

perhaps one of the greatest contributing causes was that the Newfoundland people never did have a choice of political philosophies. True, they did have a choice of political parties, but in essence the only choice they offered was a choice between Tweedledum and Tweedledee, a choice of political tenants not poles apart, but only the width of the street apart. It was never to distinct political faiths that Newfoundlanders had occasion to give their allegiance. At the best what they had was political personalities. There were no political parties held together by any bonds stronger than the desire to win the next election. There were certainly none held together by the belief that the political briefs they stood for were overwhelmingly right and true and worth holding out for against all odds. For if there had been, those parties would have held together and preserved their identity, but they did not. Not one of the old political parties that we used to know has survived — not one. As a matter of fact, none survived longer than it took the Commission of Government to move in. The Commission was appointed and the political parties were never heard of again. They had not that within them which could hold them together overnight, once there was no more chance of winning an election. And in that connection may I offer this advice to any political parties that may subsequently arise in this land: if any one of them can appeal to our people with a concrete vital platform that can touch their lives in terms of three square meals a day, they will likely go a long, long way. And if in the past responsible government was not all that it should be, particularly towards the end of its days, it was mostly because what we used to have every four years was not an election but a revolution. You will remember what would happen at election times: brother was set against brother, community was set against community, class was set against class, deliberately and with malice aforethought to serve political ends. Hatred was engendered that lasted for years and wrought disturbance of the people's peaceful way of life. Then to crown it all, if a new government was elected, almost its first move was invariably to disrupt the civil service with many discharges and new appointments of party hacks and of the faithful. Irrespective of all the whitewash that has lately been spattered around the *corpus delicti* of responsible government, it

is an unassailable fact that for a term of years immediately prior to Commission of Government the spoils system was in great effect. I do hope that we have done with all that forever, and particularly the spoils system.

Come what may in the shape of government, our people should insist on the civil service being placed, as I believe Mr. Hickman suggested yesterday afternoon, under a nonpolitical, independent civil service commission, and they should keep on insisting upon just that until they get it. Otherwise we will never get good government, and every four years the national interest will be sacrificed so that to the victors may go the spoils.

Now I have suggested that responsible government as we knew it was not at all times all that it should have been. I should like to make it quite clear that in doing so I am not suggesting that responsible government as we knew it was *never* all that it should have been. I think it only fair to say that not all our politicians were concerned only with the grinding of their own axes, and the feathering of their own nests. If I had to prove that any single one of them was not all that he should have been, I am quite certain that I should be unable to do so, and again I think that a fair verdict is that a great many of our public men of yesteryear were sincere men who did the best that they could with the little that they had. The supreme tragedy was that they did not have enough to work with. Otherwise the story of responsible government might have been much different. I have said before that in the last analysis it was not our politicians who failed us, it was our economy. Yet notwithstanding the meagerness of the resources and the facilities they had to work with, there were men in our past who wrought monumental works in this land. Men who were born to greatness, and set the mark of their greatness upon the causes they espoused, men in consequence of whose living we have all come to be at great advantage.

Mr. Miller Mr. Chairman, I take pleasure in supporting this motion, and I base my decision on the reasonable supposition of our ability to maintain self-government. A second reason for doing so is the fact that the condition for the correction of which the Commission of Government was introduced, now no longer exists. As to whether or not they can be credited with success,