

That clause 39 be amended by inserting, as paragraph (h) of subclause 1, the following words:

"(h) Persons who have signed any agreement, whether amounting to a resignation, a recall or otherwise, which would in any manner whatsoever limit the independence of such person in the event of his being elected member of the House of Commons."

Mr. FIELDING: With my hon. friend from Calgary (Mr. Tweedie) I have little admiration for the recall. In these progressive days, so-called, there is a demand among many excellent citizens for a plan of political action which is described as the initiative, referendum and recall. I do not find myself able to join in that demand. The referendum is occasionally necessary. We have it in our municipal affairs, we have it in the Scott Act, and we are going to have it under the Act which we adopted last session in connection with the question of prohibition throughout the Dominion. We are all in a measure joining in the referendum from time to time. The initiative has less to recommend it, although I speak with great respect because I know very many people in the country regard it as one of the things which modern politics require.

In regard to the recall, I entirely disapprove of it. I have no sympathy whatever with the recall, but why should I prevent any man in any part of Canada supporting the recall system if he wants it? I regard it as an unwise thing on the part of the farmers, but if they are pleased to regard it as a part of wisdom, and they want to establish the recall amongst themselves, I do not see why we should by legislation deny them that privilege.

I may think it is not the best form of legislation; I may think we would be very unwise in passing it; I would not vote for a candidate who signed a recall pledge; I think good reasons could be shown why the recall ought not to commend itself to the best judgment of the country; I regard it as a matter entirely belonging to—shall I say the internal economy of the Farmers' Party; but if it pleases them I do not see why they should not be allowed to have it. We may do very many things which in the eyes of our neighbours are unreasonable and foolish, but we would not legislate against them. If the farmers say they will not vote for a red-headed man I might think it is unwise, but if it pleases them it does not hurt me—let them have the privilege if they choose. They may say they will not vote for a man who wears good clothes—we have these days a movement for the wearing of overalls—and they will only vote

for the man who belongs to the Old Clothes Brigade. That is perhaps very commendable, but I do not think it is a matter for legislation in any shape or form. I strongly urge upon my hon. friend from Calgary—with whose views concerning the recall I largely sympathize—not to treat it as a matter for legislation at all. Let us leave the recall to the people of this country; let them try it a bit. I believe the best thing we can do in the case of some of these so-called modern reforms is to give the people a chance to try them out and they will discover very often that they do not produce the great results they hoped for. With reference to the recall, if it pleases our farmer friends to have it as part of their platform, let them have it within themselves, and I think they will get tired of it eventually.

Mr. R. H. HALBERT (Ontario, N.): I think my hon. friend (Mr. Tweedie) is mistaken as to the working of the recall. In the first place, no committee has a right to recall the member who has been elected until they have had placed in their hands a petition signed by from sixty to seventy-five per cent of the electors of that riding; and for my part I would not want to hold a seat in the House if seventy-five per cent of the people in my constituency did not wish me to be here. No doubt some hon. gentlemen fear the idea of a recall because it might prevent them from getting a judgeship or a seat in the Senate. Take it in connection with the running of a business. Suppose I were a business man, and my hon. friend from Calgary came along to me and said he wanted to hire a manager. Let us suppose a conversation took place along this line: "Halbert, will you take the job?" "Yes, under certain conditions." Very well, name your conditions." "My conditions are: First, that you engage me for four years and in that time you cannot sack me. If in that four years I think my services are worth more to you than they are at present, and I wish to have my salary raised, you must not object. Or, if I see a better job in those four years I wish to be at liberty to resign. I will take that better position and you can have no come-back." If I hired a man under such an arrangement as that it would be up to my friends to look after me, because I would certainly need their care. But that is the way in which members of Parliament have in the past been elected, and that is why the recall finds a place in our platform. However, my reason for speaking was to