

*Election Expenses*

● (1730)

I therefore urge the House to reject this motion as amended because it will only cloud the issue and make it more difficult for elections to be fought in the spirit of fair play. Political campaigning across the country must always be undertaken in the spirit of fair play. We have never had the political bag of dirty tricks that they have used in the United States. That sort of thing is alien to Canada; we try to fight elections in a spirit of fairmindedness.

**Mr. Paproski:** The government should not use Christmas holidays as a way of blackmailing members of this House.

**Mr. Horner (Crowfoot):** We must continue to fight fair and free elections. I am not enthusiastic about the concept of the government paying election expenses. I think that will only increase the cost of elections for members and will not curb expenses. However, I am not debating the matter of expenses so much as I am debating the hon. member's amendment. I am concerned about Canadian funds from Canadian sources being used to finance Canadian election campaigns.

In the last few years we have seen Canadian nationalism come to the fore. Organizations such as the Committee for an Independent Canada have been concerned about our resources; some of them have misstated facts with regard to our oil and said that international companies own our oil. I suggest that Alberta owns 80 per cent of our oil, the rest being owned by Manitoba, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, and even Ontario which owns a small part. Obviously, Canadians are interested in seeing Canadians control Canada. There is nothing wrong with that. Also, there is nothing wrong with the spirit expressed by the initial motion, which suggests that the government ought to put up a certain portion of election expenses and that the rest of the money for fighting the election should also come from Canadian sources.

As I say, there is nothing wrong with the spirit of that motion. Nevertheless, I should like to see this House vote on and defeat the subamendment and then vote on the original motion which I think has merit. Actually, we are speaking on three amendments at the same time. They are more or less the same, each dealing with money contributed directly from Canadian sources. The concept is not bad, although how the provisions of the bill are to be policed I fail to see. At any rate, the bill attempts to correct some of the abuses which we have witnessed in years gone by, specifically in 1963 and in the last election of 1972.

Having said that, I hope more members will consider this matter. If I have misinterpreted the subamendment moved this afternoon, and misinterpreted the concept with regard to unions being located in Canada, I think the matter ought to be cleared up because as it is I think the subamendment is muddy.

**Mr. Howard:** Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member permit a question? He suggested that he may have misinterpreted the subamendment. He may have misread it. Admittedly, it is in handwritten form. I think the hon. member was looking at a photocopy of a handwritten amendment and it may be difficult to find the commas. If

[Mr. Horner (Crowfoot).]

he reads it again, he will find that the 10 per cent reference is to corporations. The subamendment speaks of corporations, of which Canadian citizens own not less than 50 per cent, and of which not more than 10 per cent of the voting stock is owned by foreign groups or persons. Then comes a comma, and then you come to the words "trade unions".

**Mr. Horner (Crowfoot):** The hon. member is quite correct. I was reading a photocopy of the handwritten subamendment and the writing is rather indistinct in places. Perhaps there was not enough ink in the machine. There is a comma after the word "persons". The subamendment, after the comma, reads, "trade unions which are located in Canada, and associations or organizations which are established pursuant to a statute of Parliament of Canada or of a province". That wording would make it more difficult for trade union money to move readily from one country to another, but it still can be done. I still have my doubts about the word "located". The wording should be "Canadian unions", period. There should be no reference, directly or obliquely, to international unions. These big international unions take our workers' money but do not spend it in Canada; they spend it in the country in which the union headquarters are located. That is what worries me.

**Mr. Don Blenkarn (Mississauga):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on the motion which the House is now considering, which concerns Canadians investing Canadian funds in Canadian elections. First, may I say that this bill was introduced in the House on June 22. When it was considered on second reading, I and others urged that the committee continue sitting during the vacation period as we knew that the committee would need to consider many amendments. Unfortunately, the committee was not organized until after October 15. The committee worked diligently and actually rebuilt this bill from stem to gudgeon. It did a fair job of producing a fine piece of election expense legislation.

We do not know if the legislation will work. The hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River (Mr. Reid) has suggested that all members may run into difficulty with regard to the legislation in the first election that is fought under it. At any rate, the bill represents a good effort by the committee. The committee should be recommended highly for the enormous amount of work it did, for its dedication in coming together for meeting after meeting and for really working hard to make sure this bill could be reported to the House well in time to be passed before Christmas.

Having spoken to a number of members, I can say that if there was any urgency with regard to this bill it probably could have been passed this afternoon, despite the number of amendments proposed. It is apparent, sir, that it is necessary for this House to be kept sitting in order to debate some of these amendments.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger):** Order, please. I remind the hon. member that the rules are strict. The debate should be strictly on motions Nos. 7, 17 and 31; there should not be general debate on other topics. I ask the hon. member to return to the motions before the House.