

Mr. DEAKIN : The new Conference may, if it likes, say yes, we agree, Canada may have a vote; and then go on to consider a tiny colony of some other Power, giving it a vote and placing it on an equality with Canada. I am taking a most exaggerated contrast. Is that possible?

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Mr. BUXTON : Certainly.

Mr. DEAKIN : That is to say, there is no standard fixed below which there shall be no vote.

Mr. BUXTON : Except that under the Postal Union, the theory and practice has been that votes are all allotted to important Colonies.

Mr. BABINGTON SMITH : It is a matter for the Conference to decide. As a matter of fact, under the Postal Union some of the other countries which have colonies have a certain number of votes for them. France, for instance, which has colonial possessions of considerable importance, has, I think, three colonial votes. Germany has two; Portugal, has two; Holland, has two; and the other countries which have small colonies have most of them one vote.

Mr. DEAKIN : Then there is no real proportion?

Mr. BABINGTON SMITH : There is no precise proportion as to the importance of the Colony; but, as a matter of fact, I think Sir Joseph Ward will agree that the system has not worked unsatisfactorily for us.

Sir JOSEPH WARD : That is so.

Mr. BABINGTON SMITH : With the additional vote obtained for New Zealand at the last Conference, I think the allotment of votes is satisfactory from the point of view of the British Empire.

Sir JOSEPH WARD : I think it is satisfactory for this reason. There is no getting over the general position in the world at large, which forms the Postal Union, that the great majority of the representatives are outside the British Dominions. At the Postal Conference we had quite a fight to get one extra vote for a British Colony—that is, New Zealand—and at the same time to get South Africa put in the position of having a direct vote. On the matter of voting I do not think we can improve upon that of the Postal Conference, which has worked satisfactorily. The great majority of the contributors to the Postal Union are Continental people and they outnumber us, and until we get into the position of having other great Colonies in addition to those we have already, which has grown to manhood, the odds are 50 to 1 that we will not get an increase in the representation we have now. As long as we have the assurance from Mr. Buxton that every effort to get the maximum of votes to be used in the interest of Great Britain and her Colonies at the next wireless telegraphy conference I think we have nothing to complain of. Although I know you cannot control it, it comes back to the Conference to say whether or not those votes are to be exercised.

Mr. BUXTON : I meant, we have the precedent of the Postal Union in which we have these votes, and I have little doubt from the knowledge which one has acquired with reference to the working of these international conventions and conferences, that they would see the reasonableness of our proposal to put wireless telegraphy on the same basis as the Postal Union, and we should obtain those votes. I cannot guarantee it. Though we