

Chair. You are out of order. You have to get a Chairman.

The Secretary Order! Gentlemen, remember where you are. The Chairman has resigned and I think the best expedient would be if you were to

adjourn immediately.

Mr. Ballam I move we adjourn to the call of the Chair.

Mr. Ryan I second that.

[*The Convention adjourned*]

October 15, 1947

[*The Acting Chairman¹ read a commission appointing John Bernard McEvoy as Chairman*]

Mr. Bradley Mr. Secretary, may I avail myself of this, the first opportunity, to publicly convey my congratulations to my very good friend, Mr. McEvoy, our new Chairman, on his appointment to this most important office.

I do not think that I am unduly egotistic when I say there is no one in this Convention more qualified to appreciate the problems and the difficulties which at times beset the Chairman than myself, for I occupied the post for a period of nearly 12 months and I had particular opportunity to observe those errors which contribute so largely to the Chairman's problems. One of the very greatest of our errors has been a casual assumption that we are a political body, even a partly political body. The method of our election by the people has tended to foster that illusion and our adoption of a parliamentary framework for our deliberations has tended to confirm it. There is a tendency to assume that we may speak for the people in a representative capacity, where no such right exists. And that for two reasons: the first, in its nature double, I suppose, has to do with our election to the seats which we now occupy. A substantial number of us are here by acclamation and received no votes. Many others of us received votes and hold our seats by the franchise of somewhere in the neighbourhood of 25% of the electorate of our particular district. We can hardly then claim to have been sent here as a body by a majority of the electors of this country.

But there is an even greater reason for this. We were not elected to carry out any particular policy, for no such policy could properly exist. Far from pledging allegiance to any form of government or policy, our duty under the act which created us was nothing more or less than that of investigating and recommending, as a result of our investigations, to the Crown. We were and are in the nature of somewhat numerous royal commissions charged with duties as inves-

tigators of facts, and obligated to make recommendations to the Crown just as a royal commission does. It is fair to say that in reality the only difference between this Convention and a royal commission is the method of our selection. Quite clearly, it is outside our province to advocate particular forms of government. It is quite human, of course, that we should have opinions as to forms of government. I think I am not going too far if I say that any man who has not got personal opinions about forms of government is not a man fitted to be in this Convention at all. But those views should not be allowed to obtrude themselves into our deliberations. Our duty is not to advocate, but simply and objectively to recommend, not the particular form of government which appeals to us, but those forms of government which may be suitable in the circumstances. Ours is not the right to decide; we have nothing to do with decisions. It is ours to recommend forms upon which the people themselves will decide. Theirs is the duty, theirs alone the right to make the ultimate selection.

Speaking for myself, as I see the position today, I shall have to recommend to His Majesty's Government, insofar as my vote in this Convention goes, one form of government which I do not altogether like, and another which I shall definitely vote against at the plebiscite. I must recommend them notwithstanding that I do not like them — I do not like the one and I am opposed to the other — because they are forms which might be suitable and which the people might select; and I have no right whatever to debar the people from the right to vote for or against any form of government which might be suitable. If we could have kept that one point in view, many of our difficulties could not have arisen and much of the ill-will which has developed could have been avoided. Unfortunately it was not so. Political ideologies were adopted and fought for — sincerely enough, perhaps, but definitely erroneous.

¹Captain W. Gordon Warren.