

even though they had evidently not considered the importance to the Newfoundland fishermen of keeping our fresh fish plants in operation. We received information that the fish which the United Kingdom is buying from both Iceland and Norway is being paid for at a much higher price than the same commodity could be purchased from Newfoundland. Finally, the Secretary of State gave us his assurance that he would go further into the matter, and I think we all feel that some effort will be made to purchase a quantity of our fresh and frozen fish during the coming season.

The same difficulty arises with regard to the sale of our iron ore to Great Britain. It is a question of being able to find dollars, and we were informed by Mr. Bottomley that he has been working assiduously in this respect and that we shall possibly have an order for our ore this season. Nevertheless, we obtained no definite assurance from the United Kingdom government that they would be in a position to guarantee any long-term contracts. As usual, they told us that the Commission government had been pressing for action on all these matters.

Our third and final meeting with the representatives of the United Kingdom government took place in the Dominions Office on the morning of May 8. The Secretary of State, Viscount Addison, as usual, occupied the Chair and in reply to our memorandum handed us the following, which I shall now read for the information of the Convention and the country.

[Mr. Cashin read the memorandum¹]

As on the occasion of our second meeting on May 1, Mr. Glenvil Hall was not present, and I am convinced that the majority of the members of our delegation felt that because of this gentleman's reasonableness, and his sympathetic attitude towards Newfoundland in respect to the adjustment of our public debt, influence was brought to bear for the purpose of preventing him from attending our two meetings. In any case, the fact of his being absent for the second occasion is most significant.

After reading this final memorandum, I am sure that the Convention and the people of Newfoundland will be assured that because of our pressing the United Kingdom government for certain information and action, and because they

realised their embarrassing position, they decided to cut us off short by simply telling us, in effect, that we had no business whatever to discuss with them the administration of the affairs of Newfoundland, that it was not for us to suggest policies which we, in our view, considered were a benefit to the country and its future prosperity. So they raise the issue of our authority under the Convention Act. They tell us that our suggestions and efforts were nothing more or less than a condemnation and criticism of the Commission government. They overlook the fact that they had asked us weeks before we left Newfoundland what matters we desired to discuss with them. They forget that they agreed to discuss such matters, and now turn and in so many words tell us to mind our own business, and that all these affairs have been, and are still under consideration by the Commission government.

When questioned on the constitutional issue, Viscount Addison glibly and deliberately avoided answering any direct questions, and I am sure he left every delegate with the impression that no matter what decisions this Convention might make, the United Kingdom government had made up its mind. They were going to control the Government of Newfoundland as long as there was a dollar left to the credit of our treasury. This statement has been made by me on numerous occasions, and recent indications made in the budget speech tell us of a three-year programme which has been planned for Newfoundland by the present Commission government.

The British government has thrown overboard the agreement or pledge they gave to this country in 1933-34, and I express the personal opinion again this evening, that so long as our treasury dollar balances are available, it is their intention to hold on to the control of Newfoundland. They have intimated time and time again that they have plans for two or three year development programmes as well as reconstruction programmes, and they have not shown on their part that they would agree to any change of government the people may decide on, even though a plebiscite be taken this year. They have not even committed themselves to do so. At the present time our country is nothing more or less than an international pawn, and is being used by the United Kingdom

¹Volume II:490.