

CANADA ELECTIONS ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

Hon. Gerry Weiner (for the President of the Privy Council) moved that Bill C-47, an act to amend the Canada Elections Act be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, I believe you will find there is consent that this particular bill be referred to committee of the whole rather than the legislative committee.

Mr. Murphy: Mr. Speaker, there was not only consent to that but we have already agreed with the government that we would go through all three stages today.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion.

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and the House went into committee thereon, Mr. Paproski in the Chair.

The Deputy Chairman: House in committee of the whole on Bill C-47, an act to amend the Canada Elections Act.

On Clause 1—*Qualifications of candidates*

Mr. Cardiff: Mr. Speaker, if I could be permitted to make a few very short comments about this legislation with respect to Bill C-47, an act to amend the Canada Elections Act.

The bill corrects an omission in the Canada Elections Act of the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1985. By inadvertence, former Section 20 of the act in the first supplement to the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1970 which required that candidates at an election qualifies electors was omitted from the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1985.

The bill is very short and technical in nature. Clause 1(1) adds former Section 20, now proposed Section 76.1 to the Canada Elections Act. This section specifies that a person who qualifies as an elector may be a candidate.

Government Orders

Clause 1(2) establishes as the date for the coming into force of the amendment as December 12, 1985, the day on which the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1985 came into force. It is unfortunate that former Section 20 was omitted in the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1985. It is crucial that the bill be enacted as soon as possible as it affects the qualifications of candidates in elections.

Without this amendment, persons who do not qualify as electors, that is, minors and non-Canadian citizens could be candidates in future elections. Given the technical and non-controversial nature of the bill I am very pleased that we have had agreement with the other parties of the House to rapidly deal with this situation.

I believe it would be in order to present the amendments at this time. Would I read them or would I dispense with reading them? I believe the other members have copies of the amendments. They are in both official languages.

The Deputy Chairman: I believe all members have seen the amendment. I do not think it is necessary for him to read it.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause agreed to.

Title agreed to.

Bill reported.

Mr. Weiner (for the President of the Privy Council) moved that the bill be concurred in.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Weiner (for the President of the Privy Council) moved that the bill be read the third time and do pass.

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity to participate in the debate on this important bill this afternoon. My friend the parliamentary secretary, will appreciate the co-operation that has been shown by all parties in agreeing to pass this bill through all stages today.

We recognize the importance of correcting this portion of the law. Having shown such co-operation, I would like to draw to his attention the lack of co-operation shown