

ITEM 57 | INFORMAL CONSIDERATION

In ordinary societies the meetings of which are not large, instead of going into committee of the whole, or considering questions as if in committee of the whole, it is more usual to consider the question informally. The motion is made thus: "I move that the question be considered informally." The effect of the adoption of this motion is to open the main question and any amendments that may be proposed, to free debate as if in committee of the whole. No member can speak the second time to the same question as long as a member who has not spoken desires the floor. This informal consideration applies only to the main question and its amendments, so that any other motion that is made is under the regular rules of debate. While considering a question informally the assembly by a two-thirds vote may limit the number or length of speeches, or in any other way limit or close the debate. While the consideration of the main question and its amendments is informal, all votes are formal, the informality applying only to the number of speeches allowed in debate. The instant the main question is disposed of temporarily, or permanently, the informal consideration automatically ceases without any motion or vote.

If the question is considered in either the regular committee of the whole or the quasi committee of the whole, it is necessary formally to report the action to the assembly and then take action on the report. Thus, it will be seen that informal consideration is much simpler than either of the methods described in the previous two sections. It can be used to advantage in assemblies that are not very large, instead of the committee of the whole. While this is not a motion to commit, yet it is used for practically the same purpose as the committee of the whole. It ranks just below the motion "to consider as if in committee of the whole," which is just below "to go into committee of the whole."

