

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

HOUSE OF COMMONS, ROOM 429,

March 10, 1936.

Special committee appointed to study the Dominion Elections Act, 1934, and the amendments thereto, and the Dominion Franchise Act, 1934, and amendments thereto, met in room 429 at 11 a.m. Mr. Bothwell, the chairman, presiding.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, we have a quorum and if you come to order we shall proceed. I should like to mention a matter in connection with the evidence that was taken last day. During the proceedings last day the "point" system came up, and Mr. Stevens, you will remember, handed in a form of the "point" system as evolved by Messrs. W. L. Eddy and S. M. Spidell. I notice that in the proceedings at page 23 some objection was taken to it being printed at this time. The objection was raised by Mr. MacNicol. I am entirely in the hands of the committee in this regard. I think this is, possibly, a form of proportional representation, and we might want to have some evidence in that regard before us later on. If it is the desire of the committee we can have it printed as an appendix to the report of to-day's proceedings.

Mr. HEAPS: Mr. Chairman, if you are going to have forms of proportional representation entered into the proceedings, I think they should all go in and not one only.

Mr. McINTOSH: Where is this from?

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Stevens presented it.

Hon. Mr. STEVENS: Mr. Chairman, it is not quite correct to say it is a form of proportional representation; it is really a system in itself. I am not particular or dogmatically advocating it, but I certainly think it is entitled to consideration. One would almost think it was poison or something, judging from the comments. Why rule it out? My understanding of it was that it was to go in with the other records last session. I see no reason why there should be any objection to it. It is a rather interesting suggestion, and surely the committee is bound to consider the matter. I cannot conceive of any reason why it should be objected to.

Mr. HEAPS: I am not objecting; but I think the proper time for it to go into the proceedings would be when we have all the systems together, and have considered them one after another. I do not think we should put in one system now and another at some other time. That is not the proper way to do it, that is all.

Mr. McINTOSH: What difference would it make if what Mr. Stevens wishes to present is inserted in the proceedings now, rather than later. I do not see that it would make any difference. If you are going to put it in, let us know about it.

Mr. MacNICOL: What I had in mind, Mr. Chairman, was this: if a number of systems are to be considered it would be much better to consider them all at one time, and not interject any particular system at a time when the others are not being considered. I felt that impressions might be gathered if any particular system was interjected at any particular time that would not be gathered if all the systems were discussed on or about the same time.

Hon. Mr. STEVENS: We are discussing proportional representation and the transferable vote, and I do not know of any reason why there should be any objection to including this in the record for consideration at this time.