

registration certificate, the committee decided that such should not generally be necessary. I suggested yesterday, and I repeat, that in order to close the door against the possibility of any wrongdoing, or any general wrongdoing, being committed under this section, all who desire to vote and whose names are not on the voters' list should be required to produce their national registration certificates before the poll clerk or the returning officer. Many abuses which might otherwise arise under this section would thereby be avoided to a great extent. I trust the minister will see fit to consent to an amendment to this section, making it a prerequisite that those whose names are not on the voters' list shall be required to produce their national registration certificates before being granted the right to vote.

Mr. McLARTY: I thank the hon. member for Lake Centre for having called this matter to my attention earlier in the evening. I stated that I thought that when we came to section 7 the suggestion which had been made to this committee, namely, that those who had to be vouched for should produce registration certificates, would be a commendable proposal. I do believe, however, that we would be wise to limit the provision to urban centres, that is, where the population is over 3,500. I do not need to repeat the argument which was advanced by the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggar as to the rural areas. I suggest:

That section 7, subsection (2), be amended by adding, after the word "oath" in subparagraph (b), the word "and", and by adding another clause as follows:

(c) in urban polling divisions only upon producing for inspection the registration certificate issued to such person under the National Registration Regulations, 1940.

I would ask the Minister of Agriculture if he would be good enough to move that.

Mr. GARDINER: I so move.

Mr. CHURCH: This is a most dangerous innovation to have in any plebiscite or elections act. It was tried in New York state a few years ago and led to all kinds of impersonation and intimidation, especially among voters who had been only a short time in the country, some of whom could neither read nor write. The section is one that should never be in the act. In the first place, there is nothing to prevent a voter from voting in every riding in Toronto, going from one riding to another, as long as he can find a man who knows him and vouches for him, taking an affidavit or making a declaration. We know what that means. The returning officer has no jurisdiction. I have never seen

such a thing in any elections act. The registration card is required in municipal elections; otherwise you cannot vote. As I say, I have never seen such a provision in any elections act and I have read a great many statutes.

Mr. McLARTY: I wonder whether the hon. member just heard the amendment that was moved. If they are vouched for in urban areas, they will have to produce registration cards.

Mr. CHURCH: Even admitting what the minister says, the principle is all wrong, of having such a clause in an elections act. It will lead to all sorts of confusion and it is an innovation that should not be allowed in any British legislature. Any man who has not been living in a polling subdivision for more time than this is not entitled to vote. Taking into account those who are on relief and those who are away, besides those who have moved out of the subdivision, I suggest that this provision should not be allowed. It is not allowed in connection with voting on property rights. Why should it be inserted in such a measure as this? It is beyond my understanding. I suggest that it is a grave mistake for this legislature to adopt such a principle.

Mr. MacNICOL: Before section 7 passes, I should like the minister to tell the committee why the present elections act has been departed from in this particular as applied to the cities. I understand that in the rural areas if an elector is off the voters' list he can be vouched for by someone who is on the list, which I presume would conform to paragraph (a) of section 2. But I do not know of any elections act which allows a man not on the voters' list to be given a ballot on taking the appropriate oath himself. I do not know what the appropriate oath is. There is some merit in section 7, because it does provide for folks who are left off the list. In the recent York South by-election there were thousands who were left off the list, whole streets, whole apartment houses, and the residents there were not able to vote. Perhaps it should have been their duty to see that they were on the list. Had they done so, the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation candidate might have been defeated. However, one cannot tell how people would have voted. The hon. member interrupts me, but he does not know. He got 10,000 to 12,000 Liberal votes and that is why he is here, but he will not get them in a general election. I may say, Mr. Chairman, I am a little fed up with having it said that York South voted C.C.F. It did not; it voted Liberal plus C.C.F. However, coming back to the question, I would ask the minister why the regular urban qualifications of voters have been abandoned in this section.