

Newfoundland, the land we love, finds herself at the crossroads, a bit hesitant as she reads the signpost plainly marked, "A Date With Destiny", I too would become poetical and quote from a little poem which I have carried in my scrapbook for some years now. I do not know the author, sir, but it does seem timely and appropriate as Newfoundlanders generally wait expectantly for the referendum day. It goes like this:\*

It may be rather far-fetched, sir, to say that our date with tomorrow will be from there to forever, but certain it is that in the national referendum which is to be held next spring, we trust, the road we as Newfoundlanders take may determine to a great extent our way of life for years to come, and possibly the destiny of generations yet unborn. What of the future, then? Is the road ahead a clear one? Is it likely to lead to the uplands of happiness and prosperity, or is it still to be befogged and dimmed with hesitation and uncertainty? Does government play an important role in determining our way of life? Or is it true that our prosperity, our future place in the sun will be determined by economic factors beyond our control? One delegate speaking a few days ago pleaded for a government that would provide those elusive peaks of attainment called economic security and political stability. Mr. Chairman, I very much doubt if any government in the world can provide such blessings, and although I am inclined to agree with that gentleman that there is a form of government that might go a long way toward such an attainment, yet in the main, the responsibility for our future prosperity as a people and for our stability of government will rest entirely with us. For whatever form of government we adopt, there will still be those strong westerlies dashing the cold Atlantic spray in the face of the industrious fisherman as his boat navigates the stormy waters of Cape Freels. There will still remain those long and weary nights as fearless schooner fishermen keep their watch and hope for daylight, as their ships plough up the coast to the far-flung harbours of the Labrador. Yes, there will still be the elements to contend with, the vagaries of the weather to worry over for Mr. Fudge's hardwork-

ing farmer in the Humber valley. Forms of government cannot change this, yet good, wise government can and will help to a large extent in the alleviation of a great many of the vexing problems that now face our people. But we must not expect too much. And here I would quote the words of John Galsworthy, when he wrote: "History tells us that the status quo is of all things the most liable to depart; the millennium of all things, the least likely to arrive."

Mr. Chairman, I believe I am right in saying that there is not a man or woman of voting age in this country who does not believe in the concept of self-government. That almost legendary figure, honest Abe Lincoln, talked of a government of the people, by the people and for the people. Maybe such a government never did exist. Maybe it is like Sir Thomas More's Utopia, a myth, a daydream, which for its author meant having his head cut off by order of an unscrupulous monarch whose only philosophy was a blind belief in the divine right of kings.

In addressing myself to this motion, I am placed in a rather awkward position. As a member of this Convention, I ask myself what is expected of me at this juncture. A great-uncle of mine at the turn of the century contested a section of the district which I have the honour to represent. Unfortunately he was defeated. Asked some years later what caused his defeat, he said his defeat was the result of his having the courage of his convictions. At the risk of suffering a like fate, should I at some future date decide to follow Major Cashin's career as a politician, I am going to frankly state my convictions, although in order to be fair, I must first say that I support the idea of placing both forms on the ballot paper in the referendum. I would explain here, sir, that I am merely supporting the putting of responsible and commission forms of government on the ballot; I cannot and will not recommend them. Moreover, I want to make it unmistakably clear that in supporting them, I am not trying to place any restriction or limitation in the way of the people in their exercising a choice of a form of government not included in this resolution.

Mr. Chairman, speaking in this assembly in

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Work well and dream; the long day of waiting must end,  
Howsoever it wills not to die,  
And we have a promise, a date with tomorrow,  
From there to forever, when now has passed by.