

brazen effrontery to our country! Here we are a body of men representing all Newfoundland, brought here apparently, so we are told, for the express purpose of deciding on our country's future form of government; we ask a highly relevant and important question about a contract to which we ourselves are party, and under which we lost our former government, and we are politely told, Mr. Chairman, to mind our own business. Every intelligent person knows that the ballot which by force of law and under the terms of the 1933 agreement should be put to our people is simply this: "Do you or do you not want the return of responsible government?" That is the choice. That is the legal and the only option which is provided for in this agreement to which the British government attached its hand and seal. That is the choice they promised us. Under what right do they withhold that choice from us? Under what law are we deprived of our legal rights? What is behind all this international double-dealing and chicanery anyhow? It is a pity that those Newfoundlanders who can afford it have not long ago taken steps to bring this whole matter before the Privy Council, and in this way found out whether the contract which Great Britain made with Newfoundland in 1933 is a proper and decent transaction, or whether it is a worthless joke played at the expense of a helpless people.

Mr. Chairman, I am voting in favour of the motion before us because, under the circumstances I have outlined, I have no choice to do otherwise. Now some may say, "Is not this ballot in effect carrying out the terms of the 1933 agreement?" Does it not give our people the opportunity to ask for the return of responsible government if they want it?" I tell them it is not. There is no reference whatever in this contract which asks us to vote on the retention of Commission government. It is something imported and foisted on us. As I said before, the ballot which this contract provides for is a simple request for the return of one form of government. If more than one form of government goes on the ballot then I say it goes beyond the powers provided in that contract, and to be consistent the British government should be ready to put every conceivable form of government on the ballot. For all we know there may be people in this country who may have elected Commission of Government, representative government, union

with Great Britain, union with the USA, etc. Yes, the whole thing is obviously impracticable, even ridiculous, but as I have observed, we must do the best we can in spite of the obstacles which have been placed in our path; and as the motion before us seems to me to be the only method by which our people are to be given the opportunity of requesting the restoration of their lost political rights, I have no option but to support the motion. In doing so it is my fervent hope that if such a ballot is placed before our people they will regard it in its true light. They will see it not as a choice of being asked to vote for two equal forms of government, but rather as an opportunity for demanding that the British government fulfill the pledge that they gave this country in 1933. Let us see to it that we Newfoundlanders live up to our solemn contractual obligations, and if the pact of 1933 is to be broken and made a scrap of paper, let us not allow ourselves to be willing parties to such a breach of faith.

In dealing with the matter of forms of government to go on the ballot, I cannot ignore the fact that what we recommend, when it reaches London, may be thrown in the waste-paper basket if it does not suit the fancies of Mr. Attlee, or be in accord with the future which he has planned for us. And that reminds me, Mr. Chairman, with reference to Mr. Attlee, that when this legislation of 1933 was being passed in the British House of Commons Mr. Attlee viciously attacked it, and when the Commission of Government was appointed he called them a bunch of bum bailiffs. Somewhat consistent with his attitude today isn't it, Mr. Chairman? In which event all our work here will have been for nothing, and we will become once again placed in a farcical situation which we are helpless to prevent. As for myself I am prepared to believe that the Commonwealth Secretary has our ballot made out long ago and poked away in his rolltop desk till the time comes to send it on to us. I saw it when I was over there.

Mr. Smallwood What is on the ballot?

Mr. Cashin It is poked away up in the attic in the Dominions Office.

Mr. Smallwood You said you saw the ballot. What is on the ballot?

Mr. Cashin I said I saw the rolltop desk! And in reply to my friend Mr. Smallwood, the other day when he was speaking to this motion he said, and I quote him practically verbatim, that "he was