

After those results, the Commonwealth itself decided to have the Queensland system of compulsory enrolment and compulsory voting. I shall read from the debates in the Australian house for 1924, and I think the remarks of Senator Payne, who was introducing the compulsory voting bill, might be of interest:—

We should, I think, recognize that the natural corollory to compulsory enrolment is compulsory voting. . .

The reason he said that was because there was some opinion in the house that if only compulsory enrolment were introduced that would not be stepping up too far at once.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that the situation in New Zealand?

Mr. MACNICOL: No, this is in Australia. I do not think they have these things in New Zealand. New Zealand has not adopted much if any of the Australian systems of voting or methods of conducting elections. I shall read again what Senator Payne said:—

We should, I think, recognize that the natural corollory to compulsory enrolment is compulsory voting. Compulsory enrolment has failed to cause a great number of electors to take an interest in public questions. . .

In other words, the enrolment itself did not bring about the results they hoped for and, therefore, Senator Payne advocated adopting both:—

. . . Compulsory enrolment enables our rolls to be as complete as possible but there can be no advantage to the country if the electors who are compulsorily enrolled do not exercise their right on election day.

Now, in addition to Federal Australia, I think we should have something on what the states in Australia did with reference to compulsory voting and compulsory enrolment. As I said, Queensland adopted it in 1915 and the Australian house in 1924. Victoria was the next state to adopt it, in 1927. Tasmania followed in 1928, and New South Wales followed in 1930. At the moment a bill is going through the Victoria State senate—it is perhaps through now—to enforce compulsory voting for State senate elections in Victoria as well as in the State house elections.

Hon. Mr. STEVENS: That is the state elections?

Mr. MACNICOL: As a matter of fact, they have it for the house elections, and now the senate is going to follow suit. One of the arguments put up by one of the advocates for compulsory voting for the senate in Victoria was contained in these figures. He said that in 1928 the electorate of Victoria voting in the state senate elections, voted only 32 per cent; in 1931, 39 per cent and in 1934, 29½ per cent; so that the committee will understand that Australia, apparently, had some very strong reason for adopting both of these compulsory systems.

Mr. Butcher gave us information in reference to 1925, 1928 and 1929 for both the Federal house and senate. By the way, Mr. Butcher, did you give figures for 1922?

WITNESS: No. Neither for the Senate nor the House of Representatives.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: Was there any suggestion made to explain the extraordinarily low percentage?

Mr. MACNICOL: None other than apathy.

Mr. HEAPS: What was the percentage in Australia about the same time?

Mr. MACNICOL: I am going to give that later on. In Australia, in the Federal election prior to 1925—that is the election of 1922, which was the last election held without either compulsory enrolment or compulsory voting—the percentage voting for the house was 59.36 and for the senate 57.95. Continuing