

Mr. MacINNIS: Mr. Speaker, there is not much more that I wish to say in connection with this bill. I would like to point out, however, that the Minister of Justice (Mr. Guthrie) was evidently under a misapprehension as to the purpose of the amendment when he spoke in the house on Tuesday evening. In refusing to accept this amendment he said, at page 982 of Hansard:

I think it is going beyond the bounds of common sense. It is not a reasonable request that men from Nova Scotia or New Brunswick or the prairie provinces settling in Ontario, say, should be entitled to vote in a constituency in which their camp happens to be situated.

The amendment did not ask for any such thing. As a matter of fact, all that the amendment asks for is that the same provision shall apply to the men in the unemployment relief camps as now applies to other categories of electors who may vote by absentee ballot provided they are twenty-five miles or more distant from their electoral district or polling division on election day. First of all, the men in the camps must be registered in some constituency in the province in which they desire to vote. If they have not been long enough in the province to acquire domicile there, then of course they are not eligible for registration and are therefore not qualified to vote. In any case the reason for the amendment is that generally speaking these men are not allowed to vote in the constituency where the camp is situated. The Minister of Justice went on to say:

There is nothing in the election act to prevent these men from voting in their own localities.

Then he gave the reason himself why they cannot vote in their own localities. He said:

The question of transportation is a serious one, but I am not in favour of the proposal.

It is altogether a question of transportation, Mr. Speaker—question of the impossibility of these men going into the constituency where they are registered in order to vote on election day. The hon. member for Kingston City (Mr. Ross) was under the same misapprehension, and I understand that he was also opposed to the amendment because the vote could not be controlled. I am not interested in controlling the votes. All I am interested in is that these men should be given the opportunity to exercise their franchise as ordinary citizens do, and that they should not just because of their circumstances, over which they have no control, be prevented from exercising their franchise on election day.

Shortly before I came east along with other federal members from greater Vancouver I

met some of these men, and I think the other Vancouver members who were with me will remember this circumstance. One of the men that we met was an upstanding young fellow who, asked if he had served overseas, said that he had served overseas for four years. He is a British subject and had lived in Canada some fifteen or sixteen years. When he was overseas he was entitled to vote during the elections of 1917, even in France, but now he is in an unemployment camp and just because he cannot afford the transportation from the camp to the constituency where he may be registered, that is if he is registered, he is prevented from voting. I would ask the members to take this into serious consideration before they refuse to accept the amendment. There is equity, there is justice in this proposal, and to accept it would be doing something for men who are unable under the circumstances to do anything very much for themselves. I would therefore ask the members of the house to support the amendment.

The house divided on the motion (Mr. MacInnis), which was negatived on the following division:

YEAS

Messrs:

Beaubien	Mackenzie
Carmichael	(Vancouver Centre)
Gardiner	Macphail, Miss
Gershaw	Munn
Hanbury	Neill
Heaps	Ralston
Howden	Reid
Ilisley	Speakman
Luchkovich	Spencer
MacInnis	Woodsworth—19.

NAYS

Messrs:

Arsenault	Peck
Arthurs	Perley (Qu'Appelle)
Baker	Plunkett
Baribeau	Price
Belec	Quinn
Bourgeois	Rhodes
Davies	Sauvé
Dickie	Shaver
Duff	Simpson
Dupré	(Simcoe North)
Ernst	Simpson
Esling	(Algoma West)
Fraser (Cariboo)	Smith
Gobeil	(Cumberland)
Hay	Stanley
Loucks	Stewart (Leeds)
McGillis	Stewart (Lethbridge)
McGregor	Stinson
McLure	Stitt (Nelson)
Manion	Sutherland—37.

Mr. IRVINE: I was paired with the hon. member for East Edmonton (Mr. Bury). Had I voted, I would have voted for the motion.