreign policy in matters of defence only, it being understood that this is not to be construed as giving any right to any outside power to interfere with our domestic or economic control of all local or foreign economic affairs.

2. Or that the present form of Commission government be continued for a period of not more than four years.

However, as the first and most important part of this resolution can be properly taken care of by the first duly elected government, I am prepared to support the motion as it stands, as our people must perforce either want selfgovernment or they do not want it, and I am fully prepared to accept their judgement on the matter. There is one reason why I would agree to putting Commission of Government on the ballot paper. At any time after 1936 to 1941, when we began to feel the effect of the war time prosperity, it is the generally accepted opinion that the big majority of our people would have readily agreed to the return to self-government without modifications. Under the unprecedented prosperity of our country, through circumstances over which the Commission of Government had neither influence nor control, a large number of our people have lost sight of the true causes for the influx of foreign capital and the high prices for our commodities, and they have been giving credit to a form of government of which neither the personnel nor the form had anything whatever to do with it. I do not quarrel with anyone who disagrees with

me, not even the members of the Commission themselves. That is their right. In my opinion most of them on the Commission at present are fine men, and I have a high opinion of them; but they and others who have served that unpopular body have agreed openly that the form is wrong for any country in this modern age, when all people, regardless of race or creed, are clamouring for the right to choose the form of government under which they will live. But for the fact that I know our surplus would be gone in four years unless it could be locked up outside their reach, I would like to see them suffer for some of the sins for which I know the government of that four years will be held responsible, but for which resettling world conditions will be to blame. By that time I feel we will have our feet on terra firma and be able safely to carry on without the aid of any surplus.

For the last time in this Convention I shall repeat paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Atlantic Charter:

2. They desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned.

Territorial changes did take place in Newfoundland without the freely expressed wishes of the people. If it was the wish of the people, Newfoundlanders were not consulted and these wishes were therefore never expressed.

3. They respect the right of all people to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them.

What greater authority could we have that our cause is just, that we are not infringing on the rights of others, than the signed statement of these two great world leaders and statesmen? This famous declaration was made in Newfoundland waters. So far, I refuse to believe they were not sincere; but less than two months from now will prove whether it was an empty, fake promise to Newfoundland or a friendly sincere pledge, conscious of the very great wrong that had been perpetrated against our people. I stated in my radio address of December 20, 1947, "Great Britain has a solemn obligation to perform toward Newfoundland, that obligation *must* and *will* be kept or she will be condemned forever in the eyes of the civilised world. *No* political excuse will save her. *We*, the people of New-