

By Mr. Heaps:

Q. What percentage of the electorate of Australia voted at the last election?
—A. 95 per cent.

Q. That compares with what?—A. With 70 per cent when compulsory voting was first introduced.

Q. What did we have here in our last election?—A. Within a few points of 75 per cent.

By Mr. Turgeon:

Q. There is one thing, Mr. Chairman, that strikes me in connection with Mr. Butcher's exposition of the Australian law, particularly registration; they have a complete corps of trained officials, and I suppose they are fairly highly paid, whose sole duty practically is to put persons names on the list. How about the fellow whom they inadvertently leave off the list, and who because of that becomes an offender against the law; if he does not know that he has been left off the list has he any way in which he can take action to protect himself when he finds out that he has been left off?—A. The point is that he is under a duty to register. He does not need to require information as to whether he has been left off or not.

By the Chairman:

Q. Are these lists posted up so that a man can find out whether his name is on it or not?—A. They would only have to apply anywhere for registration, they do not need to see whether their names are on the list or not.

Mr. GLEN: It is the business of the voter to get on the list.

Mr. FACTOR: If qualified to vote a man must register.

WITNESS: He must register within 21 days of becoming qualified.

Mr. HEAPS: The cost in Australia seems surprising to me. I was under the impression that compulsory registration and compulsory voting would have the effect of reducing the cost of an election rather than increasing it.

Hon. Mr. STEVENS: We are overlooking one thing, and that is that this includes the census.

WITNESS: The census, and state elections.

By Hon. Mr. Stevens:

Q. They include the census?—A. And state elections.

Q. Their figures include enrolment, census and election expenses, and the cost of elections with respect to four state governments; if we were to include our provinces, and all referendums, if you were to take a ten year period I think you would find that there would not be much difference, but there would be some?—A. There would be some difference.

By Mr. Heaps:

Q. In Australia they have a permanent list continuously available?—A. Yes.

Q. I do not know whether we in this country could work in harmony with the provinces in having a list issued suitable for both provincial and federal elections. I hardly think we could, which would mean that we would have to provide our own electoral lists; and I think if we would have say registration a month or two months before an election, which would become compulsory voting—I am not committing myself to the principle but just speaking in a general way—if we had that I think that our actual cost would probably be less than it is at the present time?—A. I should have mentioned that to a great extent the Commonwealth and state polling divisions correspond in area.

[Mr. Harry Butcher.]