

Christ had in mind when he enjoined us to feed the hungry. And certain I am that that land is the happier in which every man has a full stomach. True it is that without vision the people perish; but without three square meals a day, they perish just as surely. And anyone who doesn't think so might well try going without three square meals a day for a little while. I say for a little while, because I know that conviction will not long be delayed.

I have no regrets about the pains I have been at to emphasise the importance of three square meals a day; and I am satisfied that I have done so in a right spirit — in the spirit that, once satisfied of the safeguard of the spiritual and moral values that we all cherish, we should next be concerned to resolve the question of the form of government best suited to our needs, in terms of what form will make for the greatest economic advantage of the common man of this island. And if it be sacrilege to have done as much, then I suggest to you to make the most of it. But let me assure you that when on Friday next I walk down the steps outside for the last time, I shall have no regret in my heart for this thing that I have done here.

Now to turn to the motion before the Chair. Mr. Smallwood, after making it quite clear beyond a shadow of doubt that he has resolved the problem of perpetual motion, has seen fit to terminate his endeavours in this Convention by asking us to recommend to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom that among the forms of government to be submitted to the people in the forthcoming national referendum should be confederation with Canada upon the basis submitted to the National Convention on November 6, 1947, by the Prime Minister of Canada. Beyond a doubt, Mr. Smallwood in moving this motion is seeking a result which a great many people in this island desire. It may be a matter of great surprise to some that any considerable body of people should desire any such thing. To many members of this Convention who have undertaken to decide in their omniscience to restrict the people's choice, and even to prefer what they should vote for, it may well appear an outrage that there should be any considerable body of opinion to the contrary of their view. But there is a considerable body of opinion to the contrary of what is the majority opinion of this

Convention; and that makes the contrary opinion a matter of legitimate concern for us. I take it that this impartial body is still prepared to afford the view, even of that which may be a minority, a hearing, if not a chance.

What I have been at pains to try to decide for myself in the whole matter of this motion has been simply this: is there anything in the proposed arrangements themselves that puts them beyond and outside the pale of rightful submission to the people of Newfoundland — in other words is there something in them intrinsically evil? Personally, I have come to the conclusion that it does not devolve upon me to seek to determine here if the proposed arrangements for union are fair and equitable, or even if they are adequate. That is a decision for the people. And time and time again throughout history the collective common sense of the whole people has proved more adequate than has the collective common sense of the people's popular assemblies. And in this instance I am quite prepared to leave this matter in the people's hands. And what I am concerned with here, is to decide whether there is any rightful impediment in the way of endorsing these proposed arrangements as a referendum alternate.

I have been listening for many weeks to the Don Quixotes of the National Convention tilting at the windmills of the proposed arrangements for union. I must give them credit for supplying the wind that drove the very windmills they were tilting at. But as far as I am concerned, no evidence has been adduced to indicate that the proposed arrangements are not fair and equitable, all the ranting and roaring like true Newfoundlanders notwithstanding. Indeed, it is quite apparent that the proposed arrangements do offer some advantages in consequence of which the lives of our people would be changed for the better.

To put the matter in a nutshell, I have come to conclude that there is nothing within the proposed arrangements themselves that obliges me in conscience not to recommend them to the people for decision. And so I will recommend them. And that will be all that is expected of me here.

I say that advisedly. The way I see it, I am not obligated to express here any preference for a particular form of government. It was not so