

Mr. McDOUGALL. I was proceeding to show that under the present franchise law the practice has been to put on the list for each subdivision a much larger number of voters' names than is proposed by the amendment now submitted to the House. I have here the list for nine subdivisions within the county I have the honour to represent, and if I had all the lists, I think I would have three or four more which show the names of over 300 voters and up to nearly 400 in a polling subdivision.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL. Two hundred is the limit.

Mr. McDOUGALL. I cannot understand how that can be. I am going by what has been done by the revising barrister, who is a lawyer, and no fault was found with his action, either by the voters or by anybody connected with the exercise of the franchise in respect to the number of votes on each list.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL. Under the local law the limit is 400, but in the federal law the limit varies from 200 to 300.

Mr. McDOUGALL. Be that as it may, I have here one polling subdivision with 348 names, another with 357, another with 391 names, another with 358 names, another with 346 names, another with 359 names, another with 386 names, another with 344 names.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL. Then the revising barrister was not doing his duty.

The PRIME MINISTER. All that is illegal.

Mr. McDOUGALL. There must be something in the Act which permits it being done, or otherwise I imagine this revising officer would not do it.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. There is nothing in the Act to permit it.

Mr. McDOUGALL. I have here another list with 333 names, and among those I find 153 of the same name—McNeills. I would like to know how a returning officer appointed by the Government, a man who may live twenty or thirty miles away and who does not know half a dozen men in the district, could go to work at short notice and subdivide that district and select the names that are going into each subdivision of that district, which may be some seven or eight miles in extent. It is not going to add to the convenience of the people to subdivide that district into two subdivisions for polling purposes, and especially so if it is done under the plan proposed by the Minister of Railways. If the subdivision of the district takes place, I am satisfied that the people of the district will insist that the polling booth would be put at a convenient part of the district, say one booth in the centre of each sub-

division. Now for a returning officer to go to work and be able to make up a proper intelligent and practical list at short notice and he a perfect stranger, would be an utter impossibility, and would lead to confusion and dissatisfaction. In my experience in running elections since the Act came into operation, and before the present Act came into operation under our local Acts, people voted in a subdivision to the number of 300 and over 300. The hon. the Minister of Marine and Fisheries shakes his head.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. I do not dispute what the hon. gentleman (Mr. McDougall) says, but I say the law does not provide for it.

Mr. McDOUGALL. I never saw any difficulty arising because of the number of names on the list. I know that in my own particular subdivision it never took us more than one-half the time allotted for voting to vote the 300 names. There is another objection which will arise in multiplying the number of subdivisions. The Government must see that by this Act they do not provide for the expenses of any work connected with the making of the list or the arrangement of subdivisions, and if they increase the number of subdivisions they increase the expenses proportionately. They not only increase the expenses for returning officers, but they put an increased expense upon the municipalities by creating these subdivisions.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL. No.

Mr. McDOUGALL. Yes, you do.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. Perhaps the hon. gentleman has not listened to the suggestions made in the proposed amendment. It is not that the municipality should subdivide the list, but that the returning officer should do it. He is an officer of the Dominion Government, and any expense he incurs must be paid by the Dominion Government. It would not throw the expense upon the municipality.

Mr. McDOUGALL. The Minister will find that in a subsequent clause of this Bill the officer of the municipality is obliged to furnish copies of the lists and of the subdivisions.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. The proposal made by the Solicitor General was that in cases where the returning officer found the names on the list exceeded a certain number, the returning officer should himself divide them into subdivisions and provide different polls in these subdivisions. The expense of that would fall upon the Dominion.

Mr. McDOUGALL. Then this work would have to be done within a few days of the election, and my experience is that even at present it frequently occurs that