

ELECTION EVILS HELD TO EXIST, BUT BILL LOSES

**Roebuck Measure to Force
Compilation Annually of
Voters' List Unacceptable
at Present, Says Cross**

COST TOO HIGH, CLAIM

Although members on both sides of the House expressed the belief that there were evils in Ontario's municipal election machinery which stood in need of correction, the Ontario Legislature yesterday defeated on second reading a bill to amend the Voters' List Act, sponsored by A. W. Roebuck (Lib., Toronto-Bellwoods) after lengthy debate. The bill would require the clerk of every municipality to compile a correct voters' list annually.

Ruled by Hon. Eric Cross, Minister of Municipal Affairs, as "not acceptable to the government," the measure was voted down over its sponsor's plea that a House committee be appointed to study its terms and present it again, possibly in amended form, before the session prorogued.

Allan Lamport (Lib., Toronto-St. David) expressed the conviction that the bill was being introduced as a direct result of representations recently made by Lewis Duncan, Toronto barrister, who was defeated in the 1939 mayoralty election.

Might Cost City \$150,000.

"If Mr. Duncan wants to get legislation like this passed, and if he has the names of violators of the act in his possession and will not give them to properly instituted committees, he's as guilty as they are," he said, in opposing the bill. "The changes suggested by this measure would cost the City of Toronto at least \$150,000 to implement."

Mr. Cross, in voicing government opposition to the measure, said there had been no demand from any Ontario municipalities except Toronto for a change in regulations, and that the extra costs involved should not be saddled on municipalities when the demand had come only from one city.

"It is evident from the debate that the evils this bill seeks to correct exist at present mainly in Toronto," he said. "I'm more concerned with the item of expense involved than with the particular case in point. The cost has not been demonstrated, but it is evident that it would be a considerable factor. The bill should not be proceeded with, as it is not acceptable to the government."

In his introduction of the measure for second reading, Mr. Roebuck said its object was to improve the "very marked evil conditions obtaining in Toronto at least."

"We have not had a clean, proper voters' list in the City of Toronto for many years," he said. "Part of this is due to the fact that authority is not vested in any one man for preparing an accurate list. The clerk makes up his list from the assessment roll, but he does not depend on it entirely. Many names are carried over from previous lists, and this results in many inaccuracies."

Says 4,700 Dead on List.

"I can vouch for that," said Col. F. Fraser Hunter (Lib., Toronto-St. Patrick). "I have absolute proof that in my own riding alone 4,700 names of persons who have died were on the list at the last election."

"Twelve thousand cards were returned to the City Clerk of Toronto," Mr. Roebuck added, "representing voters who could not be found. There is plenty of proof all right."