

Government Orders

• (2030)

The information available to me may not be available to my colleague on the opposite side, but it is my understanding that for the last few elections the homeless have been enumerated by Elections Canada. It is a matter of policy and there is nothing in current law to argue against it.

With the other changes it does become easier to do; with swearing in at the poll and with the list being open until five days before voting day. That whole process would include a longer period to appeal original decisions, that would also be there. That may be a piece of different information. Maybe when we go to clause by clause and we have Elections Canada before us it would certainly be a question well worth asking and getting on the public record. Does it or does it not, can it or can it not enumerate the homeless at this time? I think it can and has.

Mr. Murphy: Just a short response, Mr. Speaker.

When this issue was brought before committee a couple of weeks ago after the government brought down its legislation we asked Elections Canada those very same questions. Certainly my interpretation of the response that we received is that yes, it does make some attempt if someone is already at a shelter or something of that nature. Even then it is basically ignoring the present law which requires that those people must have been at that shelter for the previous 10 days. That is a situation in which Elections Canada is probably ignoring the present law. What happens if someone was to challenge that in the future?

Also, there are a number of other homeless Canadians who would not even fit that category who under the recommendations of the royal commission and with a proactive approach—and it is very important that we look at that proactive approach—we know that within certain ridings in Toronto, Winnipeg and elsewhere across this country—

An hon. member: Thunder Bay.

Mr. Murphy: —Thunder Bay, as my colleague says—there are certain areas where the homeless tend to congregate. Maybe it is a kitchen. It is not a residence but it is a place that they come for a meal, once, twice, three times a week or maybe every day. We can pick them up if we go down there. It is that type of approach which the royal commission was recommending. I not-

iced in their last census the Americans had to use the same approach in order to get an accurate census of their population.

We should take a look at those positive approaches to make sure that any Canadians, regardless of their present economic situation and hardships, be able to vote.

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, I want to make a brief comment at the outset to pay tribute to all of the members of the special committee for the work they have done. It is not easy, given the number of hours they must put in not just at the table but in terms of consideration of the royal commission's report, other interventions they may get during the formal process of the hearings or the correspondence they get.

No matter which side of the House the members are on they have done an excellent job in terms of reviewing the issues, reviewing the documents, reviewing the concepts and in phase one coming up with a bill that has been translated reasonably well by cabinet. I am not suggesting that we are totally in agreement with the final wording but they all deserve our thanks and the thanks of the public of Canada for the work they have done.

I also want to, while I have the opportunity, pay tribute to my former colleague, the former Whip of the government whom I have worked with for a number of years. He did an excellent job as chief government Whip and we miss him. We also wish him well in his new role as "speechifier" in the House of Commons.

I do have a question for my colleague and it comes out of some of the remarks he made earlier. He was talking about the need for controls on leadership campaigns of political parties. As I understand it, I may be inaccurate and I stand to be corrected, the Prime Minister this past weekend announced there would be a ceiling of about \$900,000 per candidate on the Progressive Conservative leadership candidates. Such a ceiling did not include staff costs or transportation costs.

• (2035)

I am wondering if my colleague from Churchill would like to reflect on what that really means in terms of expenditure controls, given his role in my party in preparing the groundwork for our controls for the leadership convention which actually I guess was kicked off four years ago yesterday when Ed Broadbent indicated his intention to step down as leader and when, as