

save Canadian taxpayers money. One of those which is key is the clause that allows elections to be conducted without a full enumeration when they are close enough to a previous electoral event such as the recent referendum.

There is another provision which will allow, where circumstances warrant, the creation of a voters' list by a single individual rather than a pair. These things will save the system some money.

There is another set of clauses which puts the responsibility on political parties to be more involved with local returning officers and to provide them with sufficient people skilled in electoral matters to conduct a good election.

There is a provision which makes sure that at every ballot box and at every step of the process we are represented by competing political interests. It is the principle of competing political interests which is our best protection against fraud. Those are expressed in these amendments more clearly than they have ever been expressed in Canadian election law before. I think it is a very positive step forward.

To keep people from being frivolous about their candidacy, or to aid in that regard while still encouraging people to run for public office, is a bit of a moving target. It is difficult sometimes to decide and the committee has recommended basically the process which the Lortie commission brought to our attention. Part of that process will involve a few more signatures on nomination papers, 100 in the cities and less in more rural areas.

We have also taken the idea of the deposit in a couple of directions. There has been for 20 years now a \$200 deposit. That is basically raised to \$500. An additional \$500 deposit is required which is refundable solely on completion of the necessary paperwork for Elections Canada.

Elections Canada told us that a lot of candidates never did the paper work and it cost taxpayers many thousands of dollars to chase them down to get the necessary forms completed so the election was brought to a close. We are putting out a little bit of a carrot: Put up \$500. You forfeit it if you do not do the paper work; you get it back if you do the paper work. It is just a deposit on paper work.

### *Government Orders*

There is another section which proposes some limits on direct spending. Canadian election law today puts limits on direct spending for the purpose of opposing and promoting a candidate or a party, puts limits on candidates and puts limits on parties. The law itself says that no one else can spend any money.

The courts have struck that down and the Chief Electoral Officer has struck it down in one province. The Chief Electoral Officer has informed us that it is not his intention to enforce that provision. The committee has acted to put forward a few paragraphs, half a page, which would put a \$1,000 limit on people other than parties and candidates who choose to be involved in the election by promoting or opposing directly a candidate or a party.

• (1930)

The reason for that at this time is simply to square the deck, to make sure that the principle which applies to candidates of parties applies to other than candidates or parties. The committee is seized of the over-all expenditure limit issue in phase two of its work and there will be a more extensive report on those matters at the conclusion of our second report.

I hope that will provide people with at least a brief summary of what is involved. I commend the bill to the House. It has the endorsement, in almost every instance, of every member of the committee. There is a slight variation on a few matters but over all we are enthusiastic about the thrust of the bill. It indicates clearly that the work done by the Lortie commission has been helpful in our achieving consensus about some very fundamental changes.

It is a user friendly system that at the same time protects Canadians against fraud. That is why it took so many words; that is why it took so many clauses. I commend it to the House.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands):** Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to my hon. colleague, the chairman of the special committee of this House on electoral reform. He said very interesting things, as usual, but he did not really explain what the problems are with this bill. In addition, it is obvious—so it seems anyway—that his speech was intended at least in part for the leader of the government in the House of Commons who is not here today to discuss this bill. That is too bad, because I would also like to know what the hon. minister