

you know what happened at our meeting this morning in connection with these figures, that is in reference to the revenues and expenditures on pages 112-113, from 1897 up to Dec. 31, 1946. I think that we produced sufficient evidence this morning to show that no such thing took place, and that the Finance Committee has been upheld. Under such circumstances Mr. Chairman, I would ask you to make an official ruling on this matter before we proceed to go into committee of the whole to discuss this report.

Mr. Smallwood Mr. Chairman, as Major Cashin has raised this matter, and as it refers to my remarks on Friday past, I would like to say that at no time since the report was tabled have I had anything but admiration for the fine piece of work which that report shows.... It is one of the finest reports laid before this Convention, and one of the most important. At no time have I thought that the Finance Committee has misrepresented any figures or statistics, and secondly, to the best of my knowledge and memory, on Friday I said nothing which would give any member of the public or of this Convention any...

Mr. Higgins Mr. Chairman, I don't want to interrupt Mr. Smallwood, but I think Major Cashin asked for a ruling. I think we should have this ruling.

Mr. Smallwood I would like to know what ruling Major Cashin desires. He has referred to me, and I am now making an explanation. Possibly, sir, if you have a ruling you might defer it until I make my explanation.

Mr. Chairman The position, Mr. Smallwood, is that the matter was discussed by the Steering Committee this morning, of which body you are a member. At the instance and request of the Steering Committee I am obligated to make a ruling.... Major Cashin's motion, in effect, is that I should briefly recapitulate to members what took place, the reason for convening the meeting and the ruling I am expected to make. I therefore propose to make my ruling at this time.

Before doing so I must direct the attention of members to the important distinction to be drawn between motive and effect. I am quite satisfied that Mr. Smallwood, in the course of his remarks, was prompted by the best of motives.... I must rule that, quite irrespective of his remarks, Mr. Smallwood was prompted by the best of motives, and in particular to discharge his duties. As I

before said, however, the motive which prompts a remark, and the effect of that remark upon the mind of a third person are two entirely different things.... I am forced to remind members that, in my opinion, this is not a parliamentary body. This is ... simply a fact-finding body.... I will hold that members have not the rights and privileges belonging to members of Parliament.

It has been reported to the Steering Committee that some of the remarks made by the member for Bonavista Centre Friday afternoon last created in the minds of the public some opinions which unquestionably affected the integrity and honesty of the Finance Committee, who are responsible for that report.... The position briefly is this. Members will recall that approximately some six months ago a Finance Report was tabled, and on pages 112 and 113 certain figures had been compiled and set forth. In the course of the debate which occurred on Friday last, Mr. Smallwood questioned the correctness of the figures. I want to draw a distinction here. The question with which I have to concern myself is whether or not the figures had been independently corroborated to the satisfaction of the Steering Committee as being correct and unimpeachable.... In Steering Committee the figures for the years 1897-98 to 1918-19, both inclusive, were accepted by both parties to the controversy as being correct. From the period 1919-20 to 1934-35 these were shown to be correctly copied from the Auditor General's reports.... I therefore rule that for the period 1919-20 to 1934-35 the independent corroboration to be found in the Auditor General's reports leaves me no alternative than to conclude that these figures were correctly copied and taken from the Auditor General's reports. With regard to the remaining period, that is to say from 1935-36 to Dec. 31, 1946, no evidence one way or the other was submitted to us this morning, perhaps for the excellent reason that it is not available; but I am forced to the conclusion that these figures are correct for two reasons: in the first place all figures prior to the year 1935-36 were found correct.... If, therefore, it is found that two-thirds of a report is correct, then I am driven to the conclusion that the remaining one-third must be likewise correct, unless there has been evidence adduced to warrant my reaching a contrary conclusion.... It becomes my duty to hold that the figures were correctly copied, and they should