

The CHAIRMAN: The only thing is this, that when I said there are two systems of voting it is quite true there is voting in the field or marking of the ballot by the soldier and then there is the proxy vote, but one could almost fairly state that perhaps there is a third system, and that is direct representation as suggested by Mr. Gillis. It is all involved in the same problem.

Mr. MACNICOL: Is there any state in the world that gives direct representation to the soldiers in the field?

The CHAIRMAN: In the last war as I understand it—you will correct me if I am wrong—the province of Saskatchewan had three representatives in the legislature, one from Canada—

Mr. McNIVEN: One from England and two from France. They were elected by the armed forces from Saskatchewan in those respective areas.

Mr. MACNICOL: Did they represent any particular seat?

Mr. McNIVEN: They created three new seats.

Mr. MACNICOL: In addition to the constitutional number?

Mr. McNIVEN: They were known as soldier representatives and sat by themselves in a particular area of the House.

The CHAIRMAN: You see, Mr. MacNicol, as pointed out by Mr. McCuaig, the provinces can do that without amendment. The only thing that worries me is that difficulty and the time element in obtaining the necessary authority. However, I will rule, Mr. Gillis, that it will be in order to have a discussion. I do so by reason of my interpretation of those few words in their broadest sense. I think we can have a discussion on it, but I have no hesitation in ruling that so far as recommending anything it is beyond the terms of the reference.

Mr. GILLIS: I do not want to waste any time in discussion if we cannot do anything about it. If it more properly comes under the Representation Act then this committee cannot change that Act and to carry on a discussion in this committee on the mechanics of that particular method of representation would be merely a waste of time if we cannot do something about it.

The CHAIRMAN: Well, suppose we do this, Mr. Gillis; suppose at the next meeting I will have Mr. Butcher prepare a memorandum on what it involves from the legal aspect and the difficulties and the problems surrounding that particular situation, then we can discuss that and make our decision in the light of that information.

Mr. MACNICOL: Will we discuss it before we go on with the business further?

The CHAIRMAN: Suppose we leave it to the next meeting to discuss that.

The Committee adjourned at 1.00 o'clock, p.m. sine die.