

Mr. C. P. Wright, of Wolfville, Nova Scotia.

Mr. Harry Butcher.

The case for Proportional Representation was fully and ably presented by Messrs. Hooper, Good and Wright and your Committee gave every consideration to their representations and suggestions but found that even in the minds of these outstanding proponents of the system there was a doubt as to its adaptability to the whole of the Dominion of Canada.

Your Committee were greatly impressed by the obvious sincerity of Messrs. Hooper, Good and Wright in their advocacy of the Proportional Representation System and their desire to see at least a start made in putting it into effect, but were not convinced that it would be wise for Parliament to adopt that system. It should, perhaps, be stated that these gentlemen recommended only the Hare system, which is one of the five most commonly used systems of Proportional Representation, of which more than three hundred have already been invented.

Your Committee feel indebted to Mr. Harry Butcher for the exhaustive and unbiased inquiry he has made into both the Proportional Representation System and the Alternative Vote in single-member constituencies and would especially refer to his concluding analysis in the minutes of the proceedings and evidence of May 12, 1936, in which he summed up the result of his study and investigation, which analysis is hereto attached as an appendix to this report.

Your Committee have given the most careful consideration to the views presented by Messrs. Hooper, Good and Wright, as well as to the analysis presented by Mr. Butcher, and, as a result, recommend that unless, and until, conclusive evidence can be adduced showing that the adoption of either or both of the systems in Canada would be conducive to good government, neither Proportional Representation nor the Alternative Vote in single-member constituencies should be adopted by the Parliament of Canada.

The Order of Reference respecting methods of effecting redistribution could not effectively be considered until Proportional Representation and the Alternative Vote were disposed of, and at this late date in the Session your Committee feels that it cannot give this important subject the study that is due it, and therefore recommends the reappointment of the Committee in the next Session of Parliament to complete the work on this reference.

Several meetings were devoted to the study of compulsory registration of voters and compulsory voting as well as to a consideration of suggested amendments to the Franchise and Election Acts, 1934, but your Committee believes that further investigation is necessary before reporting to Parliament thereon, and accordingly recommends that these subjects be again referred to the Committee at the next Session.

During the course of its deliberations your Committee heard four witnesses from British Columbia asking that the franchise be extended to Canadian citizens of Japanese origin; the brief filed by them is attached hereto and opens up a subject of wide and far-reaching importance on which much further evidence will have to be obtained before your Committee could make any findings with respect to the request made.

It is the unanimous opinion of your Committee that the study and assistance rendered by Mr. Butcher, Counsel to the Committee, Mr. Castonguay, the Chief Electoral Officer, and Colonel Thompson, the Franchise Commissioner, have been of invaluable service and recommends that they be requested to further study and analyse all suggestions made for the amendment of both the Franchise Act, 1934 and the Election Act, 1934, between now and the next Session with the object in view of being prepared at that time to give concrete and specific information on the value of each and every suggestion.