

St. John's,  
November 20, 1947.

Dear Mr. Smallwood:

Due to my absence from the Convention, I wish you to move the motion that is on the order paper in my name, and to pilot the debate in committee of the whole.

Sincerely,

F. Gordon Bradley.

I therefore move order No. 2 on the order paper.

**Mr. Chairman** The motion is that the Convention resolve itself into a committee of the whole to consider and discuss the proposals received on November 6 from the Right Honourable the Prime Minister of Canada.

**Mr. Higgins** Before that motion is put, I would like to make a few remarks. Two or three days ago I suggested a private session to discuss the manner in which this particular motion is to be discussed. It was not thought fit by members at that time that we should have a private session, but that it should be discussed in public. Therefore I should like to have a full discussion on how it is proposed to give effect to this resolution. If the Convention goes into committee of the whole, how is it proposed that we discuss this matter? Are we going to read through the Black Books? I think we should have some definite plan of action before we turn ourselves into a committee of the whole, and know where we are going. Probably you, sir, could give us some idea of how we should be guided in the matter.

**Mr. Chairman** This is a procedural question before the Chair. The advisability or otherwise of proceeding with this matter by committee of the whole is a procedural question which must be decided by the Convention.... I think, however, your request is quite reasonable. In view of the fact that Mr. Bradley is sick, his request is that Mr. Smallwood should pilot this matter through committee of the whole; if you do not mind, Mr. Smallwood, would you be good enough to enlighten us on how you think you should go about it?

**Mr. Higgins** The last part of Mr. Bradley's letter is quite improper. It is a matter for the committee to appoint its chairman. Mr. Bradley has nothing to do with appointing him.

**Mr. Chairman** In my own limited experience here, the Finance Report and the Economic Report were piloted by a chairman not nominated

by this Convention. Therefore there is no departure from established precedent in Mr. Smallwood's presiding without a vote to that effect from the Convention.

**Mr. Higgins** Surely it must be agreed to by somebody.

**Mr. Chairman** It is purely a procedural matter which should have been dealt with, perhaps, by the Steering Committee.... I am not prepared, not having examined the documents, to express an opinion as to the *modus operandi* if and when the Convention resolves itself into a committee of the whole.

**Mr. Smallwood** What I had in mind was, first of all, not to make any long speeches in committee of the whole; secondly, not to read through this communication from the Prime Minister of Canada; thirdly, not to read through the Black Books (that is, the report of the delegation). My proposal was to do this: immediately upon going into committee of the whole to read first, two or three passages from the speech of the Prime Minister of Canada opening our conference in Ottawa; secondly, one or two passages from the speech of Mr. Bradley in reply to the Prime Minister, because these two speeches gave the setting to the conference. Then, thirdly, I was going to read the letter of the Prime Minister contained in the Grey Book. Having done that, I was going to read clause one of the communication of the basis of union, explain what that clause meant, and then sit down. If any member wishes to direct questions at me, bearing on clause 1, I would attempt to answer. If any member cared to make comments on Clause 1, he would, of course, be free to do so. Clause 1 having been disposed of, I then proposed to read clause 2, with some brief explanation of it, then sit down. Same procedure, clause by clause; to refer to the Black Books (the report of the delegation) only by way of explaining any point that required explanation.

It seems to me that if we followed that procedure in a businesslike fashion, and tackled this communication clause by clause, consulting the documents — the supporting papers, so to speak, we should be able to get through this thing in eight or ten days.

**Mr. Fudge** As I understand it, due to Mr. Bradley's illness he is unable to appear and he asks Mr. Smallwood to take over the piloting. Does that mean that when Mr. Bradley is medi-