

(1) The opinion of each several member as to the form or forms of government, which in his opinion should be put before the people; and,

(2) Any preference which he may choose to express as between one form of government and another.

Mr. Vardy We are not compelled to express a preference?

Mr. Chairman No. The language employed is "which he *may* choose".

Mr. Hollett Excuse me, sir. I give notice that on tomorrow I will move that section 39 of the rules of procedure of the National Convention be amended: In other words I am only giving notice of a motion to amend rule 39. There's nothing wrong with that, sir, is there?

Mr. Chairman No. If the House by a two-thirds majority wants to wipe out these rules and modify, alter or amend them, that is all right.

Mr. Hollett I know that, sir.

Mr. Higgins At this time, while we are on the subject, and it is a matter of voting, I am not entering into the present controversy, but some-time ago the matter of giving the right to vote to absent members was considered, and we had some correspondence and it was brought up with the Commission of Government. I wonder now, would the House be prepared to accept a motion in this respect at this time?

Mr. Chairman Not at the moment, Mr. Higgins.

Mr. Higgins Well, I don't mean right now, sir.

Mr. Chairman The proper time for you to introduce that is afterwards, when the present business before the Chair is terminated. That is to say you are giving notice that in accordance with the discussions which have already taken place on this subject, that you are going to introduce a motion today, so as to permit members who are absent because of illness or for a good and sufficient reason having their views recorded on rule 39.

Mr. Higgins Yes, sir.

Mr. Chairman Well, would you mind introducing that when the debate on the present business is adjourned? Mr. Keough.

Mr. Keough Mr. Chairman, we are come to the last scene of all, that will end this strange eventful history. As she was about to pass into her 450th year of history, Newfoundland called 45 of her sons to gather in National Convention to serve a great cause. And now in a little while New-

foundland will know whether or not we who are gathered here did serve that great purpose with intelligence, honour and integrity of conscience, and even at this moment history waits with poised pen to write upon immortal tablets whether in these last days we proved to be men of great or little souls.

However, the final test of all will come not so much upon this motion as upon the next. We have completed the first part of the task to which we are committed. We have examined and discussed among ourselves the financial and economic changes that have taken place in the island since 1934. With what degree of confidence we have executed adequate to this hour, all that is now for history to judge. And so we are come to the completion of our mission — the recommending to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom possible forms of future government to be put before the people at a national referendum. In the matter of this great final debate based upon systems of government I had been hoping for a better bargain. I had been hoping that the form that would be taken would be different from that which has been taken. I had been hoping that it would be a three-in-one affair, and that the three forms of government that this Convention has elected to concern itself with could have been discussed within the compass of one motion.

As matters stand the motion now before the Chair does not admit of any discussion of confederation in conjunction with the two forms of government with which the motion is concerned. It is a bit of a bother that the motion does not do the obvious thing and raise the three issues at once, for the same yardstick must be applied to measuring the admittability for referendum purposes of the form of government proposed by Mr. Smallwood's forthcoming motion, as to the measuring of the admittability of the forms with which Mr. Higgins' motion is concerned; I should have preferred to make one definition of that yardstick and get it all over with. Indeed, I think I may just as well do so, and what I have to say in preamble to discussion of this motion I ask you to consider as being likewise in preamble to Mr. Smallwood's motion presently pending. That would eliminate any need for me to reiterate myself.

I take it that I am expected to do here what I was sent here to do, and that, I hope, is not an