

are objections from many sources. I know this is a great forward step and, like any other such moves, it encounters many obstacles. This debate has been most valuable, in that it has brought the issue to the fore and brings the matter into the open, where it may be considered by the Canadian public as a whole. If the Secretary of State will give some assurance that this matter will be referred—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

An hon. MEMBER: Stick to your guns.

Mr. BROWN: If the Secretary of State will give some assurance that this matter will go where it properly belongs, that is, to the dominion elections committee or some similar committee—

Mr. FRASER: Or in the pigeon-hole.

Mr. BROWN: —with the consent of my seconder I shall be pleased to withdraw the amendment.

Mr. GIBSON (Comox-Alberni): Many of my hon. friends seem to think this is a simple problem; but, no matter which way they voted on the amendment of the hon. member for Essex West, they would probably be wrong. In the Indian affairs committee of which I was a member, the idea was to pass this without hedging it round with recommendations as to how the mechanics would work, and leave details to the elections committee. We were of the opinion that the elections committee was then sitting and would immediately set about looking into our recommendation and considering it. I myself was surprised to see that this bill was introduced into the house without that recommendation having been taken into consideration. The hon. member for Essex West is probably inclined to feel that, now that the matter has been brought out, the motion should be withdrawn. I feel that, before we take this drastic step—a step with which, incidentally, as I have already said, the Indians are not completely in accord—it might be advisable if the Secretary of State would give us an undertaking that the elections committee will again be set up next year, and by that I mean a specific undertaking. I am not talking about ten years from now.

Mr. SINCLAIR: Twenty years from now.

Mr. GIBSON (Comox-Alberni): If the Secretary of State would give us a specific undertaking that the elections committee will be set up at the start of the next session and that this matter will be considered before the next general election—and I think that, after all, that is the meat of the matter; we want

to know if the Indians are to obtain the vote in the next election—I will withdraw the amendment, because I believe that procedure is in the best interests of everyone, including members of this committee who do not know on what they are voting.

Mr. GIBSON (Hamilton West): As I said previously, a great many questions must be considered in connection with an amendment such as this. It is not one that I should want to have referred back to the elections committee at this stage of the session and perhaps not get the bill through before parliament prorogues. I undertake that I will recommend that the committee be set up again at the next session, so that this matter can be brought before it.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Has the hon. member permission to withdraw the motion?

Some hon. MEMBERS: Yes.

Some hon. MEMBERS: No.

Mr. IRVINE: It belongs to the committee.

Mr. FRASER: It can be withdrawn only with the unanimous consent of the committee.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: In view of the explanation made by the minister and the desire expressed by the hon. member to withdraw the motion, supported by his seconder, I was going to ask if he now had the consent of committee to withdraw it.

Some hon. MEMBERS: No.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Yes.

Mr. FRASER: It is still on the order paper.

Mr. MacINNIS: Before this matter is dealt with—

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order. Does the hon. member wish to speak to the point of order or to the amendment?

Mr. MacINNIS: I was thinking that perhaps the Secretary of State made a promise that he may find fairly hard to meet. That is, of course, his business and not mine. I was going to ask the hon. member for Essex West if his motion arose out of a recommendation made by the Indian affairs committee.

Mr. CROLL: He said that.

Mr. MacINNIS: If that is the case, that recommendation should have been made in a report to the house.

Mr. GIBSON (Comox-Alberni): It was.

Mr. MacINNIS: When the house had approved that report, it would then be a fit subject to refer to the elections committee and, in my opinion, not until then; because.