

throughout that winter. As one who represented labour for many years I would never be one who would cast my vote to let 70,000 starve. I agree with my honourable friends Mr. Newell and Mr. Keough, but I am interested today, as a representative of the people, in the question of how we are going to get three meals a day for ourselves and our families. We must not forget that while the Commission of Government have made mistakes they have done some good things as well. I wish it to be distinctly understood that I don't like Commission of Government, although I helped bring it in. I would rather see responsible government or some other form of government if this country could afford it. I came to this Convention with an open mind and no preconceived ideas. I told my supporters that it was useless to ask me what form of government I wanted. I said, "I don't know, I must first go there, and after every form of government is examined then, and only then, will I be in a position to cast my vote for what form of government I think is best for the people of this country." And the form of government that is best for the people of this country is best for me and what I represent.

Now, some may be running away with the idea that all this country is down on Commission of Government. That is not correct. I think that if there was a vote taken among the fishermen, you would find 85% of them for it. This is the only form of government that ever did anything for the fishermen.... I just bring back to your memories two or three years ago, when the government first announced the prices of codfish in the foreign markets. That was done, I think, as much through my influence and advice as through anybody's. I was after Mr. Dunn for two years to do that and, by the way, I feel that Mr. Dunn was the finest commissioner that has come here in the Natural Resources department — and the fishermen knew for the first time in the history of the Newfoundland fishery that year and since, before they put a cod trap, or a trawl, or net or line in the water, what they were going to get for a quintal

of fish when it was taken out and dried. Take labour. The government created conciliation boards first. They created an arbitration board and gave labour a show, and I may say that I think that in eight out of ten cases that came before that board, labour got the benefit. Ask any of the clerks on Water Street. Labour today can thank the Commission of Government for that. Take public health, cottage hospitals, and other things carried through by the Commission of Government. We must, if we are going to condemn any form of government, give credit where credit is due. The Commission of Government has, in my opinion, done as much and more for the industry of the country than any government which has existed. As far as the government of today is concerned and the future government, sir, I have an open mind. After this Convention has got through its work and settled down to make some recommendations to the Dominions Office as to what forms of government are best for this country, then I will cast my vote according to the dictates of my conscience.

When the discussion was on in connection with Mr. Wild coming to address the Convention, and the discussion lasted some time as to whether he would address the Convention as a committee of the whole with no outsiders, or in public with strangers in the gallery, I said I thought it was better not to cross our bridges until we came to them. I said that if Mr. Wild refused to give us information in public, then that was all we could do about it. Never kick a man until you have reason. One of the daily papers reported I said that if he refused to give us the information, it was time to jump on him. That gave a wrong impression. I do not think any members, myself included, are ready to jump on anybody's back. Every man should get a decent hearing, and never condemn a man until you have reason to condemn. If Mr. Wild or any of the commissioners cross me I would not be afraid to tell them what I thought of them. The paper's statement was misleading and I ask that it be corrected.

[The Convention adjourned]