

to get to the revising office, which is not accessible in urban centres to most of the people? Does that not cause great difficulty?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: I do not know that I will go along with the word "accessible".

Mr. RICHARD (*Ottawa East*): But the distance?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: Yes. In the Canada Elections Act there is a provision which provides for another elector to act as the agent of an elector who is not on the list. If anyone is not able to go to the revisal office, his agent may go on his behalf. It is used a great deal.

Mr. PICKERSGILL: Do these agents have to be authorized?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: Not necessarily. The qualification for agent is just that he be a qualified elector of that whole electoral district.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any further comments on 23?

Mr. PICKERSGILL: Why does he have to be an elector?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: That is one of the qualifications put in by parliament. I would imagine it is part of the basic safeguards that are now provided in the Canada Elections Act in respect of local knowledge.

Mr. PICKERSGILL: I am thinking that someone eighteen years of age is just as competent to put somebody else's name on the voters' list as is somebody aged 21. I think they should be persons resident in the district but not necessarily an elector.

Mr. RICHARD (*Ottawa East*): The agent's name is already on the list. I think it saves a lot of trouble in establishing that a man is a resident of the district if his name is on the electors' list.

Mr. HOWARD: There is a proposed change in the form which is required when an agent puts a person's name on the list. I wonder if we might not have this discussion as to residence of the qualified voter under that particular section. It is form 17.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that agreeable?

Agreed.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you any comment, Mr. Castonguay on the next section?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: Mr. Chairman, the Canada Elections Act now prescribes that an election officer must be an elector of the electoral district. However, the forms of oath of office on appointment do not require he take an oath to that effect. In the electoral district of St. Paul's, in the 1958 general election, more than 80 polling divisions were enumerated by persons who were not electors of the electoral district.

I ordered an inquiry to be held. Mr. Justice McRuer recommended that if the principle of an election officer being an elector is of sufficient importance, then to facilitate the work of the returning officer and to facilitate administration of the act, it would be advisable to require that the election officer take an oath to the effect that he is qualified as an elector in the electoral district.

Mr. BELL (*Carleton*): The language of the report of Chief Justice McRuer is rather interesting. He starts off: If the residential requirement of the enumerator is of substantial importance the oath of office should be established. After he made a very detailed investigation he seemed to have some doubt as to whether or not there was substantial importance to this. Would you outline what you think is the substantial importance of the residential requirement?

Mr. CASTONGUAY: My own view of the substantial importance is that the safeguards provided in the Canada Elections Act mostly are on local knowledge.