

are now being supported by propaganda to divide the classes in the country, as I have stated before — a “soak the rich” attitude. But however, the Canadian Finance Minister, Mr. Douglas Abbott, has stated himself that this is an impossibility even in Canada, and has said that there are not enough rich in Canada to soak. If that applies in Canada, then so does it most certainly apply in Newfoundland. It is all political propaganda to hide the real cold facts, and to stir the people up so that they cannot see what the future may hold for them. You cannot legislate a standard of living. People have to work to live, and there is nothing in the British North America Act that provides that all peoples in union shall have a high standard of living.

If I were the most ardent confederate, and yet sincere with the people of Newfoundland, I could not possibly recommend these terms to them. It is not a question of recommending confederation or not. It is a question of doing so on those terms submitted by the Government of Canada, and to recommend them to the people of this country is more than I would care to have on my conscience. If I thought sincerely they were good enough to benefit the people as a whole, raise the standard of living and give us economic security, then I would heartily support them and do all I could to have the people accept them. But I have looked at these terms, sir, and have studied them to the best of my ability. I have used the experience I have gained in 20-odd years in this country in work, and I can only say it is a one-sided argument — one sided for Canada. I am willing to prophesy — which I hope will not come true — that if we have union with Canada, that anywhere from three to five years after we have entered into union, the people of this country will curse the day they ever voted for confederation on these terms. I hope that I am wrong, but that is my sincere belief, as well as that if the people of Newfoundland enter confederation on the terms submitted to us, it is nothing less than criminal.

Mr. Harrington Mr. Chairman, I think you will agree, and every right-thinking Newfoundlander will agree, that it is most regrettable that the chief advocate of the cause of confederation should have introduced his resolution in the final stages of this Convention on such a note as he did, which several speakers have already suggested strongly resemble the tactics of class war and sectional

agitation, that have been and are being employed by the vanguard of men who propose the Communist world order. I say it is most regrettable. Surely, confederation has more merit than that it has to be boosted in such a desperate manner. Surely the argument for putting confederation on the ballot on the basis submitted to the Convention by the Prime Minister could have been presented in a fair and reasonable manner dealing with the proposed arrangements laid down in the Grey Book.

Instead, he said very little about the many aspects of confederation which are still seen “through a glass dimly” by our people, and the only real connection with the confederation question established by Mr. Smallwood that I could see, was his reference to the business of property tax, and of course his usual assertion that such a tax would scarcely apply to Newfoundland. He said that the federal government never collected a dollar in property tax, that the provincial government would not dare to collect a dollar; and that leaves only the municipal governments or town councils, and we have only ten or 15 of these councils, and so our people would not be taxed on their property, real or personal. I put it to you, Mr. Chairman, in the light of the deficits we would have in our provincial budgets, how long it would be before that provincial government would have to pass legislation to incorporate every settlement in Newfoundland with a population of 500 and over into a local council, in order to raise the absolutely necessary revenues to keep the country going. And then see where we would stand on the matter of property taxes. And while I’m on taxes, Mr. Chairman, I’d like to refer to a couple of passages in one of those books and documents which we received from Ottawa — *Dominion and Provincial Submissions and Plenary Discussions at the Dominion Provincial Conference of 1945*, page 142.

If that is the line of tactics that the confederates are going to employ from now to the referendum; if that is the way that they going to try and sell confederation to the people of this country, by raising the ugly and dangerous head of class warfare, then, sir, like Mr. Higgins and others, we are not going to have any part of it.

Up to now the tactics, especially of the chief advocate of this cause, have been to try and prove, not that confederation is the best thing for New-