

saying anything on the matter in the debate to-night. However I think what has been suggested by the hon. member for Yukon, by the hon. member for Carleton, by the leader of the opposition and by several other speakers and what I know the minister himself would prefer would be that there should be but the one simple question, and that at the end of the question there should be a square divided into four with "yes" and "no" above and below each item in the squares nearest the question and two blanks opposite in one or other of which an X could be placed. It would be a very simple ballot, and I would be surprised if the house generally would not agree upon it.

May I say—it may sound a little absurd but I have sometimes thought that if one wanted to get from any group—I am not applying this to this honourable house, but as something to be secured from any group—just the opposite of what might appear to be what is desired, the thing to do would be to suggest the opposite form of question in the first instance, because exception would be bound to be taken to it at the outset. I am as sure as that I am speaking to-night that if the committee had brought in a single question in the form now being proposed we would have had an equal number of speakers asking why we did not put the question into two columns so that there could be no mistake if a person marked his ballot after the "yes" he meant "yes" in regard to that particular question.

I am of the point of view of the hon. member for Fraser Valley (Mr. Cruickshank) who said a moment ago that these are terrible times, and I do not think it discloses the truest sense of proportion that we should be spending an entire evening, as we have to-night, listening to one or two hon. members speaking at very great length with the remainder of the time pretty well taken up entirely with a discussion on the wording on a single ballot in respect to which consideration had already been given by a special committee of the house. There are grave issues at stake at the present time, and we may very soon have to consider some of them much more profoundly than we have thus far had occasion to do. I would suggest to hon. members that they try to make all the progress that can be made with the legislation before us, avoiding unnecessarily long speeches and also unnecessary and sometimes trivial objections to what may be before the house.

Mr. BLACK (Yukon): With the chairman's permission and the permission of the Prime Minister, in speaking of the election in 1940 he said that the leader of the Conservative party pledged the Conservative party

against conscription. I would remind the Prime Minister and the committee that the Conservative party was not in that election, that the Conservative party had been jettisoned, torpedoed, and that the then leader was then leading the National Government party. I am probably the only candidate of that time who ran as a Liberal-Conservative and was elected. I could not stomach the National government party.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I was very careful to say that the Conservative party had another name for the purpose of the election, that they did travel under the name of the National Government party. I am prepared not only to admit that but to congratulate my hon. friend on being the only Simon-pure in the party.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): I take strong exception to that. I am a Simon-pure and always have been, notwithstanding that I was not consulted by the gentleman.

Mr. COLDWELL: I agree with the Prime Minister that we are spending far too much time on this plebiscite. There are other and graver issues, we should be dealing with them instead of wrangling over the wording of the plebiscite. But I agree with the amendment of the hon. member for Macleod. The Prime Minister himself is a master of English, and if he reads the question carefully he will find that the words "restricting the methods of raising men for military service" modify the word "commitments," and that the commitments were made in relation to sending men overseas. The adding of the four words "in any theatre of war" would clear the matter up, and make the position abundantly clear. I am asking the Prime Minister and the government to consider the matter over night, because it is now eleven o'clock.

Section stands.

Progress reported.

On motion of Mr. Mackenzie King the house adjourned at 11.03 p.m.

Tuesday, March 3, 1942

The house met at three o'clock.

WAGE CEILING

ORDER IN COUNCIL AMENDING WARTIME SALARIES ORDER AND CONSOLIDATING AMENDMENTS

Hon. J. L. ILSLEY (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I wish to lay on the table of the house order in council P.C. 1549, of February 27, 1942, amending the wartime salaries order and consolidating these and former amendments with the original order.