

lines. Certain I am that Tweedledee and Tweedledum would both have felt very much at home in this chamber during the past several weeks. Up until as late as only yesterday I had no intention of risking my reputation, such as that may be, by becoming involved in this great floundering around the Canadian mulberry bush that has been going on here for some time. When at this late moment I do so, it is against my better judgement, and because I have been unable to resist the temptation to have a final word upon a matter that I have been at pains to stress throughout this Convention. I have kept out of this debate so far for a great many reasons, and by no means the least of these has been that I had a very inadequate training for effective participation in the genesis and genius of such debate that has been going on in this chamber of immortals. You see, sometime when I was very young I had the very great misfortune of being taught that two and two make four, and I have believed that all my life. But whenever during this Convention I have tried to put two and two together, I have found that my argument has been misinterpreted as adding up to 3.999 or 4.111, or what is undoubtedly held in some quarters to be the final treachery of all, an argument for confederation. Or again, I have to be of the mind that what matters most to the average man, once he is free in the practice of his religion, is three square meals a day. And that granted that, he doesn't worry very much about who sits in the seat of government and gets the grant. But I have found that to say as much in this Convention, has been to invite condemnation as a materialist. This I have found to be strange logic indeed, particularly when I remember that in 1933 the only answer of some of our best minds to all who took a stand against the surrender of our constitution was, "And how do you propose to feed this people?" I have failed completely to understand how it could be patriotism to worry about three square meals a day for all in 1933, but merely materialism to worry about three square meals a day for all in 1948. In consequence I have preferred to stay out of this debate by distortion. That, in my opinion, is exactly what it has been, and I will content myself with the statement that during this debate statements have been made, and many of them, calculated merely so to distort the whole confederation issue as to leave the Newfoundland people completely confused.

On the one hand I have heard everything conceivable thrown at the idea of union. All the old arguments, all the skeletons of ancient bogies that have been dangling in the closet since 1869, have been given a new coat of whitewash and brought out for further service — all, that is, with one exception. I have heard no mention as yet of that most effective propaganda piece of 1869, that Canadians shoot babies out of cannons. I suggest that that is something not to be overlooked. For after all, it would be just as logical to expect people to believe that as to expect them to believe some of the things that I have heard in this chamber during the past weeks. On the other hand, it is not impossible that some of our people may have been left with the impression that with confederation, we should come into the inheritance of a new Jerusalem flowing with milk and with honey and with maple leaves. I have no objection to the coming of the millennium except, perhaps, that I think that I should find it dreadfully boring. But I don't expect to see it come to pass in my time, and I very much doubt that my son will see it come to pass in his time. Being a reasonable man, I am quite prepared to think that Mr. Smallwood is not inclined to tell us that the millennium will come upon us in consequence of confederation.

It is not my intention at this late date to try to sift for you the proof from the propaganda. But for the satisfaction of my own conscience, I have tried to keep in view the point that this debate was supposed to be about in the first place, namely whether or not a fair and equitable basis may exist for federal union of Newfoundland and Canada. That is what the delegation was sent to Ottawa to investigate, and that is what each of us has to decide for himself upon the basis of the documents submitted to us. The only alternative is to play it safe, and to avoid the issue and take refuge in a confession of inability to complete the work that in standing for election we undertook to do. I have no intention of going into the decision that I have come to in this matter. I shall get around to that in the great final debates that will follow immediately. For the moment, I want merely to relate my concept of what confederation would mean, as formulated from the documents before us, to that matter upon which I have been so insistent throughout this Convention — namely, that for the future the ordinary man of this island