

Joliette yesterday was a great success. It also gives the remarks, direct as well as indirect, of two members of this House, and I would like to call the attention of the committee to some of those remarks, which will have a very serious effect upon the community at large. The article itself is under double headlines and is given great prominence. It says:

Particular stress was laid on the crisis which the province of Quebec is facing to-day by the Hon. Jacques Bureau, M.P. for Three Rivers.

Mr. GERMAN: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member is quite out of order. He is not discussing anything relevant to the section under consideration.

The CHAIRMAN: The point of order is well taken. The hon. member is out of order.

Mr. BURNHAM: The article goes on to say—

The CHAIRMAN: Order. That is not relevant to the section. The hon. member must confine himself to a discussion of the section under consideration.

Section agreed to.

On section 2—definitions:

Mr. SINCLAIR: What is meant by the word "receptacle"? Would that definition enable an officer to carry ballots around in his pockets without having a regular ballot-box in which they would be deposited? This is a great departure from the usual way of conducting an election, and I see no reason for such a general term as "or other receptacle" in the section. That opens the door to placing the ballots anywhere at all. Why is it necessary to have such general language as that in the section?

Mr. DOHERTY: The purpose of this section is only to enable us to use the word "box" wherever, through the Act, we are dealing with receptacles, but there are, in this measure, other provisions providing for the way in which the ballot is to be placed in the receptacle and as to the sealing of the receptacle. This definition is only so that we shall not have each time to say box or bag or some other form of receptacle, but we have provisions further on that the receptacle shall be a suitable one and especially that it shall be suitably closed and sealed and so forth. The effect of this is only to tell us what "box" means when we use it in this Act.

[Mr. Burnham.]

Mr. SINCLAIR: Why do we depart from the old system of having a ballot-box?

Mr. DOHERTY: The ballot-box as we have it in this country would not be a very convenient thing to carry around on the field in France or Flanders. The only object is to make the taking of this vote as convenient as it possibly may be made, because it must be recollected that every inconvenience that is put in the way of taking the vote is so much of a difficulty in the way of a soldier registering his vote. When we come to deal with particular provisions, the hon. member will see that there are provisions for the holding of what are called polls, but there is also provision for affording opportunity to a soldier to register his vote, where that is possible, otherwise than at what might be called a poll, where the conditions are such that if he is not allowed to register his vote at the time and place at which he tenders it, he may be entirely deprived of the opportunity of registering his vote. I cannot conceive of anything that would be much more awkward for an officer taking votes under the conditions under which they are to be taken than the form of ballot-box as we have it in this country. It seems to me that, as long as we ensure that the ballot-box shall be in a proper receptacle, properly sealed and closed so as to be safe, we are doing all that is needed, and in departing from the absolute requirement of a tin ballot-box, we are certainly facilitating the taking of the soldiers' vote.

Mr. SINCLAIR: What section provides that the box, or bag, or whatever it is, will be locked or closed?

Mr. DOHERTY: Section 11 deals with that, and I think there are other provisions besides. Section 11 says:

The deputy presiding officer may use the same ballot box, if it be sufficient, at all polls committed to him to be held, until it has become filled, and upon the conclusion of his last poll, or whenever he shall decide to discontinue the depositing of ballots in any box, he shall seal it in such manner as to make evident any tampering therewith, plainly mark it with the words "military votes" and send it by registered post or other safe and expeditious means, addressed, (a) if the votes therein have been polled within the United Kingdom, to the secretary of the High Commissioner of Canada, at London, England; (b) if they have been polled on the continent of Europe, to the Canadian Commissioner to France; and, (c) if they have been polled elsewhere, to the General Returning Officer at Ottawa.

Mr. PUGSLEY: There ought to be some provision for a ballot box so that, when the