

unreasonable assumption of prerogative unto myself, since it was written in the bond that what I should do was recommend possible forms of future government to be put before the people at a national referendum. That was what the people of my district sent me here to do — to recommend possible forms of future government. I ask you to note particularly the words, "possible forms". "Possible", mind you, not impossible, and "forms", mind you, not form. "Forms" — note the "s". A great deal of misunderstanding has arisen about that "possible" and that plural; and in particular one hears arguments these days that for the Convention to have to recommend the maximum of possible alternatives would mean that we should have to recommend every form of government known to man. Carry that sort of thing to its logical conclusion, the argument goes, and the sky is the limit. The referendum ballot should run the gamut of government from aristocracy to theocracy. However, that is an argument calculated merely to confuse the issue. It is rooted in either inability or unwillingness to see the distinction between recommending for the referendum ballot all the possible forms of government, and all the forms of government possible. In the latter instance the sky would indeed be the limit, but it is not to the latter enterprise that we are committed. Our concern here is with all the possible forms of government, and within that compass the alternatives open are few. Broadly speaking there are three ways in which we are limited in the forms of government that we may recommend: we are limited in conscience, by tradition and in fact. We live in a Christian country. There is behind us a long Christian tradition; our way of life is Christian to the core, and so we are bound in conscience to recommend for purposes of the national referendum constitutions that will not be in conflict with Christian ethics. It is consequently not within our competency to recommend any of those totalitarian forms of government that put the state before the individual. This is a free country. There is behind us a long tradition of the rights of all men to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Our way of life is democratic to the core. We are consequently bound by tradition to recommend for purposes of the national referendum constitutions that are not in conflict with the democratic ideal. It is consequently not within

our jurisdiction to recommend any form of government that would encroach upon the liberties and prerogatives and wishes of the common man, in consequence of centuries of parliamentary government and striving to be free. And finally, we live in a British country. There is behind us a long and intimate association with the mother country, and our relations with Britain at this time are of a very special kind. As we are all aware, the final decision as to what will appear on the ballot will be made in Downing Street, and to my mind we are limited by that fact to constitutions not incompatible with our remaining within the structure of the British Commonwealth of Nations. I think it unlikely that Downing Street would consider for referendum purposes constitutions to the contrary. As I see it, we are limited in fact. We could recommend union with the United States, but I doubt that in Downing Street it would receive a second thought, and as far as I am concerned quite properly so.

The truth of the matter is that the sky is not the limit when it comes to recommending constitutions. All the forms of government possible are not all possible forms of government for us, and we are limited in conscience, by tradition, and in fact to a few alternatives, and in my opinion it is our solemn duty to determine among these alternatives, and to recommend those that ought to be submitted to the people of this island.

In proceeding to the determination of these alternatives, there is one further thing to be remembered — that there is reason in all things. Notwithstanding the limitations imposed by conscience, tradition and fact, there is a goodly number of constitutions that we might recommend, but not all of them are relevant. Not all of them could be superimposed on the economy of this country without severe dislocation. Not all of them are suited to the temperament of our people, and so it becomes us to exercise such discretion as to avoid the recommendation of a multiplicity of irrelevant constitutions, which, if they were to appear on the referendum ballot would only confuse the electorate.

As far as I am concerned there are, in addition to the form of government we now know, but two other constitutions that may safely and justly be imposed on our economy, our institutions and our people. I am compelled to dismiss all other constitutions we hear suggested as being beside the