

On section 6,

Until the parliament of Canada otherwise provides the qualifications of voters for the election of members of the House of Commons and the proceedings at and in connection with elections of such members shall, *mutatis mutandis*, be those prescribed by law at the time this Act comes into force with respect to such elections in the Northwest Territories.

Hon. CHARLES FITZPATRICK (Minister of Justice). When this clause was up for consideration yesterday, it was decided to hold it over in order that we might have an opportunity to consider the propriety of making certain amendments to the Northwest Territories Act with respect to elections. It was suggested to me that perhaps it would be advisable, in order to remedy certain inconveniences which existed with regard to elections, amendments on the line suggested last year by Mr. Casgrain, then representing Montmorency, should be made immediately. I looked into the Bill which was introduced last year by Mr. Casgrain, which is No. 117 of the Bills of 1904 and is entitled 'An Act to amend the Northwest Territories Representation Act,' and I am prepared now to accept the suggestion of my hon. friend from Calgary (Mr. M. S. McCarthy) and introduce that Bill immediately in amendment to the Northwest Territories Representation Act. I understand that my hon. friend from Calgary desires to propose other amendments.

Mr. M. S. McCARTHY. Although I have not had an opportunity to consider the full effect of it, I would suggest an amendment to section 30 of the Northwest Territories Representation Act. That section is as follows: Section 30, Northwest Territories Representation Act.

Each enumerator shall complete, date at his place of residence and sign the copies of the voters' list or lists as aforesaid, eight days before the polling day; two of the said copies for each polling division he shall forthwith post up in two of the most public places within such polling division, and the other he shall retain for revision.

The amendment I propose to have made in that section is that there be inserted after the word 'division,' in the last line thereof, the words:

One of which shall be the post office nearest to the place selected for the polling station therein or if there be no such post office in a conspicuous position outside and adjoining the main entrance to such polling station.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. My hon. friend (Mr. M. S. McCarthy) is more familiar with the conditions existing in the Territories than I am, and he knows whether or not there is any practical difficulty in giving effect to that amendment. I myself think the amendment a perfectly proper one, and would be willing to accept it, provided there is no practical difficulty in carrying it out.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Of course, speaking entirely from recollection as I do, I cannot call to mind all the provisions of the Bill which Mr. Casgrain proposed. I shall not, however, detain the House with that at the moment. All I have to say is that upon the assurance of the Minister of Justice that such a Bill will be introduced, and also upon the understanding that we may discuss any amendments to that Bill which as we think should commend themselves to the government in addition to those suggested by Mr. Casgrain, I would be quite willing to let it go through on that basis.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Of course, my hon. friends understand that I am not willing to commit myself to amendments that I have not seen. I am willing to accept the amendments contained in Mr. Casgrain's Bill, of which I have knowledge, and the reasonable amendment offered by my hon. friend from Calgary (Mr. M. S. McCarthy), but I would not like to commit myself to any others without consideration.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I quite understand that. The hon. gentleman is committing himself to Mr. Casgrain's Bill and to the amendment suggested by the hon. member for Calgary. I simply wanted to guard myself against being understood that we should not offer further suggestions. Whether or not those suggestions will commend themselves to the Minister of Justice is, of course, entirely a matter for him and for the government. My hon. friend from Calgary (Mr. M. S. McCarthy) reminds me of one other matter, the form of oath in the present Bill relating to representation of the Northwest Territories. I mention that in order that the Minister of Justice may consider it before he brings in the Bill, and if, in his judgment, it should appear right to make some amendment.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Would my friend explain exactly the difficulty? That might help us.

Mr. M. S. McCARTHY. The oath does not require the voter to live in the polling subdivision in which he tenders his ballot.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. I read last night from a note in an old edition of the Northwest Territories Act, and in that it says that you have to declare you are a bona fide resident and householder within the electoral district. My hon. friend from Calgary says that is eliminated from the recent edition; if it is, it should certainly be restored.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. I think the oath must follow the terms of qualification of a voter. I have before me the terms of qualification as fixed by the Revised Statutes and also the amendment of 1895. Under the Revised Statutes of Canada, chapter 7, section 4, it is provided, with reference to qualification: