

Voting Rules under which public servants stationed outside Canada, as well as members of the Armed Forces serving in or outside Canada are now able to vote, were authorized by Parliament on June 26, 1970. Forces personnel had previously voted under the Canadian Forces Act. First voting under that legislation took place in August 1942, when some 500,000 ballots were cast by Canadian servicemen.

DND-EXTERNAL CO-OPERATION

The responsibility for co-ordination of Public Service voting abroad, which belongs to the Department of External Affairs, is decentralized for control and administration to each head of post abroad. While voting is concentrated at 105 posts, there are 129 voting places established to facilitate convenience in voting. Canadian Armed Forces voters serving at posts cast their ballots with other Public Service employees. However, public servants serving at detached locations cast their ballots at the voting place of a Canadian Forces unit if it was more convenient.

FIRST VOTE

Because of its being closest to the International Date Line, on Monday October 16 (local time), the Canadian High Commissioner's office in Wellington, New Zealand, was the first post to open its voting station. The honour of casting the first Canadian Public Service ballot overseas went to Mrs. Charles V. Svoboda, wife of the First Secretary at Wellington. She had become a Canadian citizen in 1971 and was exercising her franchise for the first time.

ROLE OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

The designation of the Department of External Affairs as a co-ordinator for the Public Service vote under the special voting rules has gained several advantages for the Chief Electoral Office: Through Departmental expertise, voting materials were shipped by the special returning officers to posts in 83 countries for distribution to 129 voting places. All shipments were delivered to the 105 posts before voting day, October 16. Despite the shortage of time (five days), the Department's telecommunications system made it possible to distribute to all posts by cable the appropriate official nomination lists of the candidates participating in the various ridings before voting began at posts. Finally, the Department's courier service was used to return ballots to the special returning officers from posts round the world so they would arrive before 9 a.m. on October 25, when tabulation started.

Dr. S.M. Lesley, a biochemist on the staff of the Department of Agriculture, who is undertaking research work at a Sugar Experimental Station in Hawaii, had probably the most unusual voting experience of all Public Service voters abroad; he and his wife and their 18-year-old son cast their ballots aboard the Canadian training submarine HMCS *Rain-*

bow after it docked at Pearl Harbour during the morning of October 16. They voted with the ship's company of ten officers and 80 men, and two DND liaison officers resident at Pearl Harbour. The ballots were returned to the special returning officer at Ottawa by the courier returning the ballots of members of the Public Service and the Forces serving in Australia. The ballots were delivered to the courier when his commercial aircraft refueled last week at Honolulu.

ALLEGED AUTO BRAKE DEFECTS

On October 6, Transport Minister Don Jamieson announced that an investigation had been launched into the alleged brake defects on 1971-72 Datsun sports cars, model 240-Z.

Except for public allegations made by a Montreal-based consumer association, the Ministry of Transport does not have sufficient evidence to support the allegations that the 1971-72 models of this sports car have defective brakes.

The Montreal association advised the Ministry of Transport that it had in its possession letters alleging that this model of car had faulty brakes.

The Ministry of Transport has asked the general public and concerned organizations to advise the Road and Motor Vehicle Traffic Safety Branch of safety problems related to any vehicle. Insofar as the serious allegations of the brake defects on the Datsun sports car Model 240-Z, 1971-72, are concerned, the partial information that has been provided to the Ministry by the association is now under investigation.

Since the formation of the Road and Motor Vehicle Traffic Safety Branch in January 1969, the Ministry of Transport has been instrumental in having thousands of cars re-called for the correction of defects related to safety.

HOUSING IN SEPTEMBER

Preliminary data released by Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation show that housing starts increased in September to a seasonally-adjusted annual rate of 264,400 units, compared to the August rate of 249,700. The September starts brought the third quarter rate to 255,600 units, compared to 262,300 and 256,800 units for the first and second quarters respectively.

Actual starts in urban areas totalled 20,276, bringing the cumulative urban starts to 151,015 units at the end of September. When allowance is made for boundary changes introduced following the 1971 census it is estimated that, for the first three quarters of 1972, urban starts were 9 percent higher than they were in the corresponding period last year. Single-family cumulative starts were up by about 25 per cent, while multiple dwellings showed an increase of about 1 per cent.