

Thus we would eliminate most of the election expenses. Therefore we would not need election funds anymore and as a consequence, the people would be provided with greater democracy and more freedom. I suggest that is very simple and I hope that the minister will take those suggestions into serious consideration, not only as regards television and radio, but also with respect to newspapers.

During an election campaign, it would be normal for all newspapers to be able to provide so much space to political parties. It is a normal service that they should provide. I wonder why they should be paid for that, if they should be reimbursed for something.

Whenever reporters report exciting news, whenever they run after scoops as we say in order to get news—and there are fine ones—most of the time they are not paid. One does not pay to have news published. During an election campaign, it would be quite normal for newspapers to give their readers information on all candidates, on all political parties. One does not have to pay for that; one only has to order it through a law. Again, we would eliminate much of the expenses, so much, Mr. Speaker, that if the elections branch paid the representatives in the polls, if the CRTC told all radio and television stations that so much time should be justly allotted among political parties, we would not need to have that done anymore through election funds.

If we did the same thing for the written press, there would be very little left and then we would not need to ask Canadian taxpayers to reimburse these funds. As for the expenses still outstanding, their payment could be left to the discretion of each candidate, within certain limits. We could limit them; only \$2,000 or \$3,000 would be left which should be refunded at the polls' level because, Mr. Speaker, and I want to underline this now, it would be much more logical and fair, particularly if we make a distinction between a rural and an urban riding, to reimburse expenses on the basis of the number of pools and not the number of constituents.

Mr. Speaker, I would have other remarks to make and in order that I may continue to do so tomorrow, I would like to declare that it is now 10 o'clock.

[English]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is this agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

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## PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

### Adjournment Debate

#### FISHERIES—SALMON FISHING BAN IN ATLANTIC PROVINCES—SETTLEMENT OF FISHERMEN'S CLAIMS

Mr. Tom Bell (Saint John-Lancaster): Mr. Speaker, hopefully for the last time I am raising the matter of compensation for salmon fishermen who lost their livelihood as a result of government action over one year ago. I must say that I am more than pleased to see the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Davis) in his seat. Despite all the criticisms we have levelled at him and at his activities in the fisheries branch of his department, I give him credit, truthfully, regardless of the answer he may make tonight, for being diligent in attending the late show on every occasion when I have raised this matter. That is a good lesson that some of his colleagues ought to heed.

The matter I am raising tonight was prompted by a question that I asked on June 13 in which reference was made to the number of claims that had been made. I want to be brief and will not go into the matter except to say that this is the fourth occasion on which I have raised it, and I know that other members from New Brunswick have raised this question as well.

Since I know a brief speech is necessary, it was decided, in accordance with the wisdom of the fisheries branch of the minister's department, that salmon stocks were being depleted in Atlantic Canada and that drastic action needed to be taken. Salmon fishing was therefore banned for five years on the big salmon return rivers, mainly in New Brunswick.

● (2200)

Salmon fishermen, I know, were not guilty of any wrong doing. They were not overfishing. They certainly were not responsible for the pollution of the rivers. But they suffered. They were promised, in statements by the minister and others, that they would be treated generously as compensation for their loss of income.

The period since then has been one of trial and tribulation, misstatements and misunderstanding. I hope the minister has learned a lesson not to trust some of the advice he gets from his civil servants. I am not quarrelling with him tonight. I want to try to be statesmanlike and to make a last ditch appeal to him for generous treatment of the remaining claims. Perhaps this plea will strengthen the case he may have to make when he goes to Treasury Board for the necessary money.

The minister appointed Mr. Neil Lewis, formerly of the fisheries research board, a maritimer with a great understanding of these matters, to look into the situation. He went down there. He even suffered a heart attack in endeavours to interview the fishermen on the Miramichi and Saint John rivers. He has now made his recommendation as to the final claims. It was a straightforward effort on his part. I know he dealt for at least an hour with the individual fishermen who came to see him and I feel certain that whatever he put forward is in the best interests of the fishermen and the department.

The minister has shown an interest in this situation. I shall not refer to the other problems he has encountered in the Maritimes; I merely make this last ditch appeal to him. I am not trying to jump the gun. I know the payments are probably in the offing, and I hope they will be generous