

It is a balance that has evolved over 700 years for parliamentary democracy here and in Britain. It started from the Magna Carta and has developed to what it is today. I fear that this bill, although it is a minor piece of legislation for certain people, could upset that balance. To that extent it does concern me.

In closing, let me reiterate my respect for those who bring bills like this to the attention of the House of Commons. It permits all of us to have a very frank exchange of views as we have had this afternoon and which we do not have often enough in the House of Commons. It also gives Canadians a good opportunity to see and listen to this important exchange of views.

Finally it shows as well that members such as the member for Ottawa South deserve to be congratulated. They are not fearful of bringing the heartfelt controversial issues to the House of Commons as we all should. We were sent here to take those views we think are good ideas, expose them to the judgement of our colleagues in this Parliament, and then adopt or reject them once they have been so exposed and debated.

That is exactly what we have done this afternoon. That is why I want to offer my sincere congratulations to the member for Ottawa South.

Madam Deputy Speaker: It is the first time I have seen someone who wanted to speak on a second occasion on a bill.

If the hon. member is going on article 44, I think he has read himself what it is, he cannot bring any new aspect and he is closing the debate.

There are five minutes left. The hon. member for Ottawa South.

Mr. John Manley (Ottawa South): Madam Speaker, I certainly appreciate the right of reply afforded under the rules. I would indeed want to use it in order to reply to some of the points that have been raised.

Perhaps in doing so I will address those I consider less serious first. I think of all of the points raised, surely the least serious has to be that of the member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore who cites fiscal responsibility as a reason for defeating this bill.

If he thinks we should have an eye to fiscalism as part of our parliamentary system then I suggest he propose a bill that would extend the life of a Parliament beyond

five years. Perhaps if we did not have elections more than once a decade we could save a lot more money. If we did not have elections at all think of the money we could save.

I think his suggestion that we ought to take the cost of democracy into account is so typical of a Tory attitude, that you understand the cost of everything but the value of nothing is indicative of how spurious that point is.

With respect to the charter of rights I certainly beg to differ with the interpretation suggested that somehow this bill would interfere with freedom of expression or association. In no way does it do so. It simply recognizes the fact that electors vote. In fact on our ballots in modern times the party affiliation is indicated.

I suggest to the member who raised that point that if those who choose a party affiliation come here under that affiliation without considering the gravity of putting that affiliation beside their name on a ballot, they falsely represent themselves to the people of their electorate.

By far the most substantive concern raised with the bill is that it impedes the ability of members of Parliament to express their points of view. It would limit their willingness to express points of difference freely with the leadership of their parties.

The member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore said quintessential statement of partyism in reference to the bill. That may be going a little bit far but I would be very concerned if that view were commonly held.

The member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell raised the same point with less rhetorical flourish I think and I would be concerned if indeed that were the interpretation.

I look at it this way. First of all it is in no way a repression of the right of disagreement. Disagreements can and will occur. In the context of a relaxation of strict party discipline on votes which are not matters of confidence, I am sure no one would disagree that a measure such as the one I am proposing would become a restriction on people voting against their parties.

In the current context and with the experience of the present Parliament, it has been seen that on certain matters some parties have expelled members for voting against the party on certain issues. I do not think this bill