

Income Tax Act

money go, considering that parliament is afraid to spend \$10 or \$100 more than the amount authorized by the budget?" Yet, when it comes to an election campaign in a riding, \$50,000, \$60,000 or \$70,000 are nothing but peanuts.

Consequently, I submit that the control of campaign funds is urgently required.

Besides the giving out of a receipt to every taxpayer who has contributed to election funds, I feel—and I am willing to introduce an amendment to the motion in that respect—that any money paid out by foreigners for an election campaign in Canada—in some cases it constitutes the whole campaign fund—should be taxed so that, before the election, Canada may at least derive some advantage from such taxes on foreign contributions since, after the election, it is those same countries which will reap the advantages.

Those are the few ideas I wished to express on this motion. I hope parliament will make further investigations possible in that field, so that elections may be cleaned up and controlled to a greater extent throughout Canada.

As I said a few months ago, if, after this check on campaign funds, we get the identity card to prevent people from voting five, six, seven, eight and ten times, we shall have made some contribution towards cleaning up the election procedure and we shall then give the country a government of the people, for the people and elected by the people.

[Text]

Mr. M. L. Klein (Cartier): Mr. Speaker, usually I find myself in agreement with my seatmate, the hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Lloyd), but on this issue I am beginning to see eye to eye more and more on less and less. I am opposed to this resolution because I believe it would place in the hands of our taxpayers in the upper income brackets a tremendous power. I do not believe that the deduction of a contribution of \$5 for income tax purposes has any meaning; but it does begin to have meaning when tax deductions include large amounts. I would fear that this system would reintroduce the system of patricians and plebeians.

The only taxpayers who I believe would take advantage of this deduction would probably be those earning in excess of \$15,000; because those who earn less than that amount are probably on a budget and cannot afford to make a contribution of any sizeable amount to assist political campaigns. This would make political parties completely dependant upon the people in the upper income brackets.

[Mr. Gauthier.]

According to the report of the chief electoral officer on the 26th general election there were a shade under 10 million registered voters in Canada. According to the 1963 taxation statistics there are some 4,500,000 taxpayers in Canada. Of this number approximately 22 per cent pay tax on incomes of \$15,000 and over, and simple arithmetic shows that less than 10 per cent of the voting population of this country would be the main contributors to election funds. If this were the case it would mean that political parties would be conscious of their electoral responsibilities vis-à-vis the 10 per cent who were supplying all the money. It would also mean that persons in the upper income brackets would be able to make contributions to political parties in off election years; and in certain instances people in the higher income brackets, in order to become taxable in a lower bracket, would make contributions to political parties even in off election years.

In my view the government should provide election funds for political parties. Some equitable basis should be provided whereby the government would supply the money to political parties in election campaigns. We should also study means to try and reduce the cost of election campaigns, which is mounting every year. In studying means to make elections cheaper instead of more expensive, we should consider bringing the voter to the polls. This is one of the reasons elections are so costly. Candidates have to rent cars or ask their contributors to supply the money to rent them for this purpose. If when he cast his vote the voter were supplied with a certificate by the returning officer which could be attached to his income tax return, thus giving him a credit, whether it be for \$2 or \$5, and thus reducing his tax liability, this would encourage him to go to the poll and vote.

Mr. Pigeon: A very good idea.

Mr. Klein: You like it?

Mr. Pigeon: Sure.

Mr. Klein: I think we have only to look at our neighbour to the south to see how much money is being spent for election purposes. Take the primaries which are now going on. Candidates are now spending thousands of dollars on delegates for conventions so that these delegates will commit themselves either to this or that candidate for the presidency of the United States. Radio and television costs are going up. If the government were to allot radio and television time to political parties free of charge, or if they were to pay