

ter. As a result of this application the famous royal commission presided over by Lord Amulree was appointed. It is of interest to note at this time that in the last election for responsible government the party led by the late Mr. Alderdice won by a sweeping majority, and only two of the opposing party were elected, the present member from Green Bay¹ and the member from Bonavista, Mr. Bradley, and voicing all your sentiments, I say we are all glad to have Mr. Bradley back with us today. There was also elected for the Alderdice party at that time Mr. K.M. Brown, another member of this Convention, although not with us just now unfortunately; and also at that election we have another member of this Convention contesting a seat, in the person of the representative from Bonavista Centre, Mr. Smallwood. His opponent at that time was Mr. Quinton. I feel fairly safe in saying that had Mr. Smallwood been elected at that time it is possible that we would never have lost responsible government, because we all know, particularly in this House, what an ardent exponent of responsible government Mr. Smallwood was all through the years of Commission government, and up until a short time before this Convention opened. In newspaper articles, which I would read to you if permitted, Mr. Smallwood demonstrated himself as the most eager advocate of responsible government. In his "Barrelman" programmes he spent many years helping along the cause and, in fact, it was not until he came in close contact with residents of Canada at Gander that his ardour cooled, until now he is the most destructive opponent of responsible government as we knew it in 1934. Who among us here will forget his damning speech at the introduction of his confederation resolution on October 28, 1946? Let me quote from that speech:

Compared with the mainland of North America we are 50 years, in some things 100 years, behind the times. We live more poorly, more shabbily, more meanly. Our life is more of a struggle. Our struggle is tougher, more naked, more hopeless. In the North American family Newfoundland bears the reputation of having the lowest standard of life, of being the least progressive and advanced of the whole family. A metamorphosis steals over

us the minute we cross the border that separates us from Newfoundland. We are not indignant about them; we save our indignation for those who publish such facts, for with all our complacency, with all our readiness to receive, to take for granted, and even to justify these things amongst ourselves, we are, strange to say, angry and hurt when these shocking facts become known to the outside world.

I do not know who is making them known. Gentlemen, to me these are just the vapourings of Mr. Smallwood. I well remember Mr. K.M. Brown standing up there and saying, "These words pierced me to the heart."

However, to return to events leading up to this Convention. The commission under Lord Amulree was constituted by a royal warrant dated February 17, 1933. It consisted of William Warrender MacKenzie, Baron Amulree, Charles Alexander McGrath and Sir William Ewen Stavert with Peter Alexander Clutterbuck as Secretary. This commission assembled in St. John's on March 13, and began its sessions on March 20, 1933. During its collection of evidence, it also visited Canada, arriving there on April 29, and leaving on May 27, 1933. During that time the commission had interviews with the Canadian government and took evidence of witnesses. They adjourned their sittings in July and began to compile a report which was presented on September 14, 1933.² This report, which was the basis for the formation of our present Commission of Government, was contained in a volume of 283 pages, complete with maps and other exhibits.

As you are aware, the reason for this commission was the inability of the Newfoundland government at that time to pay the interest on the bonds. A number of people in Newfoundland thought and still think that there would have been nothing wrong in Newfoundland defaulting on its bond interest at that time, and as events proved later, some of the major countries of the world did so. However, little Newfoundland could not do so because it would be a disgrace to the Empire. I would quote to you paragraph 513 of the report:

We have been content to dwell on the

¹Mr. Roland Starkes.

²*Newfoundland Royal Commission 1933 Report*, (Cmd. 4480, 1933).