

## MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

TUESDAY, March 5, 1929.

The Special Committee appointed to consider the Dominion Elections Act met at 10.30 o'clock, the Chairman, Mr. C. G. Power, in the chair.

LOUIS L. PELLETIER, representing the Railway Transportation Brotherhoods, called.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, we have with us to-day Mr. Pelletier and Mr. Baker, representing the Railway Transportation Brotherhoods who have some recommendations to make with respect to advance polls under the Act. Mr. Pelletier, will you be kind enough to tell us what you desire to say on this subject?

The WITNESS: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee: It is not unpleasant to be before you, but we are not here of our own volition; we were directed to come before this committee with these amendments. Probably it would not do any harm to say that we collaborated with the General Returning Officer who framed the Act. It was an experiment at the time. Mr. O'Connor was then the General Returning Officer, and Mr. Meighen, the then Solicitor General, directed us to collaborate with Mr. O'Connor. It was understood at that time that experience probably would show that some amendment would be needed as time went on.

We are in this position, that we have received a great number of complaints from different parts of the Dominion on the working out of the Act, which I will briefly try to explain to you.

Section 102 *re* advance polls for railway employees, sailors and commercial travellers is as follows:

Subsection (8) to read:

(8) Advance Polls shall be open from the hours of two o'clock to five o'clock in the afternoon and from seven o'clock to ten o'clock in the evening of the three days, exclusive of Sunday, immediately preceding polling day.

This is practically a copy of the Ontario Act, which we find has worked very well. It is not necessary for me to enlarge on that.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. What is the change you propose?—A. The hours now are from 7 to 10 in the evening, and we propose to change the hours to from 2 to 5 in the afternoon and 7 to 10 in the evening of the three days, exclusive of Sunday, immediately preceding polling day. It is not necessary to accept our wording, but this will give you an indication of what we desire.

*By Mr. Senn:*

Q. At the present time it is only open in the evening?—A. Yes. I might explain to you, to save my doing it hereafter, that this affects railroad men more adversely than any other class of men, because they are working in what

[Mr. L. L. Pelletier.]