

*Election Expenses*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger):** The hon. member is rising on a question of privilege.

**Mr. Roy (Laval):** It is not a matter of exercise, as the hon. member said. However, it did give me some exercise, which I appreciated as I am used to it. But I am rising on a question of privilege to ask why the area around the Confederation building was not cleared, as is now being done on the hill. This did give us some excellent exercise however and we appreciated it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger):** Order, please. I think that the hon. member has a good argument about snow removal, but I believe that the Deputy Speaker has already ruled on that and I do not consider the point raised by the hon. member as a question of privilege.

[English]

**Mr. Howard:** The amendment before us seeks to deal with the very serious question of campaign fund expenditures. We all know that money is a pretty potent force at election time. We know there is a tendency for candidates, particularly for registered parties, to think that the more lavish they make the brochure, the more money they spend with an advertising agency in preparing television plugs and spots, the more the political parties concerned can sell its image. They tend to draw a distinction in the sense of image which is not very credible. There is an attempt to develop mechanisms that are not designed to promote public discussion, to establish conversation in the community or to enlighten people about the issues in the campaign.

We all know this. No party is very different from another in that regard. They are designed to influence, to manipulate or to have an effect. They are designed to be attractive primarily to the apolitical voter; they are designed primarily for that person in our society, and there are quite a number of them. By my assessment, 20 per cent to 25 per cent of those who vote are within the group that has the general reference apolitical. These people do not pay attention to politics. The campaign expenditures are designed to have an impact upon or influence that type of voter. That type of voter has no sort of involvement or connection with the political process because he does not generally pay any attention whatsoever to politics, government, legislative items, policies, or who did or did not do what in the political arena. It is considered that he is likely to be influenced at the emotional level more than at the mental level, the level of thought, analysis and logic.

We know that it costs a good deal more in production and agency fees if someone is hired to work out a slick, smooth 30-second television shot designed with no other thought in mind than to impress or make an impact upon the voter. One would pay a good deal more for this type of television program than for the more honest one involving a five-minute period or longer in which one converses in detail or in depth about a party's ideas, programs and policies in an attempt by this mechanism to get across a point of view or an understanding to the general public. There is a tendency not to do that sort of thing and there is a tendency toward the other, that is, toward buying advertising expertise. There is a tendency to go to those agencies which spend the whole year around developing

[Mr. Roy (Laval).]

ads designed to sell toothpaste or underarm deodorant, or whatever else might be sold by someone who wishes to sell it.

In respect of a political party, this is regrettable. This is not necessarily a severe criticism of a political party but it is a sad commentary, I think, upon the level of political demand in the country if a political party feels it should go to an agency and ask it to make up a package for it, but rather than call it Crest, call it NDP; do not call it Arrid but call it Liberal or whatever. Just substitute the political party's name for the name of the mouthwash and sell it in the same way. That costs a lot of money.

● (2130)

**An hon. Member:** What would you call it?

**Mr. Howard:** There is an old-fashioned country word that people use, not only people on farms. I worked in logging camps and underground in hard rock mines, and I know what that word is. It has been used in this House; it appears in *Hansard* at one stage in reference to a speech made by the hon. member for Trinity (Mr. Hellyer) and appropriately declared as such. There is a word for it that I think probably we should not use at the moment, not when one is carefully thinking about what one has to say. It is a word that might be blurted out somewhere, a word that may be euphemistically called male bovine excrement.

**Mr. Blenkarn:** That is not very parliamentary.

**Mr. Howard:** It is a perfectly satisfactory parliamentary expression. None of our parties is distinctly different from any other in that regard, in that we tend to find the most expensive way to run an election campaign within the limits of our budget; we tend to move up as high as we possibly can. I am glad the hon. member for Trinity has come here. I made a passing reference to some remarks he made. They were not unkind. They were true, correct and accurate, but not unkind.

In any event, we tend to find within the limits of the money we have available the most expensive things to do in an election campaign. We are not content any longer to run off an old-fashioned, mimeographed bulletin, black ink on white paper. What we want now are two or three-colour jobs, and the slicker the paper, the better; the more crisp and so-called professional it looks, the better. We do not want a campaign brochure but something that looks like Playboy or Cosmopolitan in its visual impact.

**Mr. Blenkarn:** Did you not see the NDP pamphlet in the last election?

**Mr. Howard:** I am just telling my friend that no party is distinctly different from any other in that regard.

**Mr. Blenkarn:** When you have international unions to support you, how can you be different?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger):** Order. I know it is late in the day, but I think the hon. member knows the rules of the House. When an hon. member has the floor, he has the right to speak and not be interrupted by other hon. members.