

Mr. COCKERAM: Mr. Chairman, I hope you noted that the mover and the seconder voted for that?

Mr. BROWN: On a question of privilege, the hon. member for York South has accused me—I did not get all of what he said—of something and wanted it noted that I had voted in favour of this motion. That is quite correct. After all, I was a member of that committee.

Mr. ROWE: And a member of that party.

Mr. BROWN: Yes, a member of that party, and I am proud of it. I am a Liberal. I want to withdraw this motion because, unlike some of the opposition, we feel that the committee of which I had the honour to be chairman—

Mr. SMITH (Calgary West): What is before the chair? What is the point of order?

An hon. MEMBER: It is a question of privilege.

Mr. BROWN: We have a sincere responsibility over the lives and habits of 130,000 people, and it is no time for us to be playing politics.

Section agreed to.

Sections 7 to 19 inclusive agreed to.

On section 20—Instructions to be furnished D.R.O.

Mr. GIBSON (Hamilton West): There is an amendment to add a clause, which I shall have the Minister of Public Works move.

Mr. FOURNIER (Hull): I move:

That subsection 2 of section 34 of the said act be repealed and the following substituted therefor:

"(2) Each of the agents of such candidate, and, in the absence of agents, each of the electors representing such candidate, on being admitted to the polling station, shall take an oath in form No. 35 to keep secret the name of the candidate for whom the ballot paper of any elector is marked in his presence."

Mr. SMITH (Calgary West): Would someone just explain in a word what this means?

Mr. GIBSON (Hamilton West): This is a secrecy clause, providing that each agent of the candidate, or in the absence of agents, each of the electors representing such candidate, on being admitted to the polling station shall take oath to keep secret the name of the candidate for whom the ballot paper of any elector is marked in his presence.

Amendment agreed to.

Section as amended agreed to.

Sections 21 to 24 inclusive agreed to.

On section 25—Entry in poll book.

Mr. MUTCH: Mr. Chairman, I understand that this is the clause under which it would be appropriate to make the few remarks I desire to make with respect to the method of taking the vote. Suggestions have been made from time to time by influential groups in this country representing serious-minded people who have given a great deal of consideration to the study of the method of voting. I am one of those who are desirous of having the single transferable vote adopted in constituencies where more than two candidates are running.

I come from a province where the single transferable vote has been used in provincial elections for a considerable number of years. In my view and in the view of many others the results have been good, in that they have eliminated the election of members by a minority vote in the riding. This does not introduce a new method of voting, because it is the practice also in the province of Alberta. Here again I am told that the results have been satisfactory to the electors.

One need only to look at the membership of this house as it has been brought up to date in the last few days to realize the extent to which minority representation exists. At the present time there are 145 members who are in this house as a result of minority votes in the ridings from which they come. I admit quite freely, as someone will no doubt point out, that in the last election that condition applied to myself. Some sixty of those members are members of the government party; thirty-eight are members of the Progressive Conservative party; twenty-eight are members of the C.C.F. party; twelve are members of the Social Credit party, and there are seven others. If we needed lessons, we have had additional lessons in connection with this matter in the last few weeks.

Surely this is an opportune time to raise the question and to invite hon. members to give serious consideration to it. A few moments ago the Secretary of State indicated that he did not desire to reopen a question and refer it back to the committee, but if I heard him correctly he did indicate that such matters as this committee might desire to have discussed further before another election, assuming that there would not be one in the interval between sessions, could be referred back to the committee.

This is a matter which has been exercising the minds of large numbers of people in this country over a considerable period of years. It has been supported by a large section of the party of which I am a member since as far