

Election Expenses

The article goes on to say he spent a very large sum of money prior to being declared a candidate. One member earlier referred to the New Democratic Party as being centrally oriented. If we are, this could be an indication of our socialist background. However, the fact is we are less centrally oriented than any other political party.

It is interesting to note a paper that was presented on politics and the last federal election by Khayyam Z. Paltiel, Professor of Political Science at Carleton. In it he refers to the Liberal party, the one which my friend across the way recently said he agreed with whatever they did and was a candidate for that party. The Liberal party of Canada collected approximately \$6.5 million, some 60 per cent more than had been amassed in the 1968 election. Of this sum, \$600,000 was used to discharge the accumulated overdraft incurred by national headquarters and the provincial associations; \$1,322,000 was used by the national office and \$3,978,000 was distributed by provincial campaign committees. The remittance to the candidates ranged from \$4,000 to \$7,000, averaging \$6,000 in Ontario and \$600,000 remained in the hands of the members of the treasury committee. No doubt this is one of the reasons members of the Liberal party have no objection to the central control of moneys being raised prior to an election and prior to the official agent taking over in the constituencies.

Those in the Conservative party who support this provision are well aware of the fact their situation is no different. The same writer goes on to say it should be noted that while constituency allocations appear to average \$6,600, some provinces like Alberta and their constituencies were entirely self sustained. Where a member in a constituency, particularly a sitting member, is given a high priority, with the Liberals averaging \$6,000 from the central treasury and the Conservatives \$6,600, it is obvious they would be satisfied with having one chief agent to handle the collections prior to an election.

I wish to say that in my experience, that is not true. I suggest it will not be true for new developing political parties in the future. They will raise money for their election campaigns from the people in the constituencies. For this reason, it is going to be necessary for the constituency organization to appoint a constituency agent who will be responsible for collections that are made prior to the taking over of that responsibility by the official agent. I can state quite frankly that, as a member of parliament, I have never been impressed with the idea that has developed in this parliament of the individual becoming less and less important and the political party becoming more important. One does not have to go back many years to find very little consideration given in the rules of this House to the political parties, and certainly to the official function of those parties.

I suggest that the right, obligation and functions of an individual member to represent his constituency is more important to maintaining democracy than the creation of political parties and the central control they now have. I was amused when we last changed the Elections Act and eliminated the designation of a candidate's occupation, whether he be a farmer, miner, or school teacher, and whether he lived on a rural concession road, in a particular town or a particular section of the city. The name of

[Mr. Peters.]

the political party was substituted for that local identification.

The political party name can only be provided to a candidate if the party wishes to endorse him. They send the candidate a letter stating he is entitled to carry the name of that political party. This has tended to create an atmosphere of domination by political parties rather than the right of people to choose their candidate and demand that he represent them, even if it may be against the interest of some other members of his party or other members of the House. The constituents want their candidate to know their wishes and aspirations. They want to know that other members from other parts of the country are also aware of the wishes and desires of their constituents. They want their candidate to be as respectful of their wishes as he would like them to be of his.

In appointing an agent to represent a constituency, we are only extending the collective will of a group of people in a constituency to provide an agent who will obviously have to be registered with the chief agent. He will be responsible for collecting moneys prior to an election and prior to the appointment of the official agent. If it is the desire of constituents to choose their own representative, they should have the right to do so.

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It is interesting to note that in Ontario 50 collectors were involved on behalf of the Liberal party as compared to 12 in 1968. The 90 largest corporations in Ontario were canvassed personally by the national chairman, the majority in the late winter and early spring of 1972, some six months prior to the election. It may be that the chief agent, where he is nominated from national headquarters, will operate fairly close to the national chairman and he can probably represent the party reasonably well.

It may well be that the national leader, the national secretary and the national financial chairman who may make collections prior to an election would be quite satisfied to make their contributions known only to an official chief agent. It may well be, as is more likely the case, that the provinces will be doing much of the collection and therefore there will be ten agents appointed. I suppose most of us can only speak for our own ridings, but in my riding I have always depended upon a committee to make a decision as to the cost of the election. I have always allowed them, with some advice, to set the budget and I am very happy to allow them to make all the collections but I believe that because those collections are made locally, we should be entitled to a constituency agent who would be responsible for reporting the contributions which are made in that area. He could make his report to the chief agent who will of course be responsible for appointing him. I think this should be true of the other political parties in my riding. It may well be they receive contributions from the national headquarters or from provincial headquarters, but I come from northern Ontario, an area where people take their politics very seriously and I am sure all political parties secure contributions locally.

I am sure other members from northern Ontario would agree that a constituency agent would be advantageous in making a report to the national agent. It may depend on how your political party is organized. It may depend in