

their beliefs with varying degrees of ardour and ability. And with Mr. Hollett's closure motion hovering over this debate, I assure you that I will not occupy much of your valuable time. I realise that there are matters of great importance yet demanding the consideration of this Convention. Mr. Chairman, at first I had not intended to say anything in this debate, because I considered too much had already been said. But as it has been my custom since this Convention opened to briefly comment on matters before the Chair and to make my position clear regarding them, I decided to make a few general observations on this issue. They are as follows. First, I contend that the matter of confederation should never have been the business of this Convention and that responsible government should have been restored in accordance with the agreement of 1934.

Mr. Chairman You can't do anything about that. You have no jurisdiction over that matter at all. In the first place if the matter is to be debated at all it comes within the purview of the different forms of government, which is not yet before the Chair. You must confine yourself to business before the Chair, the terms of union.

Mr. Fowler That's what I'm trying to do — just following out my arguments, sir.

Mr. Chairman Mr. Higgins, there's no need for you to prompt the speaker, I've just ruled that this matter isn't debatable.

Mr. Fowler If confederation is to be a live issue, let the people interested form a party, go to the country, preach their doctrine and if given a mandate from the people, go as honourable men and negotiate the terms of union on equal footing with the Canadian government. Gentlemen, I contend that in contrast to this, we should look at what really happened. Mr. Smallwood asked this Convention to send somebody, anybody to Canada to discuss terms of union. First we said no. Then sometime later some of us got soft-hearted and by a scant majority agreed to send seven individuals to Ottawa. No qualifications were required, and as we all know that delegation consisted of every type of gentleman with the notable exception of an expert. And it must be borne in mind that the people of Newfoundland were not asked if they wanted a delegation to go to Ottawa or not. Much less were they asked to select the members of this delegation. It is doubtful if any delegation would have been wine and

dined in Ottawa for that 100 days had the people of Newfoundland been asked to decide. Secondly, we have these one-sided terms or proposals here. They are one-sided. That must be evident to all, because scores of questions of prime importance to Newfoundland have been asked and the answers could not be found in these costly documents we have before us. Mr. Smallwood has attempted to explain them. But with all due respect to Mr. Smallwood, what right has he to speak for the Canadian government? What authority has he? How does he know what any government of Canada may or may not do in the future? Mr. Chairman, we know only what is contained in the Grey Book. And that document, sir, will be longer remembered for what it does not contain than it will for what it does contain.

Gentlemen, one of the things our people want to learn is the truth about this burning question of taxation. All I can say is that it is like the truth about the next world: we hear a lot about it, but we will never know the real truth until we go there. We will never know the real truth about taxes under confederation until we become the tenth province of Canada. But always remember, that if things do not turn out as you expected, you will never be able to do anything about it. Thirdly, people should disabuse their minds of the idea of getting something for nothing, and realise that whatever form of government you have, you pay for what you get in one way or another. If you don't pay indirect taxes, you will pay direct taxes. If the federal government does not collect them, the provincial government will. If the provincial government does not collect them then the municipal government will. And remember, that under confederation we will be subject to all three forms of taxation — federal, provincial and municipal. The other nine provinces have them, how can we expect to escape them? Mr. Smallwood labours the point that we will not be compelled to have land taxes, property taxes and the like. He tells us that it will be entirely up to the province. But that is the point. Nobody compels me to eat, but I must eat in order to exist. And in order for Newfoundland to exist at all as the tenth province of Canada, it will be necessary for her to avail of every known means of taxation.

Mr. Chairman, I cannot see why we should join Canada or any other country at this time. It is common knowledge that the eyes of the North