

this clause need not necessarily be a contentious one? What hon. gentlemen on this side of the House wish to ascertain is what are the exact functions of the Chief Electoral Officer. If this is satisfactorily explained there is no reason why all these clauses should not pass.

Mr. GUTHRIE: Well then let us go ahead.

The CHAIRMAN: Shall the committee proceed to the consideration of clause 19?

Mr. CURRIE: Pardon me, Mr. Chairman, but the committee has agreed that clause 19 should stand. I was called to order for discussing a provision in clause 19 under clause 18. Now what is the use of acting in this criss-cross fashion? I think the Government should take clause 19 into consideration. I have pointed out what may be a grave error in this clause and it should receive further consideration from the Government. I cannot frame an amendment right away, and I think it is very inconsistent for the committee to be changing its mind every two minutes. I think the suggestion of the minister to let the two clauses stand should be adopted without further discussion so that we may get on with the rest of the Bill.

Mr. LAPOINTE: But other members may have suggestions to offer to the same clause and they could be considered in conjunction with the suggestion of my hon. friend.

Mr. CURRIE: I quite agree but I understood from the leader of the Opposition that the committee had agreed to pass certain clauses of a non-contentious character to-night and to delay discussion of the contentious clauses until later on. I move that clauses 18 and 19 stand.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Currie moves that consideration of clause 19 be now postponed. Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the motion?

Motion agreed to.

On section 20—staff and temporary assistance.

Mr. GUTHRIE: This clause will have to stand with the others.

Section 20 stands.

On section 22—writs to be addressed to returning officers.

Mr. GUTHRIE: That had better stand also.

Section stands.

On section 24—election clerk to assist whenever the returning officer is disqualified.

Mr. CANNON: For what reason are returning officers disqualified? What section of the law provides for that?

Mr. GUTHRIE: I do not know to what section my hon. friend is referring.

Mr. CANNON: I am referring to the section under consideration at the present time which says that the returning officer can be replaced by the clerk when the former is disqualified. I am asking the minister why, and when, the returning officer is disqualified.

Mr. FIELDING: Under section 22.

Mr. CANNON: What is the reason for disqualification?

Mr. GUTHRIE: I suppose if a person is appointed who has no right to act he would be disqualified.

Mr. FIELDING: Disqualification is dealt with at the end of section 22 which stands.

Mr. GUTHRIE (Reading):

—but if such person refuses, or is unable, to act, another may be appointed in his stead.

Mr. CANNON: What are the causes for disqualification?

Mr. CURRIE: Look up the law and find out.

Mr. CANNON: Where is the law?

Mr. GUTHRIE: I do not know that I can state that. That is section 75 of the old law verbatim. I would assume that if the person were not a British subject he would be disqualified.

Mr. CANNON: Is there any special clause in this Bill providing for the disqualification of returning officers?

Mr. GUTHRIE: I do not know that there is but we are allowing the whole question of returning officers to stand over. In the meantime I will look the matter up.

Mr. CANNON: The minister says he will study the question as to the disqualification of returning officers.

Mr. GUTHRIE: That is under section 22 I have no objection that this clause should stand.

Mr. CANNON: I am asking why returning officers are disqualified and the minister cannot give the information to the committee.