

point, even those that we hear mentioned most. True Crown colony status would go too much against the grain; Northern Ireland status would be merely avoiding the issue; so too would be representative government — we might as well retain our caretaker government as replace it with a kindergarten government; and union with the United States would raise matters of conscience for our people to which I for one will not be a party. As far as my own conscience is concerned, I am satisfied that I can recommend for submission to the Newfoundland people in national referendum not less than the forms of government proposed in the motion before the Chair. In other words, the least that we dare recommend is responsible government and Commission government. When I say Commission of Government, I mean Commission of Government in its present form. I cannot see wherein any worthwhile modification of Commission of Government can be achieved, for if you modify it you have to do one of two things: provide for the election of enough Newfoundlanders to carry a decision in case of dispute, or provide for a preponderance of Commonwealth Office appointees. In a modified Commission in which elected Newfoundlanders would be in the majority you would have, in effect, in all but name, responsible government; so why not have it by name, and by restoration of our suspended constitution? It may be that “a rose by any other name would smell as sweet”, but not in this island, if what would be in effect responsible government were still called Commission. But on the other hand, in a modified Commission in which elected Newfoundlanders would be in the minority, you would have in effect representative government, and you would have in addition all the furor, all the dissension, all the bickering that went with representative government before. Yes, and no throwing into the balance advisory councils or anything else would make for peace, quiet and good government in a body partly elected by the people, yet preponderantly appointed in Whitehall.

I am convinced that one of the choices to be submitted to the Newfoundland people should be retention of Commission of Government in its present form, but before I go on to say why, let me say this. Because I like to give credit where credit is due, I have not joined in the diatribes

against the Commission in which this Convention has from time to time indulged. Some of the criticisms of Commission that have been mouthed have been justified, for the Commission did fall far short of making the most of the golden opportunities that came its way; but hardly a word of credit has been given to the Commission, and that has been just simply the old game of playing politics. In order to redress in some little manner the injury the Commission has suffered at our hands, I avail of this opportunity to say this much in its favour; that notwithstanding its shortcomings, Commission of Government has done as much, and perhaps more, for the ordinary people in this country, the fishermen and farmers and the loggers, than any government within living memory; and in saying that I am voicing the opinion of people all over this country whose memories can go back much farther than my own. It would serve no useful purpose for me to enumerate here the excellencies and negligence of Commission of Government. The ordinary people of Newfoundland are not likely to forget overnight wherein the Commission of Government has served them well, and this Convention has done its best to see to it that they will not forget wherein it has failed, and so I will forego any recital of hallelujahs and lamentations. There is this, however, that I think deserving of special mention.

We hear it said these days that the British government promised that we would have political education during the days of Commission government, and that that pledge was not honoured. That, as far as I am concerned, is something decidedly open to question. It seems to me that during the days of Commission of Government Newfoundlanders have grown to a greater political perspicacity than has ever been there. Commission of Government has been criticised as dictatorial, and whilst definitely an oligarchy, it has put into effect policies that have made the people more politically adequate than they have ever been. These policies have led to the growth of many small organisations wherein many Newfoundlanders have learned the rudiments of parliamentary procedure, how to talk on their feet, how to think their way through to resolutions of a community's problems, what to look for in a proposal to make it worth their concern, how to select leaders from among them-