

C. G. MacNEIL, called and examined.

WITNESS: I may state very briefly the views of our association with regard to Proportional Representation. Our opinion in this matter was expressed first at the annual Dominion convention held at Vancouver, June 20th, in these terms:—

“That this association endorse the principle of proportional representation for the proper reflection of public opinion, and that the Prime Minister of Canada be requested to summon a Speaker’s Conference, similar to the one which met in Great Britain in 1917, to discuss this matter and report its findings to the House of Commons at the earliest possible date.”

The last annual convention re-affirmed this in this way:—

“Whereas it has been shown that the system of proportional representation is the only fair way that the true feeling of an election can be established;

“And whereas this has been fully demonstrated in other parts of the world;

Therefore, be it resolved that we, the Great War Veteran’s Association, in Dominion Convention assembled, thank the various local and Provincial Commands for the great interest shown on this important question, and re-affirm the stand of the Vancouver Convention, 1919,—that the Great War Veteran’s Association recommend the principles of election under the system of proportional representation in all elections in the Dominion of Canada, and that this recommendation and affirmation be forwarded to the proper authorities through our Dominion Command.”

I may say, sir, that subsequent to this expression on behalf of the Dominion body one provincial command after another has supported the idea in their relationship to their various provincial governments. In British Columbia, the British Columbia Provincial Convention has on several occasions expressed itself in favour of proportional representation; in many of the larger branches the system of proportional representation was followed in the election of officials of the branch, and the organizations of that province are active in pressing for the adoption of this principle in municipal elections within certain limits.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. Have you found the system in the election of your officers satisfactory?—A. Yes, wherever properly conducted. Saskatchewan, Ontario and Manitoba commands have also made representations to their various governments as being in favour of proportional representation, and our organization in Winnipeg was definitely interested in the matter, and following the observations made as the result of the experience at that time, they have re-affirmed their support of proportional representation. In the hearing which was held by the Ontario Government recently—

Q. Were they satisfied with the results of the Winnipeg elections?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. And they re-endorsed the principle?—A. Yes, sir. The Ontario Provincial Command has also made representations to the Ontario Government in support of this. I mention this to show that there is practically a unanimous support of the principle of proportional representation throughout the organization. We have never attempted at any time to go into the technical side of it. We arranged to have the subject fully explained by men who are experts, and the endorsement was quite cordial.

I may mention before leaving the stand, that there are two very important reasons why our association is supporting proportional representation. One is probably based on our policy. If I may have your permission, I would like to read from our declaration of policy as follows:

“That we pledge ourselves to the common service of our country, acknowledging no pre-eminence in our association, except devotion in the building up of our national life.

[Mr. C. G. MacNeil.]