

an election. Why, after all this work has been once done, after the constituted authorities both of the cities and rural districts have prepared lists, not for any partisan purpose but for public use in connection with municipal matters, should all that work be duplicated at great cost to the State? It is a question whether the Government, in its desire for uniformity has not sacrificed considerations of even greater importance, namely, security, efficiency and economy.

My hon. friend said he was anxious to introduce a law which would be not only expeditious but also economical. At the last federal election this system of enumeration was adopted. Let me give to the House the figures on the cost of the last election compared with the cost of other general elections that have taken place in the Dominion. In this House on March 22, the hon. the Minister of Finance (Sir Henry Drayton) gave the following statement as to the cost of elections in the Dominion from 1896 to 1917. The figures were as follows:

1896	\$ 197,103 35
1900	232,911 20
1904	307,995 60
1908	391,960 32
1911	507,353 55
1917	1,678,139 99

Look at the enormous increase from \$507,353.55 in 1911 to \$1,678,139.99 in 1917.

When I saw those figures I thought that possibly the enormous cost had been due to the fact that they included the expenses of taking the soldiers' vote as well as the cost of enumeration of the voters' lists, and so I undertook to get the figures for those two groups separately—the cost of the election so far as the taking of the soldiers' vote was concerned, and the cost of the election in Canada apart from the soldiers' vote. Here are the figures, and I do not think they will be disputed. The cost of taking the soldiers' votes came to \$251,613.09. The total expenditure was \$1,678,139.99, making a cost, so far as Canada alone was concerned, of over \$1,400,000. Now that increase of cost is to be ascribed almost wholly to the adoption of this system of employing enumerators by the thousands, and paying them for duplicating work that has already been performed in large part, in the preparation of municipal lists. If there is one thing above another which at this time we have reason to be careful of, it is the matter of large expenditures in the administration of public business; if we can save a million dollars and at the same time give to the electors a greater sense of security when they

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

exercise the franchise than they otherwise would have, I think we are bound to do so. That is what I would urge upon my hon. friends opposite.

This legislation, as I read it, instead of seeking to confine the system of enumeration seeks to extend it. The Government in that particular is undoubtedly going in the wrong direction. The Government should seek to restrict the work of enumeration as much as possible, and so far as practicable take lists that are approved and accepted locally, or approved provincially. Those lists I contend should be used as largely as possible for the purposes of a general election.

Just one further word in reference to the two main provisions respecting voters' lists. In introducing the Bill my hon. friend said that where no provincial lists existed, the principle adopted by the Bill was, in urban municipalities, that of registration and, in rural municipalities, that of registration by way of enumeration. Urban municipalities are described in the Bill as cities, towns, and incorporated villages with populations of not less than 1,000. In such municipalities the principle of registration is very simple: All persons, male and female, will be required to register within the time prescribed by the Bill. When the registration period has expired appeals are permitted either by those whose names are not upon the lists, or against those whose names have been placed thereon. Those appeals, in all provinces where there are what we know as County Judges, are to such judges who are appointed revising officers. In provinces where there are District Judges, as opposed to County Judges, the appeals are to the District Judges.

Sir, there is one feature in this connection not mentioned by my hon. friend, to which I should like to draw the attention of the Government, and that is the time within which this work of preparing the lists is to be carried out. As I read the Bill, the preparation of the lists, either in the cities or in the rural districts, is not to be commenced until after the writ for the election has been issued. In other words, under this legislation as drafted, once the writ for an election is issued, at a time when candidates should be discussing the public questions on the different platforms, they will be beset from all sides by electors raising questions as to whether their names are or are not upon the lists, and as to how they can be put there. I think my hon. friends opposite need only to realize what