

[Text]

other is a member of the other major party. These are things that are handed around after elections, but they do not amount to—at least I have never had the experience of any of those lawyers really contributing a great deal to my election campaign, and it was just a fact of life that it happened after an election that the crown corporations or the farm credit corporation or the housing legal work was passed around...

Dr. Paltiel: You have touched on something very important, namely that the gradual sort of attrition of the patronage system has aggravated the problem of raising funds, because the patronage system had the side effect of providing funds for political campaigns, and the fact that this has sort of gradually withered away—or to the extent that it has withered away it has aggravated the problem of the raising of funds at a time when the cost of the media tends to be rising.

Mr. Howe: I have one further comment. I feel that a lot of people are contributing to political parties these days, and just because it has been the thing to do. They do not expect—the same people will maintain tremendous offices and lobbies here in Ottawa that they expect to do the work for them, rather than the fact that they—but they will give so much to one party and practically the same thing to another party. So I think a lot of them would be very happy to see this practice disappear rather than be continued, and probably this legislation will assist them a bit. After all, Mr. Chairman, no matter who it is, whether it is General Motors or E. P. Taylor's organization, those donations do not come out of their pocket. They come out of the cost of the goods and services they provide for the public. Their money comes from some place. They make it from the public.

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The Chairman: I have read most of the material including the briefs, so I am trying to get answers to some of the things I know we will have to deal with later. I infer from what you have said that you are rather impressed with the Swedish system where they have appreciated the fact that disclosure may dry up donations. You said that it would make a real good case for individuals. Would you include with the individuals, the private corporations where it is really a proprietor or two partners who have incorporated? Would you put the private corporations with the individuals and put the large, public corporations in another group?

Dr. Paltiel: First of all, the Swedish system, a subsidy system, is not really applicable here because they have got a proportional representation system.

You talk about private corporations. A man who was once a prominent member of your House and who is now on one of the leading boards or commissions that you have, once told me that some of the worse examples of abuse, not by politicians, not by candidates, but by individual contributors came from this very level of the private corporation. He gave me an example and he said that this occurred very often in his view. I hope you will not press me as to who this person is because he is still active. I believe him and I think that he showed enough knowledge of it. By the way, this gentleman was an accountant. He said that what you did get from these

[Interpretation]

C'est ce qui se produit après une élection, mais rien ne prouve que ces avocats aient été deux véritables collaborateurs.

M. Paltiel: Voilà qui est très important; il devient très difficile d'amasser des fonds quand on essaie d'abolir le système de protection; on se trouve sans argent au moment où le coût des différents services est de plus en plus élevé.

M. Howe: Je crois que beaucoup de gens aident un parti politique parce que c'est ce qui s'est toujours fait. La plupart des gens donnent autant à un parti politique qu'à un autre. A mon avis, beaucoup d'entre eux seraient très heureux de voir disparaître cette coutume. Je crois que cette nouvelle loi sera en leur faveur. En effet, ce n'est jamais véritablement la General Motors ou l'organisation E. P. Taylor qui fait un don, mais le peuple.

Le président: J'ai lu la plupart des documents y compris les mémoires, de sorte que je puisse obtenir la réponse à certaines des questions que nous aborderons plus tard. Vous avez dit que vous étiez assez impressionné par le régime suédois qui considère que la divulgation des sources puisse tarir l'enthousiasme des donateurs individuels. Est-ce que vous comprenez avec ces individus les sociétés privées, lorsque ce sont réellement deux associés qui ont mis sur pied une société dûment constituée? Comprenez-vous les sociétés privées avec les individus pour classer les sociétés publiques dans un autre groupe?

M. Paltiel: Tout d'abord, le régime suédois qui en est un de subventions n'est pas vraiment applicable ici, car dans ce pays on a établi un régime fondé sur la représentation proportionnelle.

Vous parlez des sociétés privées. L'un de vos députés éminents à la Chambre, aujourd'hui directeur d'un grand conseil d'administration, m'a dit, un jour, que les cas les plus évidents d'abus étaient commis, non pas des politiciens ou des candidats, mais bien par des donateurs individuels au niveau des sociétés privées. Il m'a donné un exemple et m'a affirmé que ce genre d'abus se commettait très souvent. J'espère que vous ne m'obligerez pas à révéler le nom de la personne en cause, car celle-ci est toujours en fonctions. Je suis porté à croire le témoignage de ce député car il était fort au courant de la question.