

tial task to perform. We are here by the will of the people, not by gratuitous assumption of our own capacity to perform the work that we have in hand. However we must not forget that it is of essence of the endeavour to which we are committed that it should be debated with open mind and utter impartiality. I should not be prepared to see the condition of approach to the matter that we have in hand altered by anything short of an act of God.

I support the motion because I am concerned primarily with the best arrangement with regard to government that we can make for the future. And that arrangement will be the one that would seem to offer us the best chance to eat as well as to vote. I do think that there are people left who think that it is of some importance to be concerned with eating ... people isolated in many places who are not quite certain of their meal ticket for the next decade, and whilst I would hesitate to say that these people think food is more important than votes, I think that they would decidedly like to have their breakfasts on the morning they go out to vote for their favourite politician.

To some it may seem a truly strange form of political thought to drag food into politics, to speak of stomachs in the same breath as ballot boxes, to assert that to eat is as important as to vote. But those who have followed through history the impact of hunger upon the body politic will find nothing so very strange in all that. Those who know history know, for instance, that all the great revolutions began in the pits of men's stomachs. And history has a habit of repeating itself.

I do find, however, that those who talk of strange forms of political thought do seem to become somewhat inconsistent in their thinking when they come across some utterances bearing upon the economic that seem to serve their purposes. Thus it does seem a strange inconsistency that can attribute bad faith to the British government in setting up this Convention, yet can immediately change when the representatives of that government suggest that we are self-supporting....

It may be well that the problem of Newfoundland cannot be dealt with as a problem in mathematics, that the question of self-support cannot be resolved by the rule of three. We should consequently not hazard the resolution by the rule

of thumb. And so we shall have to exercise a little more than snap judgement in the matter. It would not contribute to our prestige if we were to troop down the front steps outside someday singing, "Let all the people rejoice; you are hereby declared to be self-supporting again", only to be met at the bottom by one of those who are again on the dole holding out his hand....

Just to keep the record straight I should like to make it clear that I am not one of those who believe it is the duty of government to wind the life of the individual in a cocoon of economic security. But I am one of those who believes that this minimum all men may demand of life — the opportunity through honest effort to make a decent living according to the standards of his times, and not on the basis that what was good enough for his grandfather should be good enough for him.... And if you say that not all men can have that, then I shall have to ask you just what men are you going to require to be satisfied with just how much less? The giving of such an answer might well serve to demonstrate the urgency of the economic to any Doubting Thomas politician who would care to undertake the giving of such answer the night immediately before an election....

The best political arrangement for Newfoundland is the one that will make for the greatest measure of civic liberty coincident with the greatest opportunity for all to come by three square meals a day and a decent suit of clothes on the back, and a tight roof over the head. And I feel quite confident that out of the choices presented to them the people will decide for that political form most likely to have such result. And so I repeat we are committed to assist the people to make such choice. As a matter of fact we ourselves have no choice in the matter. Mr. Chairman, the ultimate position is as simple as this: even if there should be but one man in this island who wants to hear the terms of confederation he is entitled to hear them — even if that one solitary individual should happen to be Mr. Joseph Smallwood. Even if there should be but one man on this island who wants return of responsible government to appear on the referendum ballot paper he is entitled to have it appear thereon — even if that solitary individual should happen to be Major Peter Cashin. And this too, gentlemen — if there should be but one man in this island