

clause 99, the Social Credit Party of Canada will be unable to get more than half an hour of broadcasting time. I presume that I am not the only one to believe that this is blatant injustice.

• (2120)

Outside Parliament, in my opinion, all parties are equal. We do not work looking back on the past nor on the basis of the heavy majority of the party in power, but we keep the future in mind. The proof that all parties are equal at the dissolution of Parliament is that ten days after prorogation, we automatically lose several privileges which are granted to us as the people's servants.

When we leave Parliament, even if we remain elected members till the next election, we can no longer make telephone calls free of charge nor enjoy franking privileges.

We are all on the same footing when it comes to telephone calls and postage. This is why in my opinion the CBC should not serve a group more than another.

We know that the broadcasts will be allotted under the supervision of the CRTC. We must remember, Mr. Speaker, that these supervisors are friends of the government, that they have been hired and are paid by it.

I do not trust very much the impartiality of this group, and I dare suggest to the minister who is sponsoring the bill that he should move an amendment to clause 99.

The allocation I repeat, should be done not in favour of members who have managed to get elected at the previous election, but by taking into account the number of candidates running for each party.

Supposing that the Liberal party had 264 candidates and the Social Credit 225, in my view these figures could be used as a basis for a fair allocation of the time available to the parties.

In short I remain convinced that revealing the financing of parties is an improvement, provided there is not too much hypocrisy. But there again it will be really difficult for a party to prove complete honesty. As I pointed out, amounts emanating from large corporations will not necessarily be publicly revealed.

In short, as in most pieces of legislation, the little people who contribute to election funds will again be singled out.

An insurance company doing business in a municipality, in a province, will subscribe to the fund without having its name revealed and at the same time the owner of the small corner store or the service station, the manufacturer who contributes a few hundred dollars will get talked about.

Mr. Speaker, I feel that it is childish to believe that reports will remain confidential as called for by the spirit of the legislation.

After all, in the province of Quebec, during every election campaign the same thing happens: we see that the list of welfare recipients always becomes available to the political organizers of the party in power, who use it for blackmail purposes. I suppose that the future list of contributors to election funds will be used for the same purposes, and the strongest will win.

Election Expenses Bill

If we speak of democracy, Mr. Speaker, action will have to be taken through better distribution of television broadcast time. Since I was a child, I have been hearing now and then that elections are often dishonest and I personally think that the people will keep on thinking so if no amendment is brought to the bill under which we would be granted only half an hour of television time out of a total of 6½ hours.

The public is entitled to the truth, Mr. Speaker, and if the Liberal party has nothing to hide, its representatives in Parliament should not be afraid to share the time allotted for these broadcasts in an honest way.

In clause 8 of the bill are listed the authorized election expenses and, as a matter of fact, one may read at page 14, and I quote:

(2) The amount determined under this subsection in respect of an electoral district is the aggregate of

(a) one dollar for each of the first fifteen thousand names appearing on the preliminary lists of electors for the electoral district;

(b) fifty cents for each name in excess of fifteen thousand but not in excess of twenty-five thousand appearing on the preliminary lists of electors for the electoral district; and

(c) twenty-five cents for each name in excess of twenty-five thousand appearing on the preliminary lists of electors for the electoral district.

Finally, for the Portneuf riding that has 66,000 voters, according to the 1971 census, the candidate of each of the four parties represented in the House would be entitled to expenses amounting to \$37,500, which represents an amount much in excess of \$100,000.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that during the coming election campaign, the candidates will spend freely and that the people will be spoiled a little. After all, it is merely a little of their own money that they will be getting back.

[English]

Mr. A. D. Alkenbrack (Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to exercise the privilege of speaking in this debate on Bill C-211 to amend the Canada Elections Act and the Income Tax Act in respect of election expenses. The bill should read more appropriately, "to amend the Canada Elections Act and to allow aspirants to political office to dip into the public purse".

It is said that the bill if passed may not be used during the next election. I dare the government to make an issue of this legislation and go to the people for approval of it as it now reads. I believe if the government did so there would be an unfavourable reaction by the public. This bill affects the very basis and fundamentals of our democratic electoral system. At present, parties are given only limited recognition under our system. I understand they are to be given a little more recognition in the next election because the name of the party with which the candidate is connected is to appear on the ballot.

Since the parties so far are given only limited recognition under the system, this strengthens my statement that our elections system is the real basis of our democracy. The name of the nominated candidate is all that counts. Hon. members can look at the sides of their desks and see proof of that; their name only appears on the desk tag. I ask hon. members how they happen to be members of parliament. It is because of their own efforts, and also due