

them before taking such a drastic step.

It was tragedy enough that we could not raise by means of revenue \$8-10 million to carry on, especially when \$5 million would have to be ear-marked for the bondholders of our debt; but was it not an ignominy when Britain said, "Yes, allow us to suspend your constitution, and we will feed your people on six cents a day; but you will have it restored when you become self-supporting again, if you ask for it". How were we meant to ask for it? "Oh, you may elect a national convention. They will find out if you are self-supporting." But did they say to our people, "If your convention finds you self-supporting, they will have authority from you to request the restoration of your former constitution". No, they say, "If they find your country self-supporting, they may suggest to the Dominions Office forms of government suitable to your needs".

Would it be pertinent to ask Great Britain what she understands by the words "self-supporting"? I am sorry to raise this point, for I am as loyal to my king and empire as any man in Britain today. Who are we, gentlemen, to recommend forms of government? Do the men who framed the Convention Act know of any better form than that in Great Britain today? We could recommend Commission of Government; that's the latest experiment in our great British Empire. We could recommend representative government, were it not for the fact that it has been tried and failed miserably the world over. We could recommend that we might come up a peg from where we are today and suggest a crown colony; and we could recommend any one or more of the 2,000 different known forms of government that have been tried and failed through the ages. We can do all that, but do we not know that the British system so far has no equal, or why try to force it on India or Burma?

Some people have concurred that this Convention may even send a delegation to Canada; in fact, it seems to be the idea embodied in the motion and report. Let me quote you section 146 of the British North America Act, 1867: "It shall be lawful for the Queen ... on addresses from the Houses of the Parliament of Canada, and from the Houses of the respective Legislatures of the Colonies or Provinces of Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, and British Columbia to admit

those Colonies or Provinces, or any of them into the Union ... on such terms and conditions in each case as are in the addresses expressed and as the Queen thinks fit to approve, subject to the Provisions of this Act...."¹ You will note that it is only lawful for the Queen to admit us into union after receiving an address from the House of the Legislature. And yet there are some people who want to get "the terms". What terms? Are they already drawn up? Or are they to be unpigeonholed from the closets of 1895 and 1867? Are there no terms on our side? Not in the minds of some people who wanted to hike off to Canada before we had even started our investigations....

Says the *Ottawa Journal*: "Newfoundland owes \$100 million, she is facing bankruptcy, and wants to get in out of the wet; she cannot take it, she cannot face the future". And yet "the terms" will be so good, I'm told. I tell you there are no terms; confederation must essentially be a question of bargaining on both sides.... If we are to unite with Canada, we must do it like men who believe we have something to contribute to the partnership and, mind you, we have confederation if the people of this country say so, *and only if they say so*. How may they say so? I submit there is only one way, and that is under section 146 of the BNA Act and the doctrine of mandate and that is embodied in the truth that Parliament ought not to adopt any far-reaching measure without a mandate from the country. But you say, "We have no parliament." Ah yes, we have, for as soon as our constitution comes out of its state of suspended animation, the voice of the people can be heard on the issue....

The process of entering into federal union is clear cut. First you have to have two self-governing entities; second they must have much in common, and each must have something to offer the other. One may be wealthy, but lacking something which she needs and which the other, who may not be so wealthy, possesses. Third, the people of both countries must be made duly aware of the situation. In the fourth place, the people of both countries must authorise their respective governments to explore the possibilities of a fair partnership. Fifth, each government must then report back to its people and get their final approval, by way of the referendum or otherwise. There is no other way, except by coer-

¹Great Britain. *British North America Act*, (30 & 31 Victoria, c.3, 1867).