

April 8, 1871

A vote was then taken on **Mr. BLAKE's** amendment, which was yeas 47, nays 83.

Mr. BLAKE moved in amendment that whereas in Ontario and Quebec the elections for the Dominion Parliament are held under the same rules as the Local election, and whereas in New Brunswick Dominion employees are qualified to vote, but the mode of voting is secret, therefore the general elections in Nova Scotia shall be conducted under the Local rules.

The amendment was lost on the same division as the preceding one.

Hon. Mr. DORION moved that an amendment be introduced to provide that contested elections be tried and decided by courts of justice as Local contested elections in Ontario and New Brunswick and municipal elections in Quebec are tried.

Hon. Mr. McDOUGALL (Lanark North) said he would vote against this amendment, not because he disapproved of the mode of trial suggested, but because it would require more machinery to manage it properly than existed at present, and because it was too late to take up such a measure and deal with it at this late period in the session. There were quite a number of contested elections to be tried in Ontario under the new system, and it might be as well to wait till next session when the House could have the experience of the Local Legislature to guide them.

Mr. MACKENZIE said that if the member for Lanark approved the principle he had no right to oppose it because of the period at which it chanced to be presented. However hon. members might desire prorogation, it was the duty of the House to take full time to perfect every measure before it.

Hon. Mr. ANGLIN had some experience on Election Committees, and was decidedly of opinion that some change was absolutely required in the mode of deciding controverted elections. He approved of the abstract principle of the proposition and should therefore vote for it.

Hon. Mr. DORION's amendment was then put with the following result:—Yeas, 50; nays 80.

Hon. Mr. CAMPBELL moved an amendment to provide the appointment of Commissioners to revise the lists of voters in Nova Scotia so as to place them all voters who were entitled to vote at the time of Confederation, but who had since been disenfranchised by Acts of the Local Legislature. He explained the circumstances under which he considered the motion necessary.

Hon. Sir GEORGE-É. CARTIER understood that the present motion was simply to make the lists the same as they were on the 1st of July, 1867.

Mr. MACKENZIE did not think the particulars of the amendment bore out the statement made to the House. It was provided that a new list should be made out, and there was no appeal from or check on the Commissioner. There was also full power to excise certain names.

Hon. Mr. TUPPER said that the understanding of the House was clear, and if there was anything in the clauses contrary to that understanding, it would not be adopted in Committee.

Mr. BLAKE thought the motion before the House should be clear, and he thought the proper way to meet the case was for the Revisers when preparing lists for the local election to prepare like lists of electors for the Dominion Government, adding thereto the names of all those who had been disfranchised since the time of Confederation by the Local Government. He moved an amendment to that effect.

Hon. Mr. CAMPBELL said that the Revisers in Nova Scotia were obliged to make the lists by the 1st of March; therefore, if any election took place before next year, the old law would govern.

Mr. McDONALD (Antigonish) said this House should provide its own machinery for making out the voters list.

Mr. BOWELL said the Revisers were officers of the Local Government, and might refuse to make out the lists.

Mr. MACKENZIE said that if it was true that public opinion in Nova Scotia was unfavourable to the Local Government, it was not likely the Revisers would be appointed otherwise than friendly to the Dominion.

Mr. BLAKE said the Dominion Government had full power to appoint any one they chose, and also to inflict penalties for non-performance of the duties. The member for Guysborough proposed to appoint Commissioners, and he (Mr. Blake) proposed to do the same, but, in addition, to name those Commissioners.

Mr. KILLAM said the Nova Scotia law allowed full time for the preparation of the lists by the Revisers.

Hon. Mr. ANGLIN said the House seemed to be very much in the dark as to what they wanted to do. The safest way of choosing proper persons was to choose the Revisers. He thought it very inadvisable that a Commissioner should be appointed sole judge in this matter, but the authority should be confined to the real want.

Mr. McDONALD (Lunenburg) said that proposal was clear, and the authority assigned to the Commissioner definite and concise, to add to the voters lists every one who would be on those lists according to the law in force at the time of the Union.