

of voting permits the elector to express his preferences beyond merely voting for one candidate.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that as there was no objection raised to this particular reform last year, and as I have not heard any objection, it is needless to spend further time upon the resolution at present, and we might have the question put.

Mr. MEIGHEN: May I ask whether the government has any policy upon this question?

Hon. W. S. FIELDING (Minister of Finance): The motion having been brought forward by a private member and not by the ministry, any member of the government is free to vote as he pleases on the subject. For myself I intend to vote for the motion of the hon. gentleman (Mr. Good). I may say that when this matter was debated last session the Prime Minister expressed his views upon it, giving his assurance of support of the motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: Shall the motion carry?

Some hon. MEMBERS: Carried.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Lost.

Motion agreed to.

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION IN MULTI-MEMBER CONSTITUENCIES

Mr. W. C. GOOD (Brant), moved:

Whereas the special committee on proportional representation appointed at the last session of the last parliament reported in favour of the adoption of the alternative vote method of election in all single member constituencies when more than two candidates were running for election, and also found much merit in the system of true proportional representation

And whereas the last general election has fully demonstrated the many serious anomalies of the existing electoral system;

And whereas this matter was debated at the last session of the present parliament but did not reach a vote;

And whereas the government has promised to submit a redistribution bill during the present session;

And whereas it is important that any desirable electoral reforms be adopted in conjunction with redistribution;

Therefore be it resolved,—

That in the opinion of this House, for the purpose of demonstrating the working and effects of the system of true proportional representation, one or more multi-member constituencies should be constituted by the redistribution legislation in which that system should be applied at the next general election.

He said: May I be permitted for a very few minutes to give a resumé of the case I presented last year, in view of the fact that there may be some members present now who have not read the debates in Hansard and who were not here last year?

I traced last year, first the history of the attention which had been given to this subject by this parliament from the time when the late Hon. Mr. Monk introduced it on the 15th March, 1909, up to the time at which I spoke, covering a number of cases when this matter was submitted to and debated by this House and action taken thereon. Without mentioning all of the cases which I mentioned last year, I would like to draw attention to the fact that in 1921 a committee was appointed to consider this matter, which committee reported quite late in the session of 1921, too late for anything to be done during that session.

Now, as the House has already adopted the first recommendation of that committee, I wish to deal with the other question presented to it. I pointed out last year that, having adopted the alternative vote method, we would not necessarily get very far towards a true representation, and I instanced a number of cases under the old system which showed how difficult it was either with the voting method we have followed in the past, or with the alternative vote method, to secure a true representation. May I briefly enumerate the cases which I presented to the House last year in that connection? They were: Nova Scotia federal election of 1904; British Columbia federal election of 1911; Dominion federal election of 1896; Manitoba provincial election of 1914; Dominion federal election of 1908; Dominion federal election of 1911; British elections of 1918; Transvaal elections of 1914; Ontario provincial elections of 1919; Alberta election of 1921; New York aldermanic elections of 1921.

I then proceeded to make a somewhat exhaustive analysis of the last Canadian general election and gave a very large number of facts in that connection. Next I pointed out—illustrating this point by referring to the Canadian federal elections of 1908 and 1911—the way in which the pendulum swung from one extreme to another, with a very small change in popular vote; and in that connection I pointed out that in 1911 a majority of 47 representatives could have been wiped out by a change in the popular vote of less than 3,000. So there is a great deal to support the statement that under the old system the result of our elections was pretty much of a political gamble. I pointed out, next, the very remarkable accuracy in representation which occurs under the system of proportional voting, referring in that connection to the Tasmanian elections of 1909, 1912, 1916 and 1919; the Belgian elections of 1908; the Finland elections of 1909; the New South Wales' elec-