

*Election Expenses*

**Mr. Clark (Rocky Mountain):** It is interesting to hear from the NDP, those paragons of virtue, that somebody else was as bad as they were. Saunders is controlled by the Manitoba Development Corporation, and the NDP had the plane rent free, on lease, from a middleman, who had it rent free from Saunders. When he was caught, the premier offered to pay, overlooking the fact that Saunders is not licensed by the Ministry of Transport to charter, and thus not eligible to collect.

This is not to mention the numerous executive assistants to ministers who managed campaigns, or the other public officials who worked to sustain the party in power, or the very severe pressure brought to bear to contribute upon people who are doing business with the government.

It has been pointed out in interventions in the House that that pattern is not limited to one province. A similar apparatus is being established in British Columbia, and certainly it exists in Saskatchewan. It is clearly here in Ottawa, although the Liberals here have not been so sanctimonious about condemning others for the things they do themselves. There was an order for return made to a question of the hon. member for Colchester-Cumberland North (Mr. Coates) indicating the abuse during election campaigns whereby aircraft of the state were engaged by ministers on partisan campaigning activities. There is the ad of the Secretary of State, sometimes responsible for multiculturalism and, indeed, the whole program of that minister who, from time to time when it is safe, appears in the House. It appears to be a contrived program, contrived for partisan purposes, even to the point of assigning to the minister an executive assistant whose chief former function was partisan, even though it was not always successfully partisan.

There has been recently in the House on the part of the very minister who introduced this legislation, a refusal to conduct a public inquiry into the harassment connected with the ITT contribution, harassment that is only possible when it is supported by a party with the force of government behind it.

There was the reference yesterday by my colleague, the hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona (Mr. Roche), to the partisan use even of Her Majesty's visit. I do not begrudge the Liberal candidates in Alberta an audience with the Queen. The point is that no one attends state dinners in a personal capacity. Guests are chosen as representatives, and the significance of this most recent event is that 15 of the duly elected federal representatives of the people of Alberta were deliberately excluded, their places taken by individuals who represent nothing more than the Liberal party in Alberta, which in Alberta is not very much. That is inexcusable partisanship, particularly when it involves Her Majesty unwittingly in an embarrassment she has no practical power to resist. In terms of this debate it is one more graphic instance of the developed practice, the habit, of the Liberal party in power to use prerogatives which attach to the government for purposes which are narrowly and simply partisan. This is a habit we must break, and since no amount of exhortation will reform the Liberal party, legislation must.

The danger here goes far beyond elections.

[Mr. Clark (Rocky Mountain).]

**Mr. MacEachen:** The hon. member would save our souls.

**Mr. Clark (Rocky Mountain):** There has been for several years an important confusion among Liberals about the distinction between their party and the government of Canada. That, perhaps, is natural because they have been in power far too long, for most of the last 75 years. In a system such as ours there is usually and hopefully a healthy strain between the public service and the government. Here, instead, there is consistent inbreeding. Consider the way in which during the question period one can look across the way and see the former deputy minister of the department of trade and commerce, now the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp), conferring with his front bench seatmate, the former deputy minister of defence production, now the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Drury). There are others who have moved, without changing their style or attitude, from the public service to the front benches or backbenches of the Liberal party.

**Mr. Stanbury:** Has the hon. member anything against the public service?

**Mr. Clark (Rocky Mountain):** I have nothing against the public service, but I think there is a very unhealthy attitude when there is no distinction between the public service and the party in power, as in the case here.

**An hon. Member:** That does not apply in all cases.

**Mr. Clark (Rocky Mountain):** There is the exception which proves every rule. Mr. Speaker, I remember once overhearing a conversation by the predecessor in parliamentary gymnastics to the President of the Privy Council the Hon. J. W. Pickersgill, who had gone to that reward he designed for himself but has now retired. He referred in passing to what he called an unfortunate interlude in Canadian history, the unfortunate interlude being the six years of Diefenbaker government, because they interrupted what he and his colleagues had come to look on as the normal state of affairs in Canada; that is to say, a state of affairs when a Liberal government was in office. That is the same man whose great regard for parliament, when he sat on this side of the House, was such that he developed obstruction to an art form, indicating the extent of his commitment to parliamentary government.

● (2100)

There are other instances throughout our history of confusion in the Liberal party about the distinction between the public interest and the interest of the Liberal party. There is the suspicion that persists that it was the Liberal party which caused the death of "This Hour Has Seven Days" from the CBC.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Clark (Rocky Mountain):** Members opposite can laugh. It is interesting to record the degree of seriousness which the Liberal party attaches to the independence of the CBC. I am particularly sorry to see joining in that revelry the Secretary of State (Mr. Faulkner) who is responsible for reporting to the House for that corpora-