

of them for submission to the people in the referendum. For these forms would unquestionably apply with greater or lesser merit under different circumstances. To state my position clearly, I would not recommend a form of government for which I would not vote in a referendum. I would, I feel, be very lax in my duty and indeed, it would be plain deceit to do other than that. Sixteen months ago I might have said I think the people of Newfoundland are desirous of voting on certain forms of government. Today I can only say the same, nor am I under duty to find out. But I am under duty to recommend what in my opinion should be put before the people. Obviously, to determine the wishes of the people was a purely mechanical matter; but to secure a recommendation necessitated study, hence the Convention and its undertaking, and surely now, after all its cost to the country, our recommendation will have foundation on the facts as we saw them. Mr. Chairman, are we shirking the first call of duty? Are we seeing enacted before our very eyes the first scene in the further degradation of our country? Must our way be still harder? Given the task to do, will history record us as having discharged that duty faithfully, or will it relate a gruesome story of putrefaction and prostitution of a great obligation? Sometimes I fear it has happened.

This country of ours has fought a hard fight down through the years, and progress and development were greatly retarded by outside forces. Despite all this, the great courage of its people and their determination to establish here a country fashioned to their own liking, made the task, though a difficult one, a desire of the heart. Here in the quiet though frugal comfort of their homes, they planned their undertakings — undertakings that would undoubtedly bring them great dangers. But danger to them created a more colourful existence. In this and many similar ways, a way of life was born. Meanwhile, what of our leaders? We hear, from those who would tear down the whole structure of our national life and culture, repeated attempts made to blacken our Newfoundland leaders of the past. The dark spots of our history are always held to the front, for fear can be instilled in our hearts by such a policy. Mr. Chairman, we had great men as judged in the age in which they lived. These men laid the foundation of the trade and commerce of

the country which is still sound in many ways, though greatly distorted in others. I am not prone to dwell for long in history's pages. What of our trade and commerce? What of our leaders in this field? Notice, I make no mention of the producer, the fisherman, farmer, logger, miner. I want to deal, if possible, with those influences of government which may help or harm the producer. I am fully aware and quite willing to believe that our producers will do their part, and thus I dispose of that part of the subject. Time does not permit me to deal with more than one of our primary industries, and I shall refer only to the fishing industry which is and will continue to be the chief industry of that section of Newfoundland from where I come.

The fishing industry emerged from the war period without any great shock. It could ill afford a shock — let that be fully appreciated. The war period, no one need be reminded, was abnormal in its demands both in quantity and price, and a serious falling off could have easily been the order of the day. This did not happen, and it was no accident that it did not — neither was it just good luck. It was, let there be no mistake about it, due to the vision, the constructive policy of our leaders in that field. True, we had an exchange problem, but even in this matter local suggestions capable of solving the problems of the day were readily forthcoming. We have gone a long way in the development of our fishing industry and in our marketing methods, and the future gives even further encouragement, for our next move promises to be the solving in part at least of that exchange of currency problem. If that can be once taken care of, then the Newfoundland producer will have considerably less to worry about. This is *our* problem. We have to have it solved in particular reference to this country; we should trust it to no other country to do it for us.

And now I feel I should dwell for a few moments on the effect of union with Canada on this industry. The first and perhaps the all-condemning feature is that the control of all trade and commerce would rest in the hands of the federal government, as it is today in Canada. Newfoundland is small in comparison with Canada; we are always reminded of that, but what we are not asked to be mindful of is that in the competitive market which exists, we are taking care of ourselves well. Union with Canada, as I see it,