

Mr. Chairman I will make my position clear. What I do tonight and what I do the week after next are two entirely different things, but certain it is I am not going to run the risk of excluding discussion on any form of government which may be desired by any member of this Convention. It has been suggested to me here in effect that these rules are relatively unimportant. I say they are of the utmost importance for this reason: they were made pursuant to section 4 of the Act. The Act says, "No rules shall be amended, altered or repealed except by two-thirds vote of the members of the Convention." Therefore I will have to enforce it. Every man shall be free to express his own opinion on forms of government. I am sure it never occurred to me that this motion was designed to cut off discussion of the other form of government of which I have notice on the order paper. I am going to take the only position I can. That is, the motion will have to be amended. But I want to resolve any doubt, and there appears to be grave doubt, and if it is correct that this motion if carried would preclude discussion on Mr. Smallwood's motion, I think that ambiguity and doubt has to be resolved. I will accept the motion covering responsible government and Commission government, but not to the exclusion of the form of government next on the order paper, of which I have notice.

Mr. Higgins Do I understand you to say, with any other form added it would be accepted by you?

Mr. Chairman The minimum would have to be two forms.

Mr. Higgins You said if another form was added to it, you would accept it.

Mr. Chairman I did not say that.

Mr. Bradley If it was amended in that form.

Mr. Chairman I suggested you would include another form of government. Now it is said you included that form to the exclusion of the other one on the order paper, which is something which never occurred to me until three o'clock this afternoon. It was you, Mr. Hollett and Mr. Bradley, who called my attention to it. Mr. Bradley contends this is designed to exclude the discussion on the form of government on the next order paper. That being so, I am in a very dangerous position here.

Mr. Higgins As the mover of the motion, in spite of the fact there was intimation this after-

noon of a cloven hoof of partisanship in the motion, I say there was no intention at any time by me of excluding any other form being discussed. I myself am not and was not prepared to put any other form of government I did not approve of in that motion. But to exclude any other form of government from future debate is not and was not intended by me.

Mr. Bradley If you will permit me, sir, I think the whole matter can be simply resolved. Personally, I think the whole procedure, while not exactly wrong, was not as neat as it might have been. My own view is, the proper way to deal with each of these forms is to take them singly; after all, our duty is to decide as to what forms might be suitable to the people of Newfoundland.

Mr. Higgins The Chairman would not take them singly; it was not acceptable in that form.

Mr. Chairman I could rule out your motion, Mr. Higgins, for six reasons — every recital in that motion was something over which the House has no jurisdiction. Your motion in its original form was to put one form of government on to the exclusion of all others....

Mr. Higgins I endeavoured to meet the objection by putting two forms on.

Mr. Bradley I think each form could have been taken separately and dealt with in a manner that would not have been in any way exclusive. If we had a resolution for instance that Commission of Government be placed on the ballot paper, that would have been adopted and that would not exclude anything else. It would be dealing with one form — we would say, "Yes, that is one form which ought to be submitted to the people, we will put that on." Then we take responsible government, we discuss that and we come to the conclusion, "Yes, that is also a form which shall be submitted to the people." We are then finished with that. Then we take any other form we want to consider and discuss that, we may decide to put it on or not as the case may be — each should have been taken separately. That was not done. What was done in the first instance was this resolution was introduced to place one form on the ballot paper, and reading that resolution according to the concepts of the English language, it was to the exclusion of all others.

Mr. Chairman I am satisfied about that.

Mr. Bradley That you properly rejected. We have now a resolution with two forms to the