

before the middle of December, and it might easily be early in the New Year before they could leave. So, it seems clear that if we are to arrive at sound conclusions, based upon all the facts, and communicate our recommendations to the Dominions Office in time to enable the British Parliament to deal with them before the Easter recess of next year, we must act on this resolution *now*. There is no advantage to be gained by delay. There is a probability of serious harm. The people, whether confederate or anti-confederate (and there are many of the former in Newfoundland today), want this information. Many are anxiously awaiting it. Shall we take the responsibility of balking that desire? Shall we refuse them that information, or even delay it? Have we the right to place any obstacles in the way of the disclosure of any truth to which the people are entitled?

In 1933 the Amulree report was concealed from the people until within a few days of the opening of the legislature which destroyed their freedom, and many knew little or nothing of the scheme to degrade them for their misfortunes until their liberties had passed into history. Shall we be parties to even a temporary suppression of the facts, whether of confederation or anything else? If we destroy this motion, or even delay it, we shall be guilty of just that. There are those in this land, and perhaps in this House, who would recklessly prevent the examination of every form of government which lies outside the limits of their own narrow notions, whose minds are firmly lashed to the chariot wheel of a single political system, whose judgement is impaired by the narrowness and restrictions of their mental horizons, who talk wildly that this or that form of government will only come to Newfoundland over their dead bodies. Are these the men whose lead we shall follow down the blind alley of obstruction to the search for truth? Or shall we take the road which leads to the facts, the evidence, the information which we, as representatives of the people, are bound to lay before them without unnecessary delay, and upon which they must ponder and decide their destinies?

In good faith, it has been suggested that this matter should be deferred until we know the details of our financial position. What connection is there between the two? How is the determination of the one dependent upon the ascertainment

of the other? Early action upon this resolution will not bring the terms of confederation to the people before the last of January next, and that is delay enough. In the final analysis, even if our present financial position is found to be fairly satisfactory, is that the last word? Is it suggested that in such case no inquiries are to be made of Canada, or of the United Kingdom or of anyone? Are we then bound to walk this chaotic world alone? Are the people to have no choice? That would be a repetition of the vicious scheme of 1933. It would be a clear breach of fundamental political morality. It would violate, nay, it would defeat both the spirit and the letter of the Convention Act of 1946. It would be an arrogant determination of the people's destinies in the dark, a determination which would be bitterly resented by them, for the supporters of responsible government are not in an overwhelming majority in this country today.

But I am not without sympathy for those who fear precipitate action. I can understand their desire to avoid mistakes. These fears are groundless. The delegation should be selected at an early date. Their early departure for Ottawa is definitely impossible. In any case it is not essential. In order to eliminate all uncertainty, I propose at the proper stage in this debate to offer another amendment which will ensure that the delegation shall not leave St. John's before the first day of January, 1947. That should, I think, meet the views of all but the irreconcilables.

In conclusion, it is my earnest wish and sincere hope that before voting upon this question every member of this Convention will bring to bear upon it the full strength of his intellect, backed by an irresistible urge to seek the truth; that we shall purge our minds of all passion and prejudice, all party and personal allegiances, all enthusiasms and all antagonisms. Let us discharge this solemn duty; let us reach a decision upon this, as upon all other questions, in cool, impartial and reasoned judgement. Let us render our decision upon the resolution now at our hands as a bench of judges, and not as a body of partisans.

Mr. Kennedy This House was resolved into nine committees with one main object in view, to produce for Convention members, and the people, a detailed general summary of our country's standing in such form as to avoid con-