

postpone all consideration of the question whether we shall or shall not send a delegation to Canada, whether we shall or shall not make any inquiries of Britain, until we have all the facts in connection with our financial position, then the Convention has got to sit down and wait for another couple of months until we can secure the necessary information in connection with Confederation or financial assistance from the United Kingdom. My object is to get this delegation appointed and working here in St. John's now. I want them to be ready to go at the opportune time, and if we are to await our findings on the financial position of this country as disclosed by the various committees we have appointed, then we will not be ready when that financial information is at hand. We will then have to start in and get this other information from Canada and from the United Kingdom.

I quite understand Mr. Penney's motion, and have a great deal of sympathy with him, but it is so utterly indefinite it leaves the whole thing in the air. It means we shall simply spend two or three days here debating this subject for exactly nothing. It means that at some future unknown date we may again introduce a resolution, and discuss the question as to whether we shall send a delegation to Canada or not, and I think that the best way out of this is to pin down the situation in a manner which I think can be objectionable to nobody. The objection is to prematurity. It is, I presume, contended, that this information which it is proposed to obtain from the Canadian government will not be of any avail to us or the people until we have ascertained our own financial position. There may be something in that argument. It sounds as if it had some reason in it. But the point that I want to make clear is that by throwing this resolution in the air, as will happen if Mr. Penney's amendment passes in its present form, we shall still be nowhere. When we have the financial position we shall not be ready to discuss it either in comparison with confederation or anything else, and it was for that reason I intimated an hour ago that unless somebody else did it, and quickly, that I myself proposed to introduce a resolution for the purpose of making inquiries from the United Kingdom, because I want the machinery put into action now. My only object is to see that when we have all available information collected, a delegation leaves here

perhaps during the latter part of January. And that when we have that information, we also have the necessary information about the confederation question and about the assistance Britain will be able to give in certain eventualities. For that reason I propose to make a few observations on the amendment.

First I would like to refer to Mr. Hollett's quotation where he pointed out that section 146 of the British North America Act was defined in a way which makes provision for Newfoundland to become a province. You will notice I said "a way" not "the way". There are several ways usually of doing the same thing. It is perfectly true that in 1867 when the British North America Act was passed, section 146 was inserted setting up the machinery by which Newfoundland might be included as a province. But the conditions of Newfoundland then and now are different and, consequently, section 146 is inapplicable. Today there is no House of Assembly and no Legislative Council to pass any resolutions.

**Mr. Chairman** I must dispute your statement that there is no legislature in Newfoundland. There is. There is no responsible government in Newfoundland, but there is a legislature.

**Mr. Bradley** Yes, but not a legislature which would ever undertake to do any such thing as to legislate this country into confederation with Canada. Thus the position today is that whatever method may be adopted to bring about confederation, if the people so desire it, it will not be brought about by the British North America Act, which is inapplicable and could not be utilised for the purpose. I doubt if this country can go into confederation unless we get responsible government back. But suppose we never get responsible government back; are the people of this country to be precluded from voting for confederation? Is it legally possible that this country cannot vote for confederation simply because the people do not want responsible government? Furthermore, I am prepared to stake whatever reputation I may have as a lawyer in stating that the British government can, if it so desires, legislate this country into the Dominion of Canada tomorrow, with or without our consent. I feel sure she would not without our consent; but with the consent of the people of Newfoundland she would, provided always that Canada was an assenting party. It has been said that the Commission government was