

ly that when I see Major Cashin's questions and others already asked, and I imagine many yet to be asked, I feel profoundly my inability to analyse and assess the importance of the data. It so happens that I am not very good at arithmetic. I feel that if the government were to give us a statistician-economist of at least equal academic and professional standing of Professor Wheare, the constitutional authority, whether he be obtained in the United States or any other English-speaking country, if he be a thoroughly competent man, he can be of enormous value in what is a monumental job. I think we are over-

awed and weighed down, not with the burden of the world, but by the realisation of the tremendous task of setting out to assess the real state of this country. If we can get help from a professional man, one who has no axe to grind and who does not care what kind of government we may have; if we can get such a man as that it will be of tremendous help to the members of the Convention in discharging the duty they have had laid upon them.

[Mr. Vincent seconded the motion, which was deferred to the next sitting. The Convention adjourned]

September 18, 1946

[Requests for information were tabled by Mr. Ashbourne, Mr. Vardy, Mr. MacDonald, Mr. Harrington, Mr. Fudge, Mr. Jackman and Mr. Smallwood]

Mr. Chairman I desire to inform you that pursuant to the resolution of the Convention yesterday afternoon, an invitation was extended in writing to the Hon. the Commissioner for Finance to attend before the committee of the whole at 4 o'clock this afternoon in public session. A reply was received this morning and I would ask the Secretary to read it.

September 18, 1946.

Hon. Mr. Justice Fox,
Chairman of the National Convention.

Sir,

I wish to refer to the letter addressed to me by the secretary of the National Convention, on 17 September, in which he conveys to me an invitation to address a committee of the whole of the members of the National Convention in public session at 4 p.m. today.

As you have already been informed, while I

am very willing to meet the convention informally in committee, I regret that I am unable to meet them in public session.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

I. Wild.

Commissioner for Finance.

Mr. Chairman What is now your wish, gentlemen?

Mr. Ashbourne It was perfectly clear to my mind when I made the motion to invite the commissioner to address the committee of the whole, that it had been decided by the Commission of Government, and transmitted to us through you, that the commissioners were not prepared to attend before us in public session, but in private session. I move now that the Hon. Commissioner for Finance be invited to attend in private session tomorrow September 19 at 4 pm if convenient, to address us on the general financial condition of Newfoundland.

Mr. Vardy I second that motion.

[The motion carried]

Report of the Steering Committee¹

Mr. Chairman I have great pleasure in informing you that the Steering Committee met this morning at 11 am to undertake the duty you instructed them to perform and I shall now read an interim report for your information. It was hoped, in dividing the work into different headings — fisheries, finance, forestry, mining, agriculture, local industries, education, public health and welfare, and transportation — to dis-

tribute the work over the whole of the Convention. It was thought that the Convention itself would meet, say, once a week until the committees' work is over. Each member will be on one committee. In that way, while the committees are at work doing research, compiling data and generally studying the subjects mentioned, the members cannot meet in session as we are this afternoon; nevertheless, it is to be under-

¹Volume II:445.