

cally fit and able to come to this chamber, will he carry on?

Mr. Chairman I think we better discount that from our calculations. I have no knowledge of Mr. Bradley's condition....

Mr. Hollett I think you know my attitude regarding the whole confederation idea. I maintain we are not a competent body to deal with it. I always felt we had no authority to do it and I still hold that. I suppose if I followed my conscience I would try to keep the thing from coming in here at all; but we did vote to send the delegation to Ottawa, and as a result His Excellency has chosen to send us some documents which he got from Mr. King. I therefore think we are duty bound to do something.... The point Mr. Higgins raised is well taken. There were seven men on that delegation and either one, of course, would be eligible to take the chair. I have no objection to Mr. Smallwood's taking the chair and piloting it through. Would you tell me this, sir, are you not in a similar position as the Speaker of the House of Assembly in the position which you hold now?

Mr. Chairman No. If I were Speaker of the House, I would not be occupying the committee chair at all. There would be a chairman of committees to whom the thing in the ordinary course would go. I am in the paradoxical position of having to leave the equivalent of the Speaker's chair, take the chair of committee, come back and report to myself; it is most unusual.

Mr. HollettI would suggest in carrying out Mr. Bradley's request, it would be quite in order for you to appoint whom you please, and I would say the logical person would be the person whom Mr. Bradley suggests. To keep the record straight, I think it is definitely up to you to make the appointment.

Mr. Chairman I am not so sure about my position here.... There is nothing in our Standing Orders which permits me to appoint a chairman. I therefore hold our Standing Orders are silent on that point. That being so, I must take refuge in the rules of the House of Assembly of Newfoundland which brings me to Rule 122: "In forming a Committee of the Whole House, the Speaker before leaving the Chair shall appoint a Chairman to preside who shall maintain order in the Committee." That order presupposes the appointment of a chairman to preserve order in committee, which I have been doing heretofore. Therefore

Rule 122 does not apply to the case in point, namely the appointment of somebody to pilot the business before the House which is different from appointing a chairman for the purpose of maintaining order.

Mr. Hollett How do you construe that section?

Mr. Chairman "The Speaker, before leaving the Chair, shall appoint a Chairman to preside who shall maintain order in the Committee", that is to say, appoint a chairman of the committee for the purpose of maintaining order. In the House of Assembly a bill is piloted through, usually, by the person who introduces it. Now, this Grey Book was introduced here ... by me, or at my direction, in conformity with directions I had received from His Excellency the Governor....

Mr. Hollett You introduced the documents; these are the ones we are to discuss and I hold it is your prerogative to appoint whom you please to pilot it through. I want to be clearly understood in this — I have no objection to Mr. Smallwood's being appointed, but I would like to see it done right.

Mr. Higgins I would suggest we decide whether we will go into committee of the whole first, then you will have a motion from the floor, and I can assure you it will not be embarrassing. Before we go on, there is one other point I would like to discuss. All the members here, with some apprehension and with just cause, are wondering how long the debate will continue. Is it possible, if we go into committee of the whole, that a motion under section 48: "A motion may be made during the proceedings of a Committee that the Chairman do report to the Convention" — do you view that as closing off the debate?

Mr. Chairman At any time a closure motion may be made. A closure motion is without debate. If it is deferred for any reason, it will be the right of any member to move that the question be put and I will have to put it. At any stage, it would be open to any member to move a closure motion, whereupon I would have to put the motion without debate.

Mr. Higgins Under Section 47, "when all matters have been considered the Chairman shall report to the Convention." It is up to you to decide when all the matters have been considered that have been referred to the committee.

Mr. Chairman Let us take three positions. Suppose ... we get the motion to rise, report progress