

with the real government of Newfoundland — the Dominions Office — to get answers to questions which their agents in St. John's could not give. This has now been done. We have received answers couched in the very best language of British diplomacy. They are very diplomatic answers in that they say a lot and say very little, and endeavour at the same time to put us very firmly in our place. But in this diplomatic language certain sentences have been written down — intentionally or otherwise — that no amount of twisting or interpretation can alter. I refer you to page 5 of my Lord Addison's memorandum, second paragraph, on the base deals: "There is no reason to think that the United States Government would be prepared to agree to any substantial variation of the basis on which the Agreement was entered into, or to give any *quid pro quo* for rights which were given to them 'freely and without consideration'. If, however, Newfoundland should return to Responsible Government it would be open to her to raise the question of some modification of the Agreement and in that event negotiations would no doubt be carried out with the assistance of the United Kingdom Government" There is the answer to the many people in this country who wish for a closer association with the United States. It bears out too what I said during the last debate on the motion to send a delegation to Ottawa, that no agreements or arrangements of any kind can be expected to be made with the United States by Newfoundland until this country is once again a free agent, able to act through its own responsible government — that we will never be able to do so through either the Dominions Office or the Department of External Affairs in Ottawa. Again I refer you to page 7, to the answer to the question on the "Financing and Control of Newfoundland Airports". After stating that Newfoundland is to be responsible for one-third of the operating deficit of Gander, the Secretary of State says: "In the event of a return to Responsible Government, the Newfoundland authorities will decide their policy with respect to the operation of the airport and they might if deemed desirable submit a request to the international organization for financial assistance...."

These are clear and plain statements. They should open our eyes — those of us who still need to have them opened — to the true realisation of

what is at stake. The United States bases and the great airports in our country are our bargaining power with great nations — they are a tremendous advantage that this country has never had in the past, brought about by the march of progress and the sad accident of war. They can well be the key that will unlock the door to the future well-being of all our people. If their control passes from our hands irrevocably, then we are finished. I say that word "finished" in all seriousness. If we take back our country and its assets into our own hands, our position will be one to be envied by every country. At the moment, this control is temporarily out of our hands — it is in the hands of trustees who are not going to move very far, if at all, in utilising that bargaining power to Newfoundland's advantage.

The Secretary of State has raised the signpost, wittingly or unwittingly, for Newfoundlanders to read that they may follow the right road. He did not say that if Newfoundland retains the Commission form of government, she could do anything about these matters. He said that if Newfoundland returns to responsible government — meaning dominion status — she will be, and her people will be, in a position to use these bargaining powers to her own advantage and the advantage of her people, our people — us. It is as plain as Cabot Tower on a fine day.

To me that is the most significant fact that has come out of the visit of the London delegation, the real find of this game of power politics, this game of blindman's buff in which we and our country are involved. They have told us to get on our own and do our own fighting, for they are in no position to fight for us. They are too dependent on the United States and Canada to bargain for us about matters in which these countries are so vitally interested.

....In closing I want to tell a story, and it's no fable; it happened this very morning. There came in to see me an old fisherman, 80 years old, and as bright and keen as anybody here. He follows the Convention with greatest of interest. He told me that he knew nothing about the country, nothing about what has happened in the past 15 years until the Convention started, and he gave due credit to us all, irrespective of what form of government we espouse. But he said, "I've seen a lot of governments, and I firmly believe that our own government, responsible government, is the