

We are now drawing to the close of the activities of this Convention. Our work is for the most part completed. And yet the part which remains is the most important part. The decision has still to be made on the question of forms of government which we shall recommend to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom.

Can we not for the remainder of our life as a Convention, forget our political leanings? Can we not realise, as I have already said, that we are not a body of partisans, but rather in the position of a bench of judges? That we are not a House of Assembly, but rather in the nature of a royal commission? If we can do this, we shall recover that public respect which I fear we have done much to destroy, we shall remove unnecessary and improper problems and difficulties from the path of the Chairman, and we shall have done a real service to this country.

In our new Chairman I have full confidence. His ability is great. He is adequate to the task. For myself, I offer him my fullest co-operation and support and I trust that all members will feel as I do on this subject.

Sir, I move that our new Chairman do now take the Chair.

Mr. Job In rising to second the motion so ably proposed by our ex-Chairman, which I may call a motion of welcome to you as our new Chairman, I cannot add very much to the encomium expressed by the proposer of the motion. I feel sure that your expert knowledge and well-known diplomacy fit you well for the office you have accepted at no small sacrifice to yourself. I think, moreover, that the government can be congratulated upon the promptness with which they dealt with the crisis calling for a new appointment.

I do not intend to discuss those regrettable events which occurred in this chamber a few days ago, as I feel that in the public interest it will be best to entirely forget and overlook them. Nevertheless, I cannot refrain from saying, without the slightest equivocation, that in my opinion our ex-Chairman performed his difficult duties at all times in a fair and unbiased manner, and that he at no time allowed his personal leanings towards any particular ideology to interfere with the performance of those duties.

Unfortunately there seem to be many members who have already formed definite opinions as to the recommendations to be made in connec-

tion with the forthcoming referendum without having heard all the evidence or waiting for the end of the discussions. This is indeed an unfortunate state of affairs, as our plain duty is to proceed with the presentation of facts, and not to utilise this National Convention as a jumping-off place for future political partisanship. If we cannot help forming a definite bias towards one or more forms of government, we can restrain ourselves from preventing a hearing for those other forms of which, at the present time, we may not approve.

Our duties as regards the gathering of facts have almost reached their objective, and if we now decide to concentrate our attention on perhaps three phases of our deliberations which seem to me necessary before we wind up our work, we shall be acting wisely. The first of these seems to be to declare whether the country is at the present time self-supporting, a decision which should not be difficult to reach. The second is to decide whether we have a reasonable expectation of being able to maintain a self-supporting position in the foreseeable future, and I submit that we cannot be expected to prophesy for any lengthy period, and indeed under present world conditions it may be dangerous to prophesy at all. The third phase, it seems to me, is to debate and definitely decide upon the forms of government which we consider should be placed on the referendum paper, taking each form separately. Perhaps I should add a fourth item, namely, the drafting of a report covering our findings and recommendations.

I feel sure, sir, that if you can assist in keeping the minds of the delegates of this Convention on these definite objectives you will be doing us a good service, and we shall be able to wind up our operations within a comparatively short period. I believe you will receive the respect and support of all the delegates.

[The motion carried]

Mr. McEvoy Members of the National Convention of Newfoundland, before assuming the Chair I should like, first of all, to express to you my very deep appreciation and sincere thanks for the warmth and kindness of your welcome and to assure you I regard your kindness in this respect as a very great and pleasing compliment. In particular would I address my thanks to my distinguished and learned friend, Mr. Bradley, former