

Senator MACDONALD (*Brantford*): I have the wording here. It reads:

In the electoral district of Northwest Territories the returning officer, with the written authorization of the Chief Electoral Officer, may appoint more than one election clerk and establish, if necessary, an office in each locality designated by the Chief Electoral Officer, and may delegate, in writing, to any such election clerk appointed his powers of selecting and appointing enumerators and deputy returning officers and of selecting polling places.

Senator BRUNT: Is that in the bill?

Senator MACDONALD (*Brantford*): It was in the original bill.

Mr. NIELSEN: That was in clause 4 of the bill before it was amended by the House of Commons.

Senator MACDONALD (*Brantford*): My point is that we are merely trying to work this thing out and my recollection is that after the bill had been debated in the House of Commons for several days they all felt that the clause I have read was not necessary in order to make this bill effective.

Senator HNATYSHYN: It still leaves the Chief Electoral Officer with the same power.

Senator MACDONALD (*Brantford*): But he could not appoint the necessary clerks.

Senator HNATYSHYN: But he has one clerk.

Senator MACDONALD (*Brantford*): No, but he couldn't appoint selecting and appointing enumerators.

Mr. NIELSEN: With deference, again, might I make another attempt to explain this. If you pass this bill the returning officer for the district of Mackenzie will be the returning officer for the Northwest Territories electoral district, and he will have the power to appoint one clerk, which he already has under the Canada Elections Act, but clause 4 was added because I felt, as did the Chief Electoral Officer, that it would greatly assist in conducting the election if he had the power to appoint more than one clerk so that he could set up an office in the Keewatin District and perhaps another one in the Franklin District. The returning officer in the Mackenzie District not only has the power to appoint one clerk but also the power to appoint all his deputy returning officers, who in turn have the power to appoint their own polling clerks. This power already exists in the Canada Elections Act, but what was sought by clause 4 was to increase the power of the returning officer so that he could appoint more than one clerk. He already has the power to appoint one clerk and what was wanted was the power to appoint more than one clerk and to delegate the powers to that clerk to set up polling divisions. Right now there is no power of delegation and the returning officer must set up all his polls, and so on. Clause 4 sought to delegate that power to a clerk in these more remote areas.

There was one other point I wanted to deal with and that was the reason for knocking out clause 4, for if we want to buy the principle that the returning officer would have the power to appoint more than one clerk, then such other clerk or clerks would be salaried individuals and therefore would have to be paid over and above the existing authorized payments under the Canada Elections Act. This offended against the principle of a private member introducing a money bill, and that is why section 4 was knocked out. But it is not absolutely essential that this power to appoint another clerk be there because the election could be run with one clerk. It would delay the vote and probably result in a more inefficient poll and there is no doubt at all that it is desirable for the returning officer, with the approval of the Chief Electoral Officer, to appoint another clerk or clerks and delegate to them those powers now held by the deputy returning officers.