

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: Mr. Chairman, it seems to me there is a great deal of force in the observation of my hon. friend from Perth (Mr. Morphy), that this Bill should contain everything that is intended. Let me call at once to the attention of my hon. friend the difficulty which arises. Subsection (c) reads:

If, being a married woman and previously an alien, she has become a British subject by marriage, or by the naturalization as a British subject of her father while she was a minor, and in either case has done nothing, (other than in the second case by marriage) to forfeit or lose her status as a British subject, and obtains and presents to the official in charge of the preparation or revision of the voters' lists of the said constituency a certificate under the signature of a judge or any court of record, etc.

If I understand this aright, it is intended that the provincial lists should be used and that no special lists should be made. At the present time the provincial lists are used: we make no Dominion list. We accept the lists of the provinces, and I think that is quite proper. If that be so, it seems to me the application for registration should be made at the time that the lists are prepared. The time at which the lists are prepared differs in almost every province. In Ontario, I think, they are prepared in the month of September or thereabouts, and in Quebec also they are prepared in September. I do not know the practice in the other provinces. But it seems to me that the Prime Minister should provide that the application for registration should be made at the time the lists are prepared. Otherwise, if there is no period stated in which applications are to be made, when must applications be made? Are they to be made at all times, even on the day of voting?

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: I shal' consider what my right hon. friend has observed, but I should think it would follow as a matter of course, that the certificate must be produced before the woman can be put upon the list.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: She has to produce her certificate? In my own province the lists are prepared under the authority of the municipal council, in very much the same way as they are in Ontario. The secretary of the council prepares the lists and when ready they are submitted to the council and discussed by it. That system works very smoothly and creates no difficulty at all. Anybody who regards himself as qualified makes his application to the clerk who puts it upon the list and

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it is discussed by the council. I would suggest that something of the same kind should be provided for here: the woman goes to the clerk of the council with her certificate, which she has obtained from the judge, and then she can be registered. I want my right hon. friend to take into consideration the time when the lists are prepared in every province.

Sir SAM HUGHES: Should not the Bill contain some provision as to the preparation of the lists?

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: I have already explained my conception of the law. I think that under the War-time Elections Act there is machinery under which lists containing the names of women entitled to vote under this Act could be prepared. I have also mentioned in reply to my hon. friend from Antigonish and Guysboro, (Mr. Sinclair) who, I think, raised this point, that so far as the Dominion Elections Act is concerned, when this legislation comes to be applied, there must be some machinery provided for this purpose.

Sir SAM HUGHES: If you are depending upon the War-time Elections Act it will require all the lawyers in the House to interpret it, and then no two of them will agree.

Mr. NESBITT: Do I understand that paragraph (c), subsection 2, will be amended, and that women will be under the same obligation as men to reside in the country for a year and in the constituency for three months?

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: I said I would consider the point.

Mr. NESBITT: While on my feet, I would like to endorse what the hon. member for North Perth (Mr. Morphy) said, that this legislation would be much more intelligible if there were not so many references in it. It is a very tedious and difficult matter to hunt up the information necessitated by the many references. I see no reason why the Bill should not be more simply drawn.

Mr. NICKLE: I would like the Prime Minister to make a note of this point: Paragraph (c) of the subsection 2, section 1, reads as follows, speaking of married women who have become British subjects:

If, being a married woman and previously an alien, she has become a British subject by marriage, or by the naturalization as a British subject of her father while she was a minor, and in either case has done nothing (other than in the second case by marriage) to forfeit or lose her status as a British subject,—