

*Newfoundland*

It consequently objects to the appointment of any delegation of citizens to negotiate terms with Canada.

It most strongly protests against the recognition of the present delegation of citizens appointed by the governor in which the people of Newfoundland had neither choice nor voice.

It demands that instructions be given immediately by the governor or the commission of government to the said delegation to refrain from signing any terms on the ground that it has no power to do so and that, moreover, such an act of signing would prejudice the constitutional position of Newfoundland in England.

It moves that a copy of this memorial be sent immediately to the governor, the members of the commission of government and the members of the said delegation and the Prime Minister of Canada.

Fred W. Marshall, Chairman, Responsible Government League.

This document arrived on the morning of December 11, but notwithstanding its arrival the terms of union were signed at that ceremony to which I need not refer. The proceedings were broadcast at the time to the whole Canadian public.

The telegram was answered on the 14th of December in the following form:

Fred W. Marshall, Esq.,  
Chairman,  
Responsible Government League,  
St. John's, Newfoundland.

Dear Sir,

The Prime Minister has directed me to acknowledge the receipt of the telegram which you sent to him on December 10th on behalf of the Responsible Government League, and to let you know that its contents had been duly noted.

Yours sincerely,  
R. G. Robertson,  
Secretary.

I will table these documents. I should add that the only other document of which I know, and I have had a fairly careful search made as well as endeavouring to keep as fully informed as possible about the proceedings, is the receipt on October 8, 1948, of a communication from W. L. Collins, Secretary of the Responsible Government League. It reads as follows:

Sir,

Herewith enclosed you will find a copy of the resolution passed unanimously at a giant rally held in St. John's, Newfoundland, on Friday, October 8.

I have the honour to be, sir,

Your obedient servant,  
W. L. Collins.

Forwarded with this letter was a carbon copy of something which reads as follows:

Whereas a delegation, privately selected by the chairman of the commission of government, is at present at Ottawa under instructions to prepare the entry of this country into the Canadian Federation;

And whereas since the said delegation was neither chosen nor elected by the people of Newfoundland, it cannot, in justice, claim the right to represent our people or to negotiate on their behalf any final terms of confederation;

And whereas it has been officially stated by the commission of government that the people of New-

[Mr. St. Laurent.]

foundland will not be permitted to express, by way of plebiscite, their approval or otherwise of the final terms on which Canada proposes to absorb this country;

Be it therefore resolved that this mass meeting of Newfoundlanders do most strongly condemn the unjust and improper methods which are, and have been, used to deprive us of our inalienable democratic rights and of our existence as an independent people;

And be it further resolved that, on behalf of approximately half the electorate of Newfoundland who share our beliefs, we do most strongly deny to the members of the said delegation any right whatever to act on our behalf, or in our name to give their consent to any terms which would finally commit Newfoundland to confederation without the prior approval of our people being first obtained to such terms, by way of plebiscite;

And be it still further resolved that copies of this resolution be sent to the British, the Canadian and the Newfoundland governments, to the members of the Ottawa delegation and to the press.

One other document which I have not before me at this moment was addressed, not to the Canadian government, but to the meeting of prime ministers in London. I will certainly have it found. During the dinner hour efforts were made to have it located, but since it was after six o'clock those efforts were not successful. It was not a document addressed to the government of Canada; it was addressed to those attending the meeting of prime ministers in London.

The answer to that communication was sent immediately after my return to Ottawa on November 9, 1948. It reads as follows:

W. L. Collins, Esq.,  
Secretary,  
Responsible Government League.

Dear Sir:

On his return from London, Mr. St. Laurent asked me to acknowledge receipt of your letter addressed to him there under date of the 16th of October, enclosing a memorandum to the commonwealth prime ministers then assembled in conference in London, and to inform you that the matter of the union of Newfoundland with Canada was not dealt with in the conference.

Yours very truly,  
Guy Sylvestre,  
Private Secretary.

With respect to these representations of the organization which calls itself the responsible government league in Newfoundland, I can only repeat what I said in the house at the end of the last session, at page 5546 of *Hansard*:

The department would, of course, receive courteously and file anything that would come from any group in Newfoundland, but the department would not act on anything that does not come from those who have the constitutional responsibility for the government of Newfoundland at the present time.

This referendum had been held and the majority of those voting expressed the opinion they did not want the restoration of responsible government but did want union with Canada substantially on the terms of the proposal. It was our feeling that had we, at