

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: The Bill as first introduced is probably on our files, but I doubt if it has been distributed as reprinted. It is quite voluminous. I inquired as to the consensus of opinion in the other Chamber on this Bill, and was told that it contains no controversial matter. There was a vote on the question of the period between nomination and polling. Formerly this was 7 days, but a few years ago it was made 14 days, but I understand that by this Bill it has been changed again to 7 days.

Right Hon. Sir GEORGE E. FOSTER: Surely that is torture sufficient.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I would think so, though I have never ascended to that Calvary.

The motion was agreed to, and the Bill was read the second time.

CONSIDERED IN COMMITTEE

On motion of Hon. Mr. Dandurand, the Senate went into Committee on the Bill.

Hon. Mr. Beaubien in the Chair.

Sections 1 and 2 were agreed to.

On section 3—appointment of returning officers.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: I move to strike out, in the sixth line of subsection 22, the words "for one year" and substitute the words "during pleasure." This subsection makes provision for the appointment of returning officers, and contains the following words:

Every person so appointed shall hold office for one year, and notice of his appointment shall be given immediately in the Canada Gazette.

This is a new departure. Why a returning officer should be appointed for a year I cannot appreciate. I fancy that it will involve a very substantial additional expense, because even if the returning officer is paid by fees he will expect those fees to run for a year in some way or other. But my principal objection is that if the Government which appoints the returning officer should be defeated, the incoming Government will be in the hands of the Philistines; that is to say, their by-elections will be under the returning officers appointed by their opponents. Now, that is not playing the game. I move, therefore, that the words "for one year" be struck out and the words "during pleasure" be substituted therefore.

Hon. Mr. REID: I also would like to see a little change in the same clause.

Right Hon. Sir GEORGE FOSTER.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I would remind my honourable friends that we must deal tenderly with this Bill, because it is not within our province.

Hon. Mr. REID: I do not think the suggestion I am going to make would be objectionable; it is to change "Secretary of State" to "Governor in Council." The Secretary of State of course makes the recommendation to Council.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: You would need rather to say, "the Governor in Council upon the recommendation of the Secretary of State".

Hon. Mr. REID: Yes.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: This gives extraordinary powers to the Secretary of State.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I will ask that this clause be suspended while I proceed to the other House to inquire about it.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: So that my honourable friend may not be perturbed. I may inform him that I am proposing this at the instance of certain members of the Commons.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I must remind my honourable friend that I have the sole right here to speak for the Commons.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: For one side of the Commons.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I bring to this Chamber the work of the Commons. It is supposed to be the work of a unanimous Commons.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: This happens to be the work of one side of the Commons—the side to the right of the Speaker.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I would ask the honourable gentleman to desist from moving his amendment. I do not think the Senate should intervene in the details of a Bill concerning particularly the House of Commons, except in a case in which there would be a gross miscarriage of justice. For that reason I will move that after the word "required" in the second line, the following words be added: "the Governor in Council upon the recommendation of" and, in the sixth line, that the words "one year" be stricken out and be replaced by the words "during pleasure."

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: That is very nice.