

ditions to exercise the franchise. It was said a moment ago that the Bill makes invidious distinctions. Reservists that have gone from Canada, who are as much interested in public issues here as the Canadian soldiers are not allowed to vote. It just goes to show that the more the Bill is analysed the worse it appears. Men touch it as though it were full of dynamite and ready to explode. This Bill had its origin in party desire and must have been conceived by a man who has played the game of life with loaded dice. I cannot see anything in this legislation that would commend it to the people of this country.

Hon. Mr. LEGRIS—Allusion has been made to the principle involved in this Bill. I do not know wherein that principle lies, and cannot understand it. I have no hesitation in saying that it is a bad Bill, and is wholly unwarranted. No municipal council in the country would dare to make such a law. For this reason I cannot allow the second reading to pass without entering my protest.

Hon. Mr. DAVID—There is no doubt that this is one of the worst measures ever brought before Parliament. It is subversive of all constitutional principles. It is so impracticable, so open to all kinds of fraud, that I am inclined to think the Government probably hope that the Senate will reject it, and will be happy if they do, so that they may be able to say to the country, "The Senate rejected the measure which we prepared for the purpose of giving the brave soldiers a vote." I am not ready to render them that service, and I want to leave to them the responsibility of carrying out this impracticable Bill. The Senate would make a mistake if it assumed that responsibility. Therefore, although I am disposed to vote for all amendments which will improve the Bill, as the hon. gentleman from Halifax has said, and to give all the guarantees possible that the vote will be honestly and independently taken, I shall not vote against the second reading of the Bill, but will wait to see what amendments may be offered.

The motion was agreed to, and the Bill was read the second time on a division.

Hon. Mr. LOUGHEED moved the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole on the Bill.

The motion was agreed to.

Hon. Mr. THOMPSON.

(In the Committee.)

Hon. Mr. KERR—The House will regret that the hon. leader has not in some way dealt with the principle of the Bill and endeavoured to reconcile them to what is in the best interest of the country and the best method of securing good government. It must be regretted that this Bill should be thrown at the Senate in this way and that we should be told to sit down and take the Bill in committee and make any amendments we thought proper. Where there is a great principle in the Bill there should be some exposition of the views of the Government upon it before the House. Are the Government in earnest about this? Do they want this Bill passed? Do they think it is in the interest of good government that it should be passed? Do they think it is a fair Bill? Is it one on which they are willing to pin their faith, and pledge their responsibility as the Government of this country? Before this Bill goes to committee we should have some assurance with reference to these points from the hon. gentleman representing the Government in this House. To my mind, dealing with the thing separately and individually, it is one of the most iniquitous pieces of legislation which ever was proposed. It is one which is fraught with very serious menace to the freedom and propriety and purity of elections. It is one which aims at getting an unfair advantage, and no party that ever attempts to do such a thing can expect to have either the support or approval of the honest people of this country. I say under these circumstances it is to be deplored that there is no one in this House to stand up for the Government and say one single word in commendation of this measure.

Hon. Mr. LOUGHEED—I take exception to what my hon. friend has said. He could not have been in the House when I introduced the Bill. If my hon. friend will look at the debates, he will find that I made a speech stating what the principles of the Bill were. I venture to state that my hon. friend cannot controvert those principles. My hon. friend has no right to make the statement which he has done. He is absolutely incorrect. I should also like to draw attention to the fact that the second reading has been carried, and we are now discussing as to whether we shall go into committee.

Hon. Mr. KERR—Before we go into committee I am entitled to say what I think