

the fact that within less than four weeks I shall be in my seventy-sixth year. My sole reason for offering myself as a candidate was that after a family business connection of over 180 years with this charming and fascinating country, and after 50 years of personal residence here myself, I felt that in this great crisis I would like to do something to assist in improving the living conditions of our people, and especially of our fishermen. This was, and is still my sole objective. I only give these facts in the hope that they will remove the impression created by Mr. Smallwood's propaganda, indicating that my views on confederation are prejudiced and unworthy of consideration.

I am not going to enter into a long argument for or against the Ottawa proposal. I think the pros and cons have been thoroughly dealt with by previous speakers during the recent debates. Although I have been absent during the past ten days due to temporary illness, I have listened in to the broadcasts with very much interest. I was particularly struck by the fine argument of my co-member for St. John's East, Mr. Higgins, and especially with the strength laid by him upon the enormous value of the strategic position of Newfoundland. The point overlooked by many is that we have a very strong bargaining card in the undoubted fact that the use of Newfoundland's strategic position is vital for the welfare and protection of not only Canada, but also of the United States of America and of Great Britain. I entirely agree with Mr. Higgins that much better terms than those offered should be obtained by reason of our strategic position. I feel quite certain that with skillful negotiation by properly authorised authorities, better terms would have been finally, and perhaps grudgingly given by Canada.

Mr. Smallwood and his supporters appear to think that it would be sound business to jump at this offer from Canada. Mr. Smallwood himself is very able and willing to utilise his ready tongue and quick and fertile brain to induce the people of Newfoundland to accept these terms without any attempt to better them. Don't let us be led into grabbing the elusive bait in the shape of a so-called baby bonus without first considering the full impact of the confederation issue. It is to my mind so obviously unreasonable to urge the im-

mediate acceptance of these unnegotiated terms, that I earnestly appeal to those members who are inclined to support Mr. Smallwood to reconsider their viewpoint....<sup>1</sup> Mr. Smallwood has to stop being a very strong supporter of confederation. He has already influenced thousands of voters in this small country to share his extreme views, even before any indication was received as to the basis upon which, in Canada's view, we should accept confederacy. I have small hope of influencing Mr. Smallwood. I hope I may have some influence with a few others. From the start of this Convention and probably for many months before, he has been advocating confederation without even knowing what terms were available. Above all things, this conception of confederation is a matter of terms. Are we going to barter away our valuable strategic position without endeavouring to obtain something really worthwhile? I ask you sir, when a fisherman wants to sell his fish, what does he do? Does he sell it to the first bidder? Or if there's only one bidder, does he accept the first offer that comes? In my experience he is shrewd enough to try very hard to secure a better price, and he uses every argument he can think of to do so. Mr. Smallwood and his supporters, however, appear to think it is sound business to jump at this unnegotiated and undiscussed offer.

Now, sir, there are several good reasons for deferring this question of confederation until we have our own elected government. One of these is that, in my opinion, there is a strong tendency in the country for a trusted relationship with the United States of America, and the possibility should be carefully and closely investigated before the country is projected into the irretrievable step of confederation with Canada. Our future prosperity, and particularly the prosperity of our fishermen, is mainly dependent upon reciprocal trade with the United States of America, and this would receive its death blow by our entering into confederation. Some people, including my friend Mr. Bradley, who I'm sorry to see is absent, apparently believe that the prospects of obtaining anything by approaching to the United States of America are unfounded. But surely to goodness this cannot be ascertained until some approach is made. The recent arrangement dealt with the Geneva conference has made very little

<sup>1</sup>Gap in the recording.