

become educated in regard to that system through a municipal election in which everything is mixed up?

The CHAIRMAN: Is it not the fact that the two systems voted upon were first practically the old system of electing 35 aldermen, the old ward system, and the second that of electing 15 members?

Mr. DENIS: In the city of Montreal they had a commission nominated by the Quebec Government consisting of five members I think, and there was a great deal of objection raised to that commission, and a great deal of prejudice, I believe. The people said, "Now we know what we got from that commission, and we are going to get rid of that commission. If you choose the system of dividing the city into three wards and electing in each five members, that would be just like any commission; they would control the city, and the people would be left out and would have no control, and when you want anything in your street or ward you will be neglected altogether." They said that the big interests would get control of the city because there would be only 15 members elected, five in each ward, and each ward has a population of 350,000 or 300,000. On the other hand, they said that if the people chose their aldermen in their own ward, they would know their aldermen and could go to them when they wanted anything. That was the kind of talk during the election in Montreal, and I know it because I am a voter in Montreal and the people voted against it. But it was no test at all, so far as proportional representation is concerned.

Mr. THOMSON: They were largely personal issues?

Mr. DENIS: Certainly.

Hon. Mr. CALDER: I was going to ask Mr. MacNeil if the issue was squarely placed before the people, so far as civic affairs was concerned, and the people turned it down by a good many votes, could Parliament impose upon these people for Federal purposes the issue of proportional representation? What is the situation in Vancouver, Mr. Crowe? Was proportional representation dropped there?

Mr. CROWE: Not yet. They have dropped it in Victoria, New Westminster, and Nelson.

Hon. Mr. CALDER: Well, we will take the case of Victoria. Victoria, apparently, has decided that the proportional representation system, so far as municipal elections are concerned, should be dropped. Would it be fair for us to impose proportional representation for Federal purposes upon that city in view of that fact?

The CHAIRMAN: I think that a Federal election and a municipal election are two entirely different things.

Hon. Mr. CALDER: What is the difference? They are seeking representatives in both cases?

The CHAIRMAN: In one case you have a party system, and in the other you have not, nor are there any principles involved, nor any great issue.

Mr. HAROLD: In connection with Mr. Calder's question, would it not be a good idea to consider the advisability of having a plebiscite at the time of a Federal election in the cities on the question of proportional representation as a forerunner to any decided action on the part of Parliament? That would seem to me to be an orderly way of going about it.

Mr. DAVIDSON: Could you not get on a little faster if we examined the witness?

*By Mr. Crowe:*

Q. You mentioned that your officers were elected by proportional representation? Did you mean in all your commands?—A. Not all of them. We are gradually educating them.

Q. That was only on the single alternative vote, not proportional representation. Whoever voted for the officers voted on the second or third choice?

[Mr. C. G. MacNeil.]