

Oral Questions

PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY'S EXPENDITURES

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Prime Minister knows that the Bill in question does not deal with election expenses and does not deal with party financing. He knows that a year and a half ago I asked the Government to bring in such a measure at that time. Apart from repeated promises to do so, he knows that the Government has stalled ever since and has refused to bring it forward.

The Conservative Party in Quebec has said that it will impose a moratorium on itself on collecting money from corporations during the campaign. The national campaign of the Conservative Party pays the expenses for Leader's travels, all the television coverage in English and in French, and newspaper ads. Corporations in the Province of Quebec as well as corporations on Bay Street gave a total of over \$6 million to the Conservatives last year. Will the Minister admit that this money will be spent in Québec just as it will be spent elsewhere in Canada?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I thought the Hon. Member was posing his questions in a very serious vein and was not going to go to the bottom of the sink-hole on a question which I take very seriously.

First, the Member is absolutely wrong when he says that we were not prepared to deal with the election expenses Bill. There have been letters. Just because there is a disagreement between his Party and our Party with regard to the definition of election expenses is no reason it should not go forward into committee for further study. We have advanced a definition and are prepared to meet again and advance another one. We are prepared to deal with this.

The Hon. Member also suggests that there is something fundamentally wrong with the proposal which has been advanced by the Province of Quebec. I am not going to get into specifics on this particular issue right now, but I can assure him that this would be an issue more appropriately discussed in committee where all Parties could sit down with their representatives to deal with it. As I said on Friday, Mr. Speaker, we stand ready to do that.

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Prime Minister knows that the New Democratic Party, to our knowledge, is the only Party that has submitted a definition of the kind he has requested. There has been no such definition proposed by the governing Party. We have been consistent and we want reform.

[*Translation*]

CONTRIBUTIONS OF LARGE CORPORATIONS

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, my last question is just this: The Conservative Caucus in the province of Quebec promised that as a Party, it will not accept contributions from corporations or unions. It only wants private donations. My question is quite simply: Is it true that during

the next campaign, in the province of Quebec, the Conservatives' national campaign will use money donated by the big corporations on Bay Street in Toronto and on St. James Street in Montreal? Is it true that the big corporations will pay for the national campaign in the province of Quebec?

[*English*]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, this is a very important question. I regret that I did not get the full thrust of the question and I would like to hear it before I respond to it.

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, I will repeat the question very clearly, and if he can get his colleagues to shut up maybe he will hear it.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Broadbent: Will the Deputy Prime Minister acknowledge that in the forthcoming election campaign, notwithstanding what the Quebec Conservative caucus has had to say, money collected from corporations on Bay Street and on St. Jacques Street in Montreal, which totalled over \$6 million last year, will be spent in the national campaign coming up in the Province of Quebec to finance the Leader's tour, newspaper advertising, and television ads? Will he answer yes or no to that question?

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of the specifics but my understanding is that the Québec caucus has decided to run its local associations on the basis of the new funding rules which could put ceilings of \$5,000 on individuals and would not allow for corporate, association, or union contributions. That is my understanding.

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PORTS

THUNDER BAY—DECLINE IN GRAIN TRAFFIC

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. The Government's policies with regard to the Port of Thunder Bay are having a devastating impact. Some 700 grain handlers and port workers have been laid off, four of the 13 grain elevators are shut down, and 20 of the 64 grain handling ships in the Great Lakes are lying idle.

What is the Government doing to correct this situation and to try to ensure that this port gets its fair share of grain handling and the employment of those workers in Thunder Bay is preserved?

Mr. Blaine A. Thacker (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, we certainly are in a very difficult situation. This shows once again just how interdependent we are. When there are tough times on the