

to the well-being of the public. It also retards the full expression of the individual members of the Convention as to their ideas on certain things. I do believe there are occasions when this long-suffering public, which was referred to yesterday by a certain member of the Bar, might be spared arguments. I do say, as far as a certain member of this Convention is concerned yesterday, he said nothing more derogatory about the microphones than were said by anyone else. I do think they are serving their purpose provided they are not monopolised by one or two or a few. I do think it should be your prerogative to cut out the broadcasting at certain times.

Mr. Fudge I agree with Mr. Hollett. I may say that this is the first time I heard of anything coming in to find out if we wanted this broadcasting. It has been here for a long time, and now we have a letter asking if we wish to keep it. They did not ask us first, and now, as far as I am concerned, it can stay here....

Mr. Hillier I support Mr. Higgins in what he said. As the microphones have been here practically the full time for every session, I see no reason why they should be removed. I think they can serve a useful purpose if we, on our part, keep as near to the point as possible.

Mr. Higgins To bring the matter to a head, I move that we request the Broadcasting Corporation, from today, to have the microphones in this chamber.

Mr. Newell I would like to second that motion. If I might speak briefly, there are one or two things I would like to point out. First of all, we should look at this logically, and not be carried away by anything that anyone says here or somewhere else. If people want to exercise their freedom of speech, let them go ahead and do it. There are one or two things that appear to me, and the first is that broadcasting is about the only means of having accurate reporting of what goes on here. If we do not broadcast proceedings, the only reporting we can rely on is newspaper reporting, and they, not being machines, cannot give full reports of what transpires here, and the people on the outside have to rely on secondhand information of what somebody else heard, and will not really get a full and accurate report.

The other point is this: I feel that if we have any reason for refusing to broadcast our proceedings, in other words if we put the microphones

out, I don't see why we should let the public occupy the galleries. I don't think there is any necessity for the Convention being conducted in secret. If it is not being conducted in secret, and if people care to exercise the privilege of coming here in person, then I think everybody should be allowed in through the microphones and broadcasting.

Finally, whether or not we express ourselves too fully (it has been argued that some of us do express ourselves too fully because of the microphones, and its also been argued that we don't express ourselves as fully as if they were not here), I don't think the presence of the microphones should affect in any way at all the orderly conducting of our business, and if we, as a body of 45 people, are not capable of conducting our business in an orderly way in the presence of the microphones, I don't think we would be capable of doing it if the microphones were out....

Mr. Vardy I wish to support the motion, and frankly I do not see any other way that we can impart the knowledge that we glean here on the affairs of the country to the people, except over the radio. I fail to see in what way it excuses us from making any fair, full or frank statement in this Convention. It definitely does not save us in any way, because if we make a libelous statement, it is still libelous whether the microphones are here or not, and the only way that we could come out in the open and make statements not for the public would be for the Chairman to call a secret meeting. I know that the Convention was referred to yesterday in a very low manner, but I say that the public of Newfoundland can be the best judges of that.

Mr. Smallwood I would like, while we are at it, to say a word that I have been threatening now for some time to say, a word of praise for the gentlemen who sit here each day in the press box. I am myself an old newspaper man, and I covered sessions of this chamber for many many years and for various governments, and sat in that same press box, and I know something about the job of sitting in here, and reporting for the public the proceedings that go on. I am full of admiration and respect for the gentlemen who sit in the press box daily, representing the newspapers and the radio stations. To my mind the job that the Doyle News Bulletin¹ does each night is masterly — a

¹A news programme sponsored by Gerald S. Doyle Ltd. on VONF, the government radio station.