

the candidates of all political parties. They like to go down to the town hall, where they are served sandwiches and liquor. They are given shot glasses for the liquor. Obviously, somebody buys the liquor, and somebody provides the sandwiches. When I objected to the liquor, I was told that is the way things were done in that community and, while I was there, that is how they continued to be done. So far as I know, that is the way things have been done down there ever since. To my mind, however, the light refreshment did not consist of the whisky. It consisted more of the sandwiches. Similarly, I am not in favour of bottles of whisky being handed out as people leave the polling booth. That is not light refreshment. Of course, in one part of New Brunswick, where this practice has gone on, the people are so faithful to their political party that, if they are Liberal supporters, they will go to only one vehicle handing out refreshments, and if they are Conservative supporters, they will only go to the other. Under no circumstances will these people accept a bottle from the wrong vehicle.

I am surprised to see the light refreshment provisions retained in the bill. I would have thought that the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard) would have given some attention, when studying the bill, to a clearer definition of light refreshments. In the last election light refreshments were given out in a certain hotel. The hotel keeper was very happy, until he discovered that there was a considerable unpaid bill. Now, he is not quite as much in favour of that practice. I do not think that the serving of refreshments will be enough in future, as the electorate of Canada is too well informed now to be bought that cheaply. If the term, "light refreshments" means what I think it ought to mean, it would not be necessary to clarify the relevant section. As it now is, I think this section is wide open. It really indicates that any amount would be permissible. I suppose these amounts have been increased largely over the last few years.

● (1250)

The figures given by Professor Paltiel show that the amounts received by the Conservative and Liberal candidates from their central offices were between \$6,000 and \$6,500, though the situation appears to be different in Alberta as far as the Conservatives are concerned. They have been self-sufficient, a sign, I suppose, of an affluence in that province which is not shared by all others. One thing with which we ought all to agree is the payment of \$200 to help parties establish a national image across the country during an election. I am sure the New Democratic Party would ensure that this contribution is considered as part of its election expenses and that it is recalculated on the basis of a contribution from the riding. The Liberal Party will have difficulty in getting candidates in a number of areas, I imagine. It will probably have difficulty getting candidates in Alberta, in British Columbia and in the Maritimes. I suppose the Liberal Party usually puts across a national image more easily than other parties, but I believe it will be harder for them to do this in the next election.

A lot of money could be spent if we allowed this section to be wide open. It is all very well to take out the "not" and make this section an election expense similar to those under section 2, but if we leave the words "shall not" in

Election Expenses

place, it means that it is in a separate section and a contribution can be made in a totally different way and this may not be in the interest of holding a satisfactory election. If we were to apply a limit to these contributions from one particular source I think we would be able to continue to operate on the basis of a local organization which would represent a constituency, but if we leave the section as it is, without the "not" and it is not considered to be an election expense, we shall be able to finance—

Mr. Barnett: We are all in a knot.

Mr. Peters: Well, it is a very knotty problem. It seems to me that some political parties will be operating their constituency organizations under this section from national headquarters and that there will be no need for any support at all from the riding for candidates. If this restriction is applied it may hurt the NDP. In the past, we have run candidates in areas where there was absolutely no chance of getting a major proportion of the vote. This has been done by other parties, too. Candidates who certainly did not get one per cent of the vote have run against me on a number of occasions. I certainly believe they had the right to do so.

An hon. Member: One o'clock!

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I imagine it could be called one o'clock according to some of the clocks here. In any event, the hon. member's time has expired.

At one o'clock the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): When the House adjourned at one o'clock it was considering motion No. 12 in the name of the hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Barnett). Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. Members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. Members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): In my opinion the nays have it.

Motion No. 12 (Mr. Howard, for Mr. Barnett) negatived.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): I declare the motion negatived. If the House agrees, we will now proceed to motion No. 13, in the name of the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard).