

must come before Parliament at every session and present a report within 10 days after the convening of the session. I was told that we would have a session, God knows when, some time in the future, at which time the Chief Electoral Officer would be presenting certain recommendations. My argument at the time which, I think, would support the argument of the Hon. Member for Esquimalt-Saanich, was that we indeed did pass a Constitution not a year ago, a resolution adopted by the House. I want to read Article 3 of the Constitution for the Hon. Member because I think it would be very useful in his debate. Article 3 states:

Every citizen of Canada has the right to vote in an election of members of the House of Commons or of a legislative assembly and to be qualified for membership therein.

In my opinion, that includes those who are physically handicapped, those who are disabled or temporarily in shut-in situations, perhaps as the result of an accident, in a hospital or otherwise. To me, every Canadian, whether he works abroad or is travelling abroad, should also have the right to vote. If I understand it correctly, the idea of a mobile polling station is one which should be seriously considered by the Chief Electoral Officer in areas such as the base at Lahr, where a substantial number of Canadians are working for us who are not eligible to vote at this time because they are not members of the regular Forces or teachers on the base, but are perhaps working in administration or as doctors. A cousin of mine is in charge of radio broadcasting there. He cannot vote, nor can his wife and children.

I find it disgraceful that in a country in which we passed our Constitution less than a year ago, there are still situations where Canadians working for our own Government would not be able to vote if a general election were to be called, and would be disenfranchised because they are outside the country.

I want to congratulate the Hon. Member for Esquimalt-Saanich on his success with the Bill. I agree with the Parliamentary Secretary that it should go to committee. I would hope that he would use the argument that it is a constitutional right. It is one which we have earned and is to be followed and obeyed. He should also present argument concerning the costs involved. If the Committee is to argue costs, for God's sake, let us be frank. Not very many expenditures will be involved, although I know someone will raise it because it was raised before. I am sure the Hon. Member can get around that by saying that we are not adding any extraordinary costs to the process.

Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Not \$200 million anyway.

Mr. Gauthier: We are just giving more Canadians, all Canadians, a basic democratic right to vote in any federal election.

Mr. Laverne Lewycky (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to say a few words about some of my concerns about Bill C-518. I am definitely very supportive of this particular Bill. It is time we did introduce the measures which are espoused in the Bill. There are already some similar

examples in Canada. I am referring to the fact that Manitoba is the leading light in the matter of mobile polling stations.

Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): One of the leading lights.

Mr. Lewycky: A number of provisions exist for those electors who are not ambulatory or who live in remote areas. For example, there is provision for mail ballots for individuals who are confined to their own homes. The returning officer, himself or herself, will personally deliver and pick up those ballots. From my own involvement in provincial and federal elections, I have noticed a great contrast.

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There is also the provision of a travelling ballot that can be transported by car, together with the ballot box, the poll book, the district returning officers, the scrutineers and poll clerks. Certain areas are designated, such as senior residences, and a poll is held in these areas at a prearranged time.

I wonder if I should call it one o'clock and continue my few remaining comments at two o'clock?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): I was allowing time to go by. I thought the Hon. Member wanted to put the matter through prior to one o'clock but I think, from his comments, that he has further remarks to make. In that case we will call it one o'clock and I do now leave the chair until two o'clock this afternoon.

At 1:02 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Order, please. When the House rose at one o'clock, the Hon. Member for Dauphin (Mr. Lewycky) had the floor.

Mr. Lewycky: Mr. Speaker, I am glad to be able to continue the discussion on this excellent Bill in the name of the Hon. Member for Esquimalt-Saanich. Bill C-518 is an Act to amend the Canada Elections Act with regard to mobile polling stations.

Before we adjourned for lunch, I was referring to the fact that in Manitoba we have had a very profitable experience for a number of years regarding the provisions of voting facilities for the disabled and handicapped. I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to work for three years with the Society for Crippled Children and Adults of Manitoba. During that time the executive director was Mr. Archie Carmichael who was responsible for sensitizing myself and many other people to the needs of the disabled and the handicapped. It is because of pressure from individuals such as he that we were able to introduce changes to the Manitoba Elections Act.

For the benefit of the House I would like to share some of the provisions which are available in the Province of Manitoba.