

**Sec. 1—The President****Cl. 5—Qualifications**

Code, Tit. 17, § 145. Even though the victory of an independent candidate for elector in Alabama cannot be anticipated, the state does offer the opportunity for the development of other strong political organizations where the need is felt for them by a sizable block of voters. Such parties may leave their electors to their own choice.”

“We conclude that the Twelfth Amendment does not bar a political party from requiring the pledge to support the nominees of the National Convention. Where a state authorizes a party to choose its nominees for elector in a party primary and to fix the qualifications for the candidates, we see no federal constitutional objection to the requirement of this pledge.”<sup>98</sup> Justice Jackson, with Justice Douglas, dissented: “It may be admitted that this law does no more than to make a legal obligation of what has been a voluntary general practice. If custom were sufficient authority for amendment of the Constitution by Court decree, the decision in this matter would be warranted. Usage may sometimes impart changed content to constitutional generalities, such as ‘due process of law,’ ‘equal protection,’ or ‘commerce among the states.’ But I do not think powers or discretions granted to federal officials by the Federal Constitution can be forfeited by the Court for disuse. A political practice which has its origin in custom must rely upon custom for its sanctions.”<sup>99</sup>

Clause 5. No Person except a natural born Citizen, or a Citizen of the United States, at the time of the Adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the Office of President; neither shall any Person be eligible to that Office who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty five Years, and been Fourteen Years a Resident within the United States.

**QUALIFICATIONS**

All Presidents from Martin Van Buren on were born in the United States subsequent to the Declaration of Independence. The principal issue with regard to the qualifications set out in this clause is whether a child born abroad of American parents is “a natural born citizen” in the sense of the clause. Such a child is a citizen as a consequence of statute.<sup>100</sup> Whatever the term “natural born” means, it no doubt does not include a person who is “naturalized.” Thus, the answer to the question might be seen to turn on the interpretation of the first sentence of the first section of the Fourteenth Amend-

<sup>98</sup> 343 U.S. at 228–31.

<sup>99</sup> 343 U.S. at 233.

<sup>100</sup> 8 U.S.C. § 1401.