

trouble or financial discomfort by deliberately accepting a position which will leave us with a deficit in our financial budget. No reliable figures have been produced to show that under the terms indicated there would be sufficient revenue left to carry on our provincial duties on a reasonable scale without running into debt. I believe that with incomplete information to work upon, the people of Newfoundland will not be in a position to fulfill the condition imposed by the Government of Canada, as expressed in the letter dated 29 October last from the Right Hon. the Prime Minister of Canada, to the effect that before finalising any arrangement for union, "the people of Newfoundland should indicate clearly and beyond all possibility of misunderstanding their will that Newfoundland should become a province of Canada." How can they come to a well-considered conclusion with incomplete information before them? I ask also whether Canada's expression of views mentioned in the same letter has been carried out, namely, "that it is essential to have a complete and comprehensive exchange of information and a full and careful exploration by both parties of all the issues involved."

I believe that the issues to be placed before the people in the forthcoming referendum will be seriously befogged and confused if this Canadian issue is included in the referendum. By excluding it, the people of Newfoundland will be much better able to come to a definite choice between responsible government and Commission government, and later on will have an opportunity of considering the confederation issue. If the confederation issue is on the referendum paper it can definitely be dealt with at some not far distant date, perhaps within six months from the date of the referendum, as it should then be put before the people as a single issue, instead of being mixed up with two real forms of government. These two forms of government, if unsatisfactory, can at some future date be discarded, while acceptance of confederation would be an irrevocable and irretrievable step. If this motion is turned down by the majority of this Convention, as I believe it will be, it must be remembered that the British government still has the option, if they deem it wise, of keeping the confederation issue in some form on the referendum paper. I hope that if they do so they will see that it is

simply not common sense to place on the paper for final decision, *for final decision*, a scheme which has not received the approval of any Newfoundland government or assembly, and which is almost certainly capable of improvement.

Just a few words more, sir, and I am finished. I must refer to Mr. Smallwood's statement that the whole truth should be put to the people, a point with which I entirely agree. In his, shall I say fiery speech of a few days ago, he made the statement, which I think was afterwards confirmed by Mr. Ashbourne, that confederation with Canada would not be an irretrievable step, and in fact Mr. Smallwood indicated that it would be comparatively easy to get out of it should Newfoundland find that she has made a mistake. I don't fear to state definitely that this is simply not true, as it has been definitely decided that the only way in which provinces can secede, or be expelled, is through an act of the United Kingdom Parliament. In actual fact a select committee of Lords and Commons decided in 1935 that Parliament was, by constitutional convention, not competent to deal with such a matter upon petition of a single province or state. Their decision emphasised the fact that in practice, as well as in law, no right of secession rests with any state or province acting alone. If there is any doubt on that point, and if Mr. Smallwood would like confirmation, I have quoted almost from the views of our own constitutional adviser, Professor Wheare, who issued a textbook on federal government and very strongly pointed that out, quoting the actual case on which I have based my views. I hope that Mr. Smallwood will correct his statement, before we "marry in haste and repent at leisure." I thank you.

Mr. Cashin Mr. Chairman, the question now before the Convention, as I see it, is simply this: is this Convention, having reviewed the terms and conditions of confederation as contained in the Black Books and the Grey Book, of the opinion that union with Canada should be recommended to our people as a possible form of government in the forthcoming referendum? On this we are, as representatives of the Newfoundland people, asked to make a decision. For myself, my conclusion in the light of all the information at my disposal is, that it would be neither wise nor profitable for us to recommend such a form of government to our people; and I