

who own this country, and who are most directly concerned in what happens to it.

Firstly I am not satisfied, and have never been satisfied, with the method adopted for the solution of our political position. I have always regarded the setting up of a Convention such as this as not being the proper method of solving the problem which confronts us, and every day that passes further confirms these beliefs. I have slowly seen emerge into the light of day the duplicity and bad faith which underlies this whole business. I have seen proof that our country is being deliberately sidetracked from the democratic highway that we thought we were on into a blind alley, where we can spend our time groping for progress and getting nowhere. As a result, I say that if we do not become aware of these things, and turn around on a new course, we are headed for danger.

Let us review things. This country was promised self-government when she became self-supporting. On December 12, 1945, in the House of Lords, the Dominions Secretary declared that Newfoundland was then self-supporting, and had been since 1941; and coming nearer home, we find that no less an authority than former Commissioner for Finance Wild told this Convention four months ago that we were self-supporting. All right then, we *are* self-supporting. These men say we are, and they should know. Now then, the first question we ask is, why was not this international contract carried out? It is a serious thing to break an international agreement, Mr. Chairman. Yet not alone was this done, but no reason was given us for such default. What does this mean and what impression must we, as sensible men, gather from this? I submit there is only one deduction we can make, and this is that the British government has not kept faith with us; that it was not in their interest that we should have control of our own country. And so determined were they to carry out their plan, that they did not hesitate to treat an international agreement as just another scrap of paper. Is this the situation which confronts us today? Must we look for duplicity where we should look for straightforward dealing? But let us go on and study the character of the thing further.

You will remember when, on the request of the Convention, Commissioner for Finance Wild was asked to appear before us, his point-blank

refusal to answer certain questions. Does this indicate a wholesome co-operation with our efforts, or does it indicate another example of the bad faith to which I have referred? Does it not indicate that both Mr. Wild and the Commission government, as well as the Dominions Office, have regarded us as an opposition rather than a friendly body — that they did not care whether we got facts or not; that they had no sympathy for either ourselves or the work which we had undertaken? For myself, as a member of a committee of this Convention, I have been time and time again unable to get the information I requested. I have been refused information, sometimes almost insolently refused. Other committees have indicated that they have been greeted with the same hostility and lack of co-operation. I remember one extraordinary instance, when the government refused information on confidential grounds, and shortly after I saw the whole thing published in pamphlet form in the Dominion of Canada. Could there be anything more farcical? Here they tell us we are an assembly appointed and authorised to get facts, and yet when we go to the very people who so appointed us — when we go to the normal source — we are, in so many words told to go about our business. I say again, does this conduct indicate anything? Does it not indicate beyond all reasonable doubt, that the Commission government and the Dominions Office do not want us to get all the facts — do not want us to know what the true state of this country is today, and how our affairs are being managed? Does it not clearly show that we are regarded as a body without either importance or standing; that we are not being taken seriously; that they have given us the glory, but that the power remains with themselves? What would you say, Mr. Chairman, if you were doing business with a man and he treated you that way? You would say that he was a trickster and a deceiver; refuse to have anything to do with him any longer. You would cease to put faith in him. But let us see if we cannot also prove what I have said in a different manner.

Let us suppose that we have none of this evidence of bad faith on the part of the Commission government and the Dominions Office. Let us forget all this, and take up a single instance where the British government comes to us, in all good faith, and asks us to find out the facts