

Supply—Secretary of State

the public should pay for campaign expenses, because they would be much better off than paying in the form of special privileges given to those major contributors.

The point I make is that electioneering will become more and more expensive. I suggest it cannot help but do so. Some of my colleagues have checked the rate cards provided by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation to the committee on broadcasting with respect to the cost of television appearances, and if the expenses in that regard are an indication of the expenses involved in television appearances wherever television reaches—and we have indication now that it does reach 94 per cent of Canadian homes—the total expenses are rather fantastic.

With regard to this particular subject I suggest we should consider two features. First, perhaps a ceiling could be applied to campaign expenses, such as has been done in Britain; and second, to adopt the suggestion of Senator Douglas, at least in regard to television appearances, to provide the expenses out of the public treasury. If such a system were adopted appearances could be based on a sharing arrangement, thereby removing this feature of campaigning from the public realm.

The difficulty involved in setting a ceiling, of course, would be that a great deal of hawshaw work would be involved over a long period of time in order to make it apply across the country. Great Britain seems to have a tighter control on public morale than we have, and I understand, from information I have received from the head offices of the different parties, that they consider this has worked fairly well there, without too many abuses. I do not know whether this would be practical in Canada, but it might be a step we will have to take. We should then at least have some guide for the consciences of candidates.

The suggestion made by Senator Douglas regarding the running of election campaigns at the expense of the public treasury may seem fantastic when we consider that the total expenses of candidates' campaigns during the last election amounted to more than \$2 million in relation to the individual constituency campaigns only. I am convinced that there are many hidden expenses which if added to this total, would at least double or triple it. When I say "hidden" I do not mean deliberately hidden, but certainly associated with the election campaign. If the cost of the national campaigns carried on by the different parties were included—for example, full page advertisements in magazines such as *Weekend*, with a circulation of one and a quarter million, and the *Toronto Star*

Weekly, with a circulation of 800,000 to 900,000 and other national magazines—the total expense would be fantastic. The figures regarding the cost of such advertisements could be readily obtained from the editors and publishers of the magazines.

The difficulty of paying the cost of campaigns out of the public treasury is a practical one, in that a ceiling would have to be set. In view of the enormous expenses involved the amount of campaigning would have to be cut down, with the result that the voters would be very disappointed because of the lack of the kind of commercial spot announcement campaigns, hammering upon the issues, with which they have become familiar in recent times. If something of this nature is not done, however, the major parties in Canada will have tremendous advantages in terms of being able to find money to meet the election campaign expenses, while the minority parties will have a much more difficult task. That situation may not have applied during the last election campaign, and perhaps will not apply to the next, but I suggest it will apply more and more to future election campaigns as the expenses involved skyrocket.

I suggest this is a subject which should be of interest to all hon. members, and I hope many of them will give consideration to it; because I have a hunch that this will certainly be a major problem in future years to the democratic political policies of North America. Since in the United States certain limitations have been set in respect of expenses, with regulations requiring the provision of more information regarding amounts spent by national parties, it seems to me that this problem in our country, which in many ways is greater because of our lower economic base, as well as the fact that fewer politicians must cover a much greater area, must be seriously considered in the near future.

I realize that some consideration was given to the problem at the Liberal rally which took place in January. I was not present, but it is my interpretation of what took place there, having read the articles covering that rally which appeared in newspapers, that the discussion in respect to this problem was made from an objective point of view until someone dragged in a subject concerning Allister Grosart, the national organizer of the Conservative party, and the Liberals went chasing off down a trail regarding the activities of that particular gentleman.

It was interesting to me to find that the topic loomed so large with the Liberals at their convention, but I was disappointed to find no reference to it as a topic at the rally held by the Conservative party in March. I can only assume that when you are a winner these things are not important. I am sure that