

ness disposed of.

I feel that the proceedings of this Convention and the extramural activities of some of its members must be very disappointing to the people who sent us here. The talk of political intrigue that is going on, of ganging up in groups, the determination beforehand of attitudes that should be resolved in debate, the closed minds to everything that one does not approve, are a very definite setback to the birth of democracy in this land. But I suppose it will be heartening for the whole country to learn from the remarks of two of the most outspoken, if not the most unbiased members that the people are our masters. I had begun to wonder if we were forgetting that. It is very encouraging to note that we are not going to tell the people of Newfoundland what they must do. Let us hope that spirit continues.

Meanwhile we are here. And if the people are our masters, what is it they want us to do? They want us, surely, to secure the facts, the information on which they can base their decision. They did not send us here to devise methods for limiting their choice in that decision, or to inaugurate political careers for ourselves. Above all, they expect us to behave as rational, sensible men. They expect us to have the mentality of a jury. They expect us to be fair-minded, not supermen. As reports come in here they do not expect them to be coloured by the political views of the authors — or maybe by this time they do. If we cannot be honest, objective and impartial about this thing, what are we here for? Who cares what form of government we, as individuals, believe in? We each have one vote in the referendum and no more.

This Convention is unique not because it is a stall or a sham or a makeshift — that's baloney, and we all know it. It's unique because we have the opportunity to sit down coolly and soberly and figure out possible forms for a future constitution for our country. Upon the basis of our findings the whole people will decide the form they prefer. Nothing could possibly be more democratic than that. We can make a good job of it, or we can foul it up. It's up to us.

Meanwhile, our mandate from the people is clear and unmistakable. At least, mine is. A year ago the people whom I represent were holding meetings and discussing their future government. Some of them, in their community study groups,

have been discussing things like economic security for five or six years now, and doing things about it too. I think I can claim that they are more politically alert than many parts, even the Avalon Peninsula, from whose glittering highways I first took my bearings. Some thought a revised form of the present system might be workable and desirable, at least for some time. There were a great many who thought that, and no doubt they still do. Others wondered if union with Canada might not be more practicable, particularly from an economic standpoint. Perhaps therein lay economic freedom. They wanted to know. I don't know how they feel about it now, but I imagine they must be pleased to learn from the member from Grand Falls that he thinks they still have a chance to qualify as loyal Newfoundlanders. Most of them, frankly, found it difficult to make up their minds. They know what they don't want — ever again. They weren't so sure of what they did want. So I'm here to get certain information for them. And that is why I support this motion. I cannot conscientiously do otherwise. I wouldn't want to decide the issue. Let those who will suffer or enjoy the consequences make the decision. If we are ever confronted with the choice of freedom or poverty — and with poverty there is no freedom — and we choose to be poor but proud, let that decision be made by those to whom poverty is something more than a polite expression, and who have often in the past had to swallow their pride and accept a handout in one form or another. Whatever the choices are, they must be put as clearly as possible. That is our work. The choosing is for the country as a whole. I not only believe in the right of the people to decide, but I have faith in their ability to decide wisely.... If any of us believe that we are the servants of the people who sent us here, we must do the work for which we were sent. And we must stop inventing excuses for not doing it.

Mr. Crummey I do not think I can be charged with using up very much time in this Convention. I do not intend to say much now. During the debates, there have been many issues brought in foreign to the subject matter, and the same thing applies tonight. We are talking about confederation. There is no such issue before the Chair. Why then talk about confederation? The motion as tabled by Mr. Smallwood is that a delegation be appointed to be sent to Ottawa and that motion to