

government of Newfoundland and decided exactly what taxes will be placed on our people to raise those few million dollars in provincial taxes. They demand that I shall here and now turn myself into the provincial treasurer or finance minister and name the taxes that will give the provincial government those few millions a year. If I refuse to oblige them they raise a great chatter about property taxes. Sir, are their imaginations so poverty-stricken that they can think of nothing but property taxes? Is their knowledge of taxation so microscopic that they cannot look around in this country and see how taxes can be raised by the government without putting taxes on the bits of property our people have? Let me remind you that we are today collecting certain taxes that we can and will go right on collecting under confederation. Gasoline tax, motorcar and truck taxes, drivers' licenses, liquor profits, timber and mineral royalties, lumber royalties and a dozen other items that will bring us in close to \$5 million a year. These are taxes that we have right now. These taxes can be kept on, and if we have any brains, any courage, any sense of fair play in us, we will collect the rest of the taxes we need out of the public domain of this country. And when I say that, I am not thinking only of the huge areas of holdings in this country that are tied up in the hands of persons living outside the country, but of actual operations going on right now. I am not going to tip my hand in this matter just now — the time will come for that — but when the right moment comes, I think I will be able to show some of our former finance ministers ways of getting taxes without grinding the faces of the poor. And that is a promise, if you want to take it that way, a promise or a threat, however you want to take it.

Sir, the conduct of the members on this motion that will shortly be put to them for their vote will be watched closely by our people. It will be watched closely because by it our people will judge the fitness of all of us to play any future part in the public affairs of our country. We have heard many passionate declarations of belief in democracy. We have been told how very anxious certain members are that democracy should be restored to Newfoundland. We have been treated to many fierce denunciations of dictatorship and all its works. Well, we shall very soon see how sincere were those declarations. We shall soon

see just how much they were meant. They have told us how much they love the people; how anxious they are that the people once again shall have control over their own country; how determined they are that the people shall rule, and not dictators and outsiders. We shall soon see just how sincere these declarations really were. They have told us again and again that our people are well fitted to govern their country, that our people are educated and intelligent enough to make the proper decisions in the referendum, and that our people can be trusted to render the right verdict. We shall very soon see how much they meant those things. By their fruits ye shall know them; not by what they say, but by what they do; how they vote for this motion.

Now with regard to those here who are not going to vote for this motion, it would be very interesting to know why they will not vote for it. After Mr. Bradley's speech they have lost completely all the reasons they used to give for not placing confederation on the ballot. No longer can they say that the British government has broken its promise to restore responsible government if the people request it. No longer can they say that Britain is not entitled to place on the ballot paper forms of government other than responsible government. No longer can they say that this National Convention cannot recommend other forms of government. No longer can they say that an elected government could get better terms. No longer can they say that we must have responsible government first. What have they left to say? What excuse can they think up now for cheating the people out of their right to decide the question of confederation in the referendum? Sir, there is only one reason they can have. They are afraid of confederation. They are afraid to put it on the ballot to let the people vote on it. They are afraid to let the people vote on it, for they fear that the people will vote for it. If they are not afraid, let them vote for this motion. I challenge them, I dare them to vote for this motion. I dare them to let the people decide on the question of confederation. We confederates were not afraid to let the people decide on responsible government and Commission of Government. We voted to place those two forms on the ballot paper. If the anticonfederates are not afraid that the people will vote for confederation, let them vote now, tonight, to place confederation on the ballot in the