

*Canada Elections Act*

time but who has now been living in Montreal with his family for some 25 years, is still entitled to vote in Portneuf.

Worse still, in the last election, he was being treated in an Ontario hospital and was approached by another soldier who went to his bedside to make him vote for a Portneuf candidate. There was no witness in the patient's room. It was the month of June. It is recalled that the weather was beautiful, which explains why the witnesses waited out in the street. You have there as many opportunities for manipulation. Even in a hospital bed, one could already "play" with those famous ballots.

Now, as ridiculous as it may seem, the most deserving citizens are beyond the reach of publicity in national elections. The ordinary citizen assumes his responsibilities of full citizen through his franchise, by participating in public affairs, the economic activity of his country, but soldiers are not entitled to see their name on the list of electors.

In the summary of the main amendments published on page 7419 of *Hansard* for May 27, we read the following in item 61:

A candidate or his accredited representative will be authorized to inspect, in the office of the returning officer, the list of Canadian Forces and Public Service electors, entitled to vote under the Special Voting Rules...and make extracts therefrom—

Yet, item 62, at page 7420 of *Hansard* for the same day, reads as follows:

The list of Canadian Forces electors prepared by each commanding officer is no longer open for inspection by candidates or their representatives—

• (4:50 p.m.)

So those lists are prepared by commanding officers. From now on, they will not be open for inspection.

Under items 61 and 62, of the Summary of the main amendments, should I, at the time of the next election, ask the returning officer for my constituency to examine that secret or semi-secret list of electors, and make extracts therefrom that could eventually prove me right, the returning officer could refuse my request by resorting to item 62 and deny me a privilege granted under item 61, to know the electors in my constituency.

Is it not legitimate for an out-going member to know the electors of his constituency, even before the election, especially in the case of those who have enough courage to expatriate themselves in order to defend their fellow-citizens, their member of Parliament and their minister? If so, why not say it exactly, without hiding anything?

[Mr. Godin.]

Mr. Speaker, I call for the deletion of item 62, in which the broader provision included in item 61 is cancelled concerning the list of Canadian Forces electors.

I also request that the list of Canadian Forces electors be given the same publicity as those of residing electors in a constituency where a general or by-election is held.

I leave the drafting of the motion to that effect to the efficient staff of the House of Commons.

I hope that the government members also consider the possibility of introducing an amendment to Bill C-215, in order to make the carrying of the identification card compulsory. Other countries have such a card. We would just have to imitate them. Unfortunately, we choose to imitate others even when they do wrong. The time has come now I think to imitate them when they do something right.

In short here are my suggestion. First, I do agree with the reduction of the voting age to 18. Whether we admit it or not, a lot has been asked in the past of our young people. It is the young people in general who have cleared our land. In fact, they cleared the Abitibi area for instance. Some years ago young people went abroad to defend Canada and today again young people are expecting a lot from us who have nothing now to offer them. We offer them to clear the land and to build Canada. We ask them to defend their country in times of war but in times of peace we have nothing to offer them.

I know the young people and I know that they lack patience. If, being older, we tolerate a policy of trial and error on the part of governments, I know that those under 20 will not accept it for very long. By extending to them the right to vote, we are simply giving them the opportunity to make known their wishes and to compel the government to act.

Furthermore, as I said before, contributions to electoral funds should be made known to the public.

The list of electors in the armed forces should also be revealed to the public and finally a compulsory identification card should be carried at all times. If we want to increase the confidence of the Canadian people in our parliamentary institutions, we will have to do everything possible to avoid fraud with regard to the exercise of the franchise. Studies have already been carried out in that respect. Time has come to discuss them and to effect the required changes since honest elections are the basis for a just society.