

chance of getting a job. Don't forget that under the first six years of Commission government we had no economic prosperity or security or stability. Then the war broke out, and hundreds of millions of dollars poured in here from Canada and the United States to build all those bases. There was lots of work then. You could sell anything. Now since the war ended, and with the whole world short of this and that, we could still sell our fish and our oil and ore, and we don't feel like thanking the Commission government for that. They did not start the war. We can't praise or blame them for that. We have had Commission government for the past 14 years — six years before the war, six years during the war, and two years since the war, and what economic stability have we had? We had a bit during the war, and a lot less since the war, and already it has started to wear very thin for a lot of our people. It has started to wear very thin, this wonderful prosperity, for the 13 or 15,000 of our Newfoundland people who are on the dole tonight. Prosperity is wearing very thin for them, but if Commission government gave us full economic security up to now, what chance is there that they will give us economic security in the future? None at all, Mr. Chairman, not a bit. The Commissioners would be the first themselves to admit it. There is only one thing that the Commission government can promise us or guarantee us, and that is that they will collect taxes from us and they will spend the money honestly. That is, they won't rob the till. They can't even promise that they will do these two things wisely: wisely collect the taxes, and wisely spend them. As for guaranteeing economic security in Newfoundland, it is out of the question altogether. So you see, Mr. Chairman, the Commission government means neither political freedom nor economic security, neither one or the other, and responsible government does not mean political freedom without economic security, because there can't be such a thing as political freedom without economic security, and in any case, what I want in this country and for our people is a form of government that will mean political freedom and economic security, both, for one is useless without the other. I can tell you that is what our people are looking for. First and foremost our people are looking for economic prosperity and security. They are looking for a form of govern-

ment that will give them those three square meals a day, and a second suit of clothes, and a tight roof over their heads, and the chance to rear their families in Christian decency and frugal comfort. They are looking for political freedom, but always remember that the three square meals and the rest of it comes first, before the political freedom. It is a cruel mockery to talk political freedom to a people who are harassed by want, and don't know where to turn for the next meal, a people who are anxious and eager to work, not lazy, anxious and eager to work, but can't find work.

We will make the biggest mistake of our lives here in this Convention if we think that our people are bothering their heads about voting and elections and governments, or even National Conventions, ahead of that more pressing problem of three square meals a day and a chance by their labour to live decently as Christian human beings. No system of government is of the slightest use to our people unless it gives them that chance to make their living as decent Christians. We here can talk till we are blue in the face about forms of government, but it will all be a waste of breath unless we can show the people that some particular form of government will give them a better chance to live and rear their families.

Our Newfoundland people have long suffered from a sense of injustice. They have long felt that they were denied a square deal. They are unalterably convinced that they have been kept down all through the decades and centuries. They feel that they have never gotten a square show in this country. Our people, sir, are not lazy, they are hardworking and loyal fathers and husbands. They ask for nothing big and outrageous and extravagant, but only a fair chance to earn a fair living.

Truly this is one country of which it can be said, "to him that hath shall be added; from him that hath not, shall be taken away; even the little that he hath." Our Newfoundlanders look yearningly for a new deal. Their deeper instincts cry out for justice. That is how our people feel and I share that feeling to the last fibre of me. I am of the people and for the people of the working class, to the last drop of my blood in my veins, the last ounce of flesh on my body. I came from the working class. I belong to them. My brothers