

the latest date on which the recommendations of this Convention must be submitted to the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, in order to ensure the holding of a referendum in the spring of 1948. Second, in the event of the majority of the voters in the forthcoming referendum favouring a form of government other than Commission of Government, at what time and by what method will the change to the new form of government become effective? I now move that the other order be deferred.

*[The motion carried]*

**Mr. Higgins** Mr. Chairman, before we go into committee of the whole this afternoon, there is a matter that I want to raise, and I think this is the time to do it. Yesterday afternoon I had occasion to interject on two occasions when Mr. Smallwood was replying to Mr. Hollett; on both of these occasions I used the term "tedious repetition of irrelevant matters". On the second occasion Mr. Smallwood made a statement, of which I have not all the words, but I have sufficient that I want to repeat them today. Mr. Smallwood said, "I don't want to turn on Mr. Higgins, but if I do someone will be hurt, and I won't be the one that will be hurt. I am holding myself in." As far as I am concerned that was a reflection on me, both offensive and unbecoming, and many of the members here today think that Mr. Smallwood has something on me. That is the general tenor of the remarks, and the impression they got. That's not only here, but outside of the Convention, and I want a ruling on that. If Mr. Smallwood has any reflection to give on me, now is the time and place for him to say it.

**Mr. Chairman** I think I am in duty bound to hold that Mr. Smallwood was out of order, under standing order 31, which provides: "No member may use offensive or unbecoming words in reference to any member of the Convention". It is a fair inference to draw that the words were offensive, but if there should be any doubt, I think it is clear that the words were unbecoming, and if the words are either offensive or unbecoming, the member using the words is entirely out of order. I personally feel that the words were both offensive and unbecoming, and it might well be that there was a serious innuendo contained in the words. I am asked to decide whether or not standing order 31 was violated by Mr. Smallwood when he employed the language to which my

attention has been drawn by Mr. Higgins. I hold and rule that the language employed, while perhaps in the heat of the moment, was both offensive and unbecoming, and certainly was not calculated to preserve to the distinguished member for St. John's East, and all other members of the Convention, the dignity and respect to which they are fairly entitled, and the responsibility for which is laid on my shoulders. I feel that the dignity, and perhaps the integrity of the member for St. John's East has been perhaps seriously affected by the language employed. Before going any further with the matter, if there is anything that Mr. Smallwood would want to say I would be very glad to hear from him.

**Mr. Smallwood** Mr. Chairman, if it will please Mr. Higgins, or reassure him, let me say that what I had in mind when I spoke as I did yesterday, was nothing secret, nothing confidential. I certainly had no thought that I had anything on him. What I had in mind, sir, was rather something that was extremely public, that all the members of this Convention and most of the people in this country know all about. That's what I had in mind.

**Mr. Chairman** Well, if you don't mind...

**Mr. Smallwood** Sir, I am making an explanation. So far as I am concerned no member of this Convention has had as much to take and contend with as I have. I suppose I am the only member here who has been called a "Quisling" and a "Judas Iscariot". I did not object. I have been in this chamber in one capacity or another since 1915, and I have learned to let things of that nature be as water on a duck's back. The man who called me a "Quisling" and a "Judas Iscariot" is perfectly well accustomed to calling and being called names in the past 25 years, and he rarely objects when anyone says anything to him, and I rarely object. What I had in mind yesterday was the continual process of being nagged at by Mr. Higgins. That's what I had in mind, and so I said that if I turned on him somebody would be sorry, and it would not be me. Perhaps I would have been sorry, but I would not be the only one. What I meant was that I would turn loose on him a verbal barrage. I have nothing on Mr. Higgins except that since we returned from Ottawa I have been continually nagged at by him — in a very polite and mild way, but nevertheless nagged at, and I resent that.

Now while I am on my feet and speaking to a