

revocable. It would be nothing short of a criminal dereliction of duty on our part to leave any avenue of information unexplored. And let me say this: that not only do I approve of the sending of this delegation to Canada, but that I am equally insistent that steps should be taken to obtain from the United Kingdom a statement as to what financial and other assistance they would be prepared to offer us in case of need. I do not suggest that we should send a delegation to the United Kingdom. I do not think that is necessary. The United Kingdom government is the government of Newfoundland and we can communicate with them either through His Excellency the Governor or through their agents, the Commission of Government here. If the Government of the United Kingdom should deem it proper that we should then send a delegation to England, by all means let us send that delegation; but I want it clearly understood that should any resolution to send a delegation be brought in here, I shall not oppose it. I do not consider it the right way to initiate the acquiring of this information from the United Kingdom, but I shall take no steps to place anything in the way of such a delegation going immediately.

And now as to the timing of this delegation's visit. There has been much nervousness and fear expressed over the prematurity of this resolution. Whether these fears arise out of lack of knowledge of the real situation, or out of a panic-stricken desire to exclude information about any form of government which might endanger the position of that form to which their closed minds cling with fanatical tenacity, I do not know. But it is clearly their desire to delay any examination of confederation facts for a considerable period. That attitude tends to create the impression that the appointment of a delegation now would result in an immediate rush to Ottawa by such a delegation. If anything even remotely approaching a resemblance to such a proceeding exists in the mind of any delegate, the fact would not even be humorous. It would be deplorable. Nothing is further from the truth. Conferences and discussions between governments and public bodies are not conducted in that way. Let us briefly review the probable course of procedure. The resolution, if adopted, would at once be sent to the Governor, or to the Commission of Government, who in turn would communicate with the Dominions Office.

The latter would then get in touch with the Government of Canada. That government has already indicated in the House of Commons that it would be willing to meet a delegation of this Convention. In all probability, the Canadian government would either suggest a suitable time or enquire what date would be agreeable to us. Thus the timing of the delegation's departure from Newfoundland would be delayed for a considerable period. Does anyone in this Convention imagine that any delegation of its members would have the temerity, or even the discourtesy to rush off to Ottawa at any time without first advising this body? And is anyone here under the impression that any sane body of delegates would depart upon such a mission without much previous preparation right here in St. John's?

Their very method of approach to the subject will have to be very carefully considered, for they will have in their keeping the dignity of this land of ours. Newfoundland must not be placed in the position of a supplicant. They will have to compile a considerable amount of factual material for possible reference during their stay in Canada's capital. They will have many conferences with the departments of government here, for it is elementary that, before leaving it will be imperative that they prepare figures estimating closely:

1. The amount of public service expenditures which will be lifted from our shoulders by the Dominion government's assumption of responsibility for the Railway and its subsidiaries, the postal telegraph services, and other items for which our revenue is now liable.

2. The sources and amounts of our present revenue which will remain to us as a province when the Dominion takes over customs, income and other taxes.

3. The amount of revenue which will be required to carry on the remaining public services which will still be our responsibility — education, public health and the like.

These are a few subjects upon which much information must be carefully compiled and many others will occupy many days of work in close collaboration with the ablest officials of the public service, some of whom, by reason of their intimate knowledge of departmental affairs, will have to accompany the delegation to Ottawa. The early appointment of this delegation could not possibly result in their arrival at Ottawa much