

subject matter be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections. If the House is willing to accept that proposal, I shall put the question. Is it agreed that I put the question?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** It is agreed that the hon. member for Cochrane shall have leave of the House to delete the financial provisions from the 38 bills standing on the Order Paper in his name and, by consent, to propose that the subject matter of those bills as amended stands referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections?

**Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, there will be unanimous agreement. However, I must say that while I appreciate the value of sending these particular bills to a committee, just as many excellent bills and motions have been introduced by hon. members on this side of the House. There must be an understanding that the full potential of the talent and knowledge which lies on this side of the House must be utilized, and that bills prepared by this party and by my friends to the left will also be considered. I hope in this regard there will be that degree of consultation which, when it takes place, makes this House move so smoothly and efficiently.

**Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, we are prepared to agree to the suggestion made from the Chair, namely, that these 38 bills have the necessary correction made to them and that the subject matter thereof be referred to the Standing Committee that has been indicated. I join the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) in the sentiments he has expressed. It seems to me that if we are prepared to send 38 bills which are improperly drawn to a committee, we ought to be prepared to send to a committee some of our bills which have been properly drawn.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent to the proposal which the Chair has put?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** In fulfilment of that order of the House, the bills affected will be removed from the Order Paper. The bills to be amended and the subject matter thereof to be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections are as follows: C-7, C-10, C-11, C-17, C-18, C-29, C-31, C-35, C-37, C-43, C-48, C-57, C-58, C-60, C-74, C-78, C-79, C-80, C-81, C-84, C-89, C-91, C-92, C-98, C-114, C-116, C-119, C-122, C-123, C-126, C-142, C-145, C-147, C-152, C-153, C-154, C-160 and C-164.

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## CANADA ELECTIONS ACT

### QUALIFICATIONS OF ELECTORS AND CANDIDATES

On the order:

Second reading and reference to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections of Bill C-12, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (qualifications of electors and candidates) —Mr. Stewart (Cochrane).

23568—3

### Disclosure of Government Information

**Mr. Stewart (Cochrane):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I should like to suggest that this bill be removed from the Order Paper. It was placed there in error, having been debated during the last session and the Canada Elections Act having been changed accordingly. Therefore, the motion no longer has any meaning.

I should like to express my appreciation to the Chair for arriving at a solution regarding the bills standing in my name. I also express my appreciation to the House for agreeing to send them to the committee.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member for Cochrane has requested that the bill referred to be dropped from the Order Paper. Is it agreed?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

Order discharged and bill withdrawn.

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## GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

### PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF ADMINISTRATIVE DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION

**Mr. Barry Mather (Surrey)** moved that Bill C-15, to better assure the public's rights to freedom of access to public documents and information about government administration (administrative disclosure), be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs.

He said: Mr. Speaker, this is the third time this bill has come up during recent years. I am hopeful that the third time will be lucky not only so far as the bill is concerned but also so far as the public is concerned. In brief, as outlined in the explanatory note, this bill is in aid of the public's right to know in what manner a government is administering the public duties entrusted and delegated to it by the people: save for exceptions that are in the public interest, the bill enacts Bentham's basic parliamentary rule that public affairs must be conducted publicly. The bill would seek to do that—I quote from clause 1—by requiring the following:

Every administrative or ministerial commission, power and authority shall make its records and information concerning its doings available to any person at his request in reasonable manner and time.

• (4:10 p.m.)

There would be certain exceptions to that principle: those records affecting national security, those affecting or concerning matters that are exempted from disclosure by statute, those concerning trade secrets, commercial and financial matters of a privileged or confidential nature obtained from private persons and, finally, those that concern any private matter of private interest to the degree that the right to personal privacy excludes the public interest.

The measure puts into words, which I hope will some day become law, the basic parliamentary democratic principle that public affairs must be conducted publicly. It seems to me rather incongruous that according to