

around. That is the voice that is going to be heard in this Convention. They are not alone in that viewpoint, they will be joined by a few here in this Convention. I have no doubt whatever that efforts will be made, honest and sincere, even if mistaken, to keep the discussion on political and constitutional lines, and it is not going to be done. There are bigger things than politics and constitutions to be decided in this Convention, before ever we come around to the type or form of government. I should imagine that for the next three months that will be the matter with which the Convention will be fully occupied, and before we come to a discussion of constitutionality and the rest, I would like to put myself on record on a matter with which Major Cashin has dealt at least briefly here this afternoon. Major Cashin has said that he condemns the motives that inspired the creation of this Convention. I want to say, Mr. Chairman, that in my view the whole idea, the whole conception of the recent National Convention election, of this Convention, of the national referendum to follow, constitute in the aggregate the most thorough democratic procedure in the entire political history of Newfoundland. I see in it nothing sinister. I see in it no attempt whatever to railroad this people or this Convention. I see nothing suspicious in his presence and appointment of Professor Wheare, though I heard it suggested on the air, that he, or the person appointed in his place, was to be a Dominions Office dictator to come to Newfoundland and dominate the Convention so that the delegates elected would be merely puppets in his hand. I see no evidence of it, and I do not believe for a moment that was the intention. Let us look at it for a moment. There are five documents relative to the whole political situation — the Amulree Report, the British government white paper, the joint address of the legislature of Newfoundland, the act of Parliament, and the letters patent. If I am not mistaken, there is a phrase in identical language in all five documents to the effect that responsible government would be restored to Newfoundland when Newfoundland became self-supporting again, and upon request of the people. It is therefore very clear that a contract was indeed set up between the Parliament of Britain and the people of Newfoundland, and the contract laid it down that when two conditions were met responsible

government would be restored to this country: the first, that Newfoundland should be self-supporting again, the second that the Newfoundland people should request it.

At most, and then taking merely a very superficial view, we can say today that Newfoundland is self-supporting and that the first of the two conditions has been met. The Newfoundland people have never requested the return of responsible government to this moment. It is true that here and there an association, a businessmen's organisation, a public meeting, a group isolated, scattered, constituting in the aggregate only a tiny fraction of the Newfoundland people, have passed resolutions that they would like responsible government restored. But the people have not requested the return of responsible government. Up to this moment where has the Dominions Office, the Parliament of Great Britain, or the government of Great Britain violated a contract established? Have they been asked that they do it? They have not. If, tomorrow morning or afternoon, any member of this Convention stood in his place and moved that we recommend to the government of the United Kingdom, or to the Secretary of State for the Dominions, the restoration of responsible government, and the motion is seconded and voted on and carried ... we have not an iota of evidence to lead us to assume that that request would be refused. Despite accusations of malignancy, despite suggestions of nefarious purpose, we have not the slightest evidence that a request of this Convention to the government of the United Kingdom for the restoration of responsible government would be refused by them in the sense that they would refuse to submit it to the people of Newfoundland. Remember we are not the people of Newfoundland, and even our unanimous asking for the restoration of responsible government does not make it the request of the Newfoundland people. Mr. Chairman, that right of the people to request the restoration of responsible government has not been removed, it is still here in the national referendum, the particular machinery which has been set up through which the people can express any wish.... Now, Mr. Chairman, if the right of the Newfoundland people to request a return of responsible government stands and is still here, where is the lack of democracy in the whole situation? Not only do