

Mr. ROSS (St. Paul's): When I said that half the ballots would be spoiled in my riding if the ballot were left as it is now, I meant that as the people there had such definite views, if they wanted to vote "yes" they would mark their ballot that way and then strike out the "no".

Mr. TURGEON: I have no deep opinion as to the particular form the ballot should take, but when I was in the special committee I was convinced by what the chief electoral officer told us was the experience of his branch. The members of the special committee made a change which has not been brought to the attention of this committee of the whole, and the following words were placed at the top of the ballot:

Every person qualified to vote at the plebiscite shall do so by making a cross within one of the spaces herein provided after the word "yes" or after the word "no" according to the manner in which such person desires to vote.

Mr. REID: How many do you think will read that?

Mr. TURGEON: The special committee thought they would read it. I am not arguing in favour of this ballot, but as one of the members of that committee I want to point out what was in the minds of the members of that committee when they were giving consideration to this question. There is no doubt that the members of the special committee felt that persons coming to vote would read that, and my opinion is that they would. When the average person goes into the quiet of the polling booth he will look at the ballot to see what is on it. When he reads what is at the top, the nature of the action he is expected to take will be clarified and he will be able to mark his ballot accordingly. I would not have any fear that there will be many rejected ballots because of the way in which this question is put. I am not saying that because I object to changing the question—that does not matter very much. I would have no fear that the average voter will be able to vote intelligently with this ballot.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Would it not be a sound principle to apply to this problem to have the form as simple as possible? I suggest that the question be placed on the form once and once only, and direction given to mark opposite the word "yes" with a cross in a square, or opposite the word "no", as the case may be.

Mr. McLARTY: I think the hon. members of this committee wish to get a ballot form that will be as fair and simple as possible. I suggest that possibly we may let this form stand, and I shall endeavour to have sample

ballots prepared overnight and then hon. members will have an ocular demonstration as to whether or not it is simple.

Mr. HOMUTH: When the resolution was introduced I think it was mentioned that there would not be as many polling booths as would be provided in an ordinary election. Therefore, there will be a greater number of people voting at each booth. To a large extent, that will eliminate some of the questions of the cost of taking this plebiscite, but if every voter has to read a chapter of a book before he votes, we can see how it will slow up the voting.

Mr. GREEN: It does seem to me that the words at the top of the ballot could be simplified a great deal. Would it not be more satisfactory to use these words:

Make a cross within the space after the word "yes" or after the word "no" according to the manner in which you desire to vote.

Would that not be simpler than having all this business about "Every person qualified to vote", et cetera?

Mr. McLARTY: I think I shall be able to produce some sample ballots to-morrow, if that is the wish of the committee. I do not think this is a matter in which there is any great difference. It is simply a case of trying to get the ballot in the best form.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. McLarty moves that section 3 stand.

Mr. McLARTY: Just subsection 1.

Mr. BLACK (Yukon): I should like to say a word before that motion is put. I think the minister is correct when he says that the committee was largely influenced in recommending this form of ballot by the opinion of the chief electoral officer who said that such form had been satisfactory in the past. After listening to the discussion that has taken place to-night, I really think the form of ballot would be simplified by printing the question on it only once.

If hon. members will look at the ballot paper as it appears in the bill, I think they will agree that it would be much simpler to raise the word "yes"—or "no" if you like—further up in the space, and then print "no" below it, drawing a line between "yes" and "no" and leaving a space after each word where the voter could mark his cross. That would be very much simpler, and then you would not need the printed direction above at all.

Mr. CRUICKSHANK: I think we are wasting a lot of time. In the last federal election we solved simple problems such as