

The members from Puerto Rico who met with our committee, who are experts in the sense that they were on an equivalent committee, suggested that we have the best of both worlds. We have both disclosure and protection of privacy, since we must disclose either to the Minister of National Revenue or some minister of the Crown for policing purposes, but disclose to the public only the total donations and not the names of the donors.

I do not agree with the suggestion that the election campaign period be without limit. This is a major point with respect to which we agree with the Barbeau report. All the witnesses before us were unanimous in this view. If there is not a limit on the advertising period, one candidate may be forced to follow the lead of the other candidate, since his backers might say, "Let us get going; your people are losing morale. Get in there and spend money in the advertising field." After a month or so, a candidate may have expended the amount allowed for advertising. He would then spend money on other items which are not included in the definition "election expenses" in the bill, thus, of course, increasing his expenses.

May I raise another point which is perhaps more difficult to appreciate but which is most important. There are four recognized parties in this country; obviously, they will register. In addition, there are perhaps four or six other parties, not so recognized, which will also register. These parties are entitled to use the six and a half hour period which is made available to all parties. On the twenty-eighth day of the campaign they would lose their registration rights if they had not fielded 50 candidates. The twenty-eighth day, I suggest, is too late for action to be taken, since these minor parties would have used three or four hours of the time available to them simply to bring their personal message to the world, to tell the world about some cause they espouse. The result would be that people would have lost the right to hear the representatives of other parties which seriously hope to form the government. If this campaigning were limited to 28 days, as the committee suggested, that problem would not arise.

As the law now stands, successful candidates file their reports and the majority of unsuccessful candidates have no alternative—I suggest that this matter would be raised in the House if there were anything amiss—and do not do so. I ought to have said, Mr. Speaker, that the majority of unsuccessful candidates do not report. The only penalty, as I understand the act, for those who do not report is this: They will not be able to stand for election on another occasion if a court so orders. This has been completely ineffective. We recommend that the chief electoral officer should be required by law to see that all reports are filed. Under questioning by our committee, he said he was agreeable to shouldering that responsibility. The bill provides for payment of \$250 towards the cost of an audited report for those candidates who receive 20 per cent or more of the votes cast. I suggest that we change that provision and allow \$250 to every candidate to meet the expenses of the audited report. I think it is wrong to charge somebody who can honestly say, "I used every penny I had and I did not have \$250 left", because, in the result, we would be sending that man to jail for not having enough money. However, I do not think the public should lose. He has to make a deposit of \$200. I suggest this sum

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be increased to \$250. In other words, we would divert his forfeited deposit to pay the auditor for the report.

• (1610)

Recommendation 34 allowed between 13 and 14 cents per elector by way of reimbursement to a candidate who had received 20 per cent or more of the votes cast. This was equivalent to the cost of a stamp and a respectable brochure for each elector. We felt this was the basic minimum to which the public was entitled in order to learn about the man himself and his platform. For a constituency of 50,000 he would be reimbursed to the extent of \$6,500; if he had a large constituency of 100,000 voters he would get 13 cents for the next 50,000, another \$6,500, or a total of \$13,000. The bill would allow him to be reimbursed to the extent of 25 per cent of the amount he spent on advertising only.

But supposing a candidate spent all his money on advertising. Supposing, also he had limited funds and spent only \$10,000 on his campaign. He would get back only \$2,500. The result would be he would be prevented from using money which he might have borrowed from a bank and paid back from his reimbursement. So, also, in the bill, a person with a constituency of 100,000 electors would be disadvantaged. Under the committee's report, he would have received 13 cents for each additional elector over 50,000. That, as I said before, would have been \$6,500. Under the bill he will receive only half that amount, or \$3,250, which is in no way enough to send the simplest scrap of paper to 50,000 electors. It is my suggestion that the amount of reimbursement be based upon the number of electors in the constituency.

There is another unfair situation which could arise. In some constituencies in which there is a local television station, the candidate could spend all his campaign funds on advertising over television and he would be reimbursed to the extent of 25 per cent. But in a rural riding where there was no television station he might decide to hire halls and provide refreshment and entertainment. That would be his method of campaigning. But he would not get back 5 cents. Under our recommendation No. 13, we would limit reimbursement to the winner and anyone who obtained 50 per cent the vote the winner received or 20 per cent of the total of votes cast. The bill omits reimbursement for the 50 per cent. I would remind hon. members that in some constituencies, particularly in Quebec, there might be five, six or seven candidates. The winner might receive only 35 per cent of the votes cast, the second 19 per cent, and the third 18 per cent. It seems wrong that under those circumstances, a man who came second should not be reimbursed. I suggest he should be included.

In recommendation No. 3, we recommend that political parties be made legal entities for the purposes of suing and being sued, and owning and leasing property. It is time political parties became full adults in terms of being responsible for their financial transactions. The bill, in clause 13(5), appears to make the parties legal entities only for the purposes of enforcing the Act. I may be wrong. Perhaps the courts will determine that they are also legal entities for the purpose of suing and being sued. I suggest this be made clear; it ought not to be necessary to go to