

of which they could see nothing to inspire hope, but much to create apprehension. Sir, it is not by the conditions of 1948 that we must pass judgement on the decision of '69. We must try to see it as it was, and as they saw it almost 80 years ago, and be not too sweeping in our judgement, and endeavour to see the present situation from every angle, including the question of dollars and cents, which may seem the most important question to some, but there is more at stake than that.

I have pointed out the anxiety with which the British government pressed for the confederation of the North American colonies, and it is obvious that this desire was prompted far more by imperial than colonial interests. The opposition in the House of Assembly here after the 1869 elections expressed it as their main opinion that confederation had been prevented by first the studied determination of some persons of influence to oppose the desires of Her Majesty's Government, and secondly by the active dissemination of Britain, which entirely ignored the true merits of the question. And if you want final proof that this 1869 election was principally brought about by imperial planning, listen to what Governor Hill said at the closing session of the House of Assembly in May, 1870: "Her Majesty's Government," he said, "ever awaits the welfare and prosperity of her people, and not only approves Confederation of Newfoundland with the Dominion, but is anxious for its speedy completion"; and I, in the light of all the circumstances of our history in the 19th century, say that was the main rock on which confederation foundered — the feeling of coercion that was behind the whole movement, the definite pressure that was exerted by the Queen's representative in many pronouncements, and while the matter of entering confederation was in theory a matter of choice, it was in fact something of a pressure movement, with the realisation that while it was being arranged for the colony's protection, it was still an end that must be achieved willy nilly....

That, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, was the real position as I see it at the close of the 1869 election. And confederation slept until 1888, when due to the efforts of Alfred Morine, a Nova Scotian who had adopted Newfoundland as his country and gained a reputation here as a lawyer as well as a politician, an attempt was made to reopen the negotiations, but it fell through, and

in 1890 the Whiteway government began to negotiate with the United States for a reciprocity treaty, and the result was the Bond-Blaine convention, which never came to anything due to Canadian interference with the home government; for had not Sir Charles Tupper, the Canadian High Commissioner in London, been assured by the British government that Newfoundland would not be allowed to do anything with the United States until it had been submitted to his government? There, sir, was the rock on which confederation foundered again in 1895.

Sir, is it the intention to rise the committee?

Mr. Chairman Subject to the approval of the House, it is my intention to sit tonight.

Mr. Harrington Shall I continue?

Mr. Chairman Yes, you can continue until six, unless you want a recess. Do you want a recess for five minutes?

Mr. Harrington A recess till 8 o'clock?

Mr. Chairman No, a recess for five minutes.

Mr. Harrington No, I can continue.

Mr. Smallwood We have not got very much time, and if Mr. Harrington is prepared to go ahead until six, it is only what? 20 minutes or so.

Mr. Harrington I will continue.

[The Convention adjourned to 8 pm]

Mr. Harrington When the House rose this afternoon I had been speaking on the country's history from 1869 to 1895, and I had come to a consideration of the present day situation. Newfoundland's position has greatly changed since 1869, and since 1895. In 1927, Newfoundland gained a possession, the Labrador, three times as large as itself. Hitherto, she had been a small island colony whose strategic position, as Mr. Higgins has pointed out, was ignored until the second World War. Up to that time too, the United States had not come into its own as a number one world power. Now the US has assumed Britain's traditional role in world affairs, and the US has bases in Newfoundland. Hence it is now more imperative than ever to get Newfoundland into confederation. Hence the statement that if Newfoundland enters confederation, Canada will replace Britain as the other party in the base agreement.

It might well seem that the pressure is on Britain this time — pressure from Canada. When Britain made the surrender of self-government in 1933 the condition for financial aid, she knew