

**Report of the Ottawa Delegation
Proposed Arrangements for the Entry of Newfoundland into Confederation
Committee of the Whole**

Mr. Cashin Mr. Chairman, I am glad Mr. Smallwood brought that matter up. With regard to closure, it is immaterial to me; but I want to point out that before the Ottawa delegation left last year, this Convention was practically assured it would reconvene again around the middle of July, but the Ottawa delegation ignored that; they did not have the decency to communicate with the Secretary telling him to advise the members of the Convention that they were sorry about the delay; we had to take it upon ourselves to communicate with them, and we were told we were committing an act of national treachery. Mr. Smallwood can reply all he likes to my remarks. This confederation issue has been before this house for 16 months. That is all we have heard. Every report has been torn abroad and told what confederation would do. The thing should never have happened. Even the *Evening Telegram* practically said it was a farce.

A few items have been drawn to my attention to bring up, and there are many points I omitted, particularly from the point of financial interest. A party asked me today to inquire what is going to happen to the Newfoundland Savings Bank in which there are \$20 million belonging to our people at 2.5%. When the Ottawa delegation was discussing these matters, did they ask the Ottawa government what would become of the bank? It is a very important matter.... I am one of those who believes in that bank. If those savings are going to be reduced in annual interest charges, that money should be withdrawn; and for those in the country who have their savings in that bank, I am going to direct a question to the Minister of Finance. I will draft a question.

This so-called budget of Mr. Smallwood's¹ indicates to me that, in addition to paying an annual federal tax of around \$230 per annum, every Newfoundlander, will have to find an additional \$30 per year in provincial taxation. In all, therefore, the people of the country would have to find over \$80 million each year to pay both federal and provincial taxation. In short, the whole thing means that the people of Newfoundland would be taxed to death — that the dole days would be considered luxurious living

and opulence in comparison to the manner in which the people of our country would be forced to live in union with Canada.

Mr. Chairman, there is a saying that there is none so blind as those who will not see, and it is certain that many of us refuse to see things as they are in this country today. They cannot plead ignorance, they cannot say they have not been told that the threats to our country have not been pointed out to them. Time and time again, the call has come to them to assume the duty which as Newfoundlanders is rightly theirs. And whatever befalls us in the future, whatever disasters happen to us, the people generally cannot say that have not been asked to stave off such disasters.

I am not speaking to hear the sound of my own voice. Nor am I trying to warp the judgement of the delegates to this Convention or the people of the country, or influence their minds with any more airy rhetoric or political spellbinding. My purpose has been, at this time particularly, to give hard, cold facts which cannot be denied or talked away. What I have said emanates from my sincere political belief which is based on the solid and eternal doctrine: first, a country belongs to its people; second, it is the solemn duty of the people of that country to shoulder the responsibility of governing it. Any divergence or avoidance of that doctrine, any excuse for acting contrary to that fundamental truth is cowardly, unethical and immoral. The challenge which faces the people of this country today is the patriotic and moral challenge to do their duty and to face their responsibilities like real men and women. It is a clear-cut issue — as clear and unambiguous as the challenge of right and wrong. But again I say, there are those amongst us who have shown that they are unwilling, or have not the capabilities of facing their responsibilities and accepting obligations of democratic decency. They are prepared instead to assume the garb of mendicants and go begging at the back door of some outside country, asking to be taken in out of the rough world which they fear to face. Like Shakespeare's character, they are prepared to crawl under the huge legs of some foreign colossus and find themselves dishonourable graves. But I know that there are

¹Volume II:522.