

But I point out to the Government now so that they may take due notice of it, that if there is any endeavour to substitute a system of Dominion enumeration for the provincial lists which have been followed in accordance with the spirit of our constitution, the Government will have to give a pretty clear and satisfactory explanation before a measure of that kind will meet with the approval of the House and of the country. After the experience the country has had with Dominion enumerators, care will be taken before the freedom of our people is once again placed in the hands of the Administration for manipulation as it may see best by its own creatures. So much, Sir, in reference to the franchise and what it stands for.

I submit, Sir, that there is not a line in the foregoing statement which can be interpreted as meaning that in any way I have questioned the authority of this Parliament to pass a federal Act.

The only reference I made to provincial lists was to say that if the Government proposed to depart from the use of provincial lists and to extend the system of enumeration, the Government would have to give some very clear and satisfactory reason for so doing. I regret that my hon. friend, in his remarks, did not give us a satisfactory reason in that regard, but we shall doubtless have an opportunity as the debate goes on to have that particular point discussed.

What does the Bill propose?

According to the speech of the Acting Solicitor General when introducing the Bill:

In regard to the preparation of voters' lists, the principle adopted is that the existing lists in any province which are authorized by law for use in provincial elections shall be utilized in Dominion elections provided that they are not more than one year old or that not longer than twelve months has elapsed between the completion of such lists and the issue of a writ for the Dominion elections.

May I follow the example of my hon. friend and refer more particularly to Ontario. The voters' lists for Ontario were made up prior to the last provincial election in the month of November last year. The new Government that has come into power in Ontario has decided, to use the words of their own Attorney General, to scrap all the legislation that had to do with the system of enumeration. They have thought it well to do that because they believe that the system of enumeration does not give satisfaction, or lend confidence to any franchise law. But were we to have an election today on the last provincial list, what position would we be in? It has been disclosed since that list was prepared, to give only two examples, that in this very city—the city of Ottawa—some 8,000 names were left off, that the enumeration was so badly managed

that 8,000 electors in this city did not have their names on the lists although they were entitled to have them there and in the city of Toronto something like 25,000 names were left off.

Mr. MIDDLEBRO: Does my hon. friend not know that these names can be added?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I am quite aware that under this Bill these names can be added, but the point I wish to draw my hon. friend's attention to is that a system of enumeration which results in leaving off 8,000 names in one place and 25,000 in another at any particular election cannot be a satisfactory one. If such a thing happened on that occasion the same result is apt to happen at any other time, and in seeking to enact by Parliament a law that will be satisfactory and which will serve to give full expression to the people's will we should endeavour to avoid the possible dissatisfaction and limitations which have been so patent in the instances I have pointed out.

Sir GEORGE FOSTER: Such an error would not necessarily follow.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Let me draw my right hon. friend's attention to this. In the last provincial election, in addition to the election of members, there was a prohibition referendum. My right hon. friend, who is an old temperance advocate, knows very well that in that particular election there was an effort made on the part of those who were supporting temperance legislation to get names on the lists much greater than would have been the case had the referendum not been one of the features of that particular election. Instead of 8,000 names in one case and 25,000 in another having been left off the numbers would have been considerably greater. That they were not was due to the energy of the men and women who sought to have as many names as possible put upon the lists despite the system of enumeration that was followed. What we on this side advocate is that where you have organized districts in which lists are already prepared by the constituted authorities, these lists should be made the basis of the lists on which the election is to be held, and that if it is necessary to appoint enumerators to make up lists, the enumerators should begin with the lists that are already prepared and take these lists as a basis. If a man has been put on the municipal list by an assessor in a city or in a rural district, and his name is there, that should be sufficient to guarantee to him the right to a vote at