

application and determine whether the party can be registered under this section and

(a) where he determines that, on the nomination by the party of fifty candidates in accordance with paragraph (3)(a) or (b), whichever is applicable, the party could be registered, so inform the leader of the party—

I shall stop here, since at this point I would like to see a condition that goes further than the requirement of fifty candidates in order to register a political party.

Paragraph (2)(a) of the amended text, that is, the one I am proposing in my Bill, Mr. Speaker, reads, and I quote:

(a) where he determines that, on the nomination by the party of fifty candidates distributed in a majority of the provinces in accordance with paragraph (3)(a) or (b), whichever is applicable, the party could be registered, so inform the leader of the party;—

That is the whole point, Mr. Speaker. It is easy to understand why a political party, if it wants to operate at the national level, should be obliged to field candidates in a majority of the provinces, that is, in five out of six. These are candidates who will be working on the federal scene—if they are elected, of course. Without this obligation, regional or provincial groups, which I would prefer to qualify as local, will use Parliament as a platform for their own specific interests by disrupting or simply paralyzing the proceedings of the House of Commons. Considering the vulnerability of our Standing Orders, I am sure that if a provincial group representing one or more provinces were to be elected and were to operate on the federal scene, this might cause many problems since these parties would bring the normal activities of this House to a complete standstill.

Mr. Speaker, a number of questions were raised by some observers when I presented this Bill. They said the Bill was aimed at preventing the Parti Québécois from going federal.

However, when I read Part III of the new Canada Elections Act on the registration of political parties and also the provision regarding election expenses, I wondered, Mr. Speaker, whether the Parti Québécois was not trying, in a roundabout way, to collect funds from sources other than the voters of the Province of Quebec. Actually, the purpose of registering a national party is simply to be able to collect funds and provide receipts for income tax purposes. Mr. Speaker, when the Parti Québécois applied for registration to the Chief Electoral Officer, it was because it wanted to operate on the federal scene. This means that the application made by Mr. Lévesque, the Leader of the Parti Québécois, will be approved, provided the conditions for registration as a national political party are met. It means that in the next election, to all intents and purposes, Mr. Lévesque will be able to stand for election or field candidates on the federal scene. This also means, Mr. Speaker, that if anyone gives a donation of \$100 to the Parti Québécois it would then have the same status nationally or federally as the Progressive Conservative or Liberal or NDP parties that the donor would get a receipt for \$100, with which he could then obtain a federal tax rebate of \$75. A copy of the receipt would also entitle him to a 50 per cent or \$50 rebate on

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Quebec provincial income tax, under the Quebec Elections Act.

In other words, to all intents and purposes, a supporter who contributes \$100 to the Parti Québécois once it has been duly registered as a national party will receive from both levels of Government an income tax deduction of \$125. That is why something has to be done about the Income Tax Act to change a situation which will indeed create a serious injustice for all Canadians.

Is the Parti Québécois so hard-pressed that it has to circumvent its own legislation—everybody knows that in the Province of Quebec contributions to political parties are allowed only when made by voters or residents of the Province—and find roundabout ways to go outside the Province of Quebec and raise the funds it needs for its electoral campaigns? Or is it simply trying to take advantage of loopholes in our Income Tax Act once again to fill its election coffers?

I want to conclude, Mr. Speaker, by saying that it is imperative that we plug that loophole in the Canada Elections Act with regard to the representativeness of candidates throughout all of Canada, and the Income Tax Act will have to be amended as well. Otherwise, all Canadians would be financing the elections of the Parti Québécois! I might add that I am talking about the Parti Québécois which is seeking national registration because, as far as I know, it is the only provincial party that is doing so. None of the other provincial political parties, whether they are Liberals or NDP, are registered. That would be unfair to the other parties and a flagrant injustice done to all Canadian taxpayers.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, I have referred to the Parti Québécois because it is the only group which is doing this. It may or may not have planned it that way, I do not know, but the fact is that I did notice and I think that others are now aware of that anomaly in the Canada Elections Act. Besides, Mr. Speaker, what is the challenge on the federal scene for those new crusaders who are already breathless as a result of their costly and fratricidal battles for the independence they had promised but were unable to deliver? What would they be accomplishing here other than dying needlessly in a suicidal assault, those supporters of a party whose only legacy to what was once *la belle province* will be an ephemeral and deceiving pseudo-victory which in fact will become nothing more than a passing illusion? Fortunately, I hope that the passage of time will make people soon forget that they even lived through those years. I urge my colleagues to give serious consideration to this huge loophole in the Canada Elections Act and to defend the national interest which must always be the priority of the House of Commons of Canada.

• (1530)

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): The Chair recognizes the Hon. Member for Dauphin (Mr. Lewycky). I believe it is