

I submit that if we were to remove this clause we would bring about a great deal of confusion and it would be difficult to figure out what amounts should be included in returns on election expenses. We would not know what amounts of money should be included and what should not be included under amounts paid. Further, even if the parties wanted to do the right thing they would find it extremely difficult to do so. They might do the wrong thing even though they want to do the right thing. For that reason, for the sake of clarity if for no other reason, I suggest this motion must be considered as being in order.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I thank the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) and the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard) for their contributions. I think, in making my determination, I will not be bound by considerations of procedural nicety. As both the President of the Privy Council and the hon. member for Skeena are well aware, the proposed clause before us could have been tackled in one or two ways. Either one word could have been taken out, which would have achieved the result of negating it, or the whole thing could have been knocked out with a positive motion, which also would have resulted in the clause being negated.

Therefore, I think this is not a question which the Chair ought to resolve. It seems to me this is a positive matter of principle which the House should determine one way or the other. For that reason, without going at great length into the niceties of it, I would say that the question should be put.

Mr. Howard: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the hon. member for Comox-Alberni let me say that I am sure he would like to see the subject matter of his motion placed before the House for determination. May I express certain thoughts on his behalf. Let me deal with the sense of the motion. We have just dealt with motions related to limiting expenses. The bill, in a declaratory sense, says that expenditures are to be limited; yet in fact that limit is no limit at all.

The chief agent of a party, and registered agents are authorized under the bill to spend with respect to the conduct or management of an election an amount equal to 30 cents times the number of voters on the voters' list in the riding being contested. In absolute terms, as has been mentioned before, that would permit the party to spend \$4.2 million on such an election. We have been seeking to bring about a further limitation with regard to campaign expenses. We have also brought forward suggestions with regard to the manner in which political parties are to keep books once they have concluded their campaign expenditures.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marcel Roy (Laval): Mr. Speaker, I wish to rise on a question of privilege. I am just coming from the Confederation building. There is no bus service from the Confederation building to the House of Commons. Buses are running in downtown Ottawa but the members' service—

An hon. Member: From Parliament Hill.

An hon. Member: From the Confederation building.

Election Expenses

Mr. Roy (Laval): I beg your pardon? There is no service at all, Mr. Speaker. I had to come here with the hon. member for St. Boniface (Mr. Guay), by truck—

An hon. Member: A tow truck.

Mr. Roy (Laval):—bearing licence number D16457 and driven by Mr. Arthur Rochon. We have no service at all as I just said. Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege because this has to do with services from which electors get the benefit in the final analysis. We have to be here. I came here to work like other members, but the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard) presented a motion yesterday, and it was defeated by 182 to 1. He keeps on with his filibuster. I was hoping, Mr. Speaker, that members would be provided with transportation service from the Confederation building since they cannot come to the House of Commons at the present time. As a matter of fact, the approaches to the Confederation building have not even been cleared up.

● (2120)

[*English*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I hope the Speaker of the House of Commons is never responsible for acts of God or for removing them, but I think the Chair would have to recognize that members are not able to take part in the debate tonight because of weather conditions. I think some leeway should be given to them to make their contributions on these points when the House resumes tomorrow, or next week, or the week after, or at some other time.

Mr. Howard: In January or February the weather will be about the same, Mr. Speaker. I have great sympathy with the question of privilege raised by the hon. member. I do not have my office in the Confederation Building. However, I was at the Confederation Building—not that this puts me in any different class from anybody else. I was visiting there. I came out of the Confederation Building and came up that way at about 25 minutes after seven. I did not have occasion to use a truck. I took the old-fashioned way of walking, and I arrived here in ample time.

I do not think that acts of God such as snowstorms and things of that nature should deter members from getting here. I got my feet extremely wet in the process; they are still wet. Nonetheless, I arrived here and my colleague from New Westminster is here as well. I do not know whether he walked, flew or how he got here, but he did get here.

The other reference about conducting a filibuster may be as accurate a statement as the hon. member will ever utter in this House. I am amazed at his perceptiveness, because it took him so long to discover this. Of course, he has remedies available to him and these remedies are also available to the party to which he belongs. Surely one should not be castigated for trying to examine in as close a manner as possible all the fine, intriguing points in this bill which will have a massive effect on the electorate and upon political parties. This is what we are setting out to do in this discussion.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Roy (Laval): Mr. Speaker.