

Canada Elections Act

Mr. Benidickson: Only in respect of the 1962 figures the hon. member indicated he did not perhaps have the equivalent information. On that basis I wonder whether perhaps the Conservative reports are not in comparison.

Mr. Woolliams: I think the hon. member has made a good point. For 1962 I have not the exact figures. As for the others, I should like to table them. However, by leave, I should like to keep them on my desk as I intend to refer to them in the course of my argument and I should like to have them available in order to be accurate.

Mr. Pickersgill: The hon. member being a private member, I do not think he has any more right to table them than I have. However, he can have them included in his speech. That is what I think he has in mind.

Mr. Woolliams: That is what I mean.

Mr. Pickersgill: I am sure we should all like to have them there.

Mr. Woolliams: I thank the hon. member very much, I appreciate the suggestion made by the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillin-gate.

[Editor's note: The table above referred to is as follows:]

Cost to taxpayers for elections in Canada from 1949 to 1958 inclusive			
1949		\$4,328,118	
1953		5,380,436	
1957		7,500,000	
1958		9,800,000	
Total cost to all candidates in elections from 1949 to 1958 inclusive			
1949	Liberal	\$1,001,049	
	Progressive-Conservative	904,505	
	C.C.F.	176,830	
	Others	
			\$2,213,006
1953	Liberal	1,287,138	
	Progressive-Conservative	890,177	
	C.C.F.	159,149	
	Social Credit	82,203	
	Others	
			2,535,049
1957	Liberal	1,669,669	
	Progressive-Conservative	1,261,092	
	C.C.F.	214,431	
	Social Credit	141,796	
	Others	
			3,398,302
1958	Liberal	1,108,608	
	Progressive-Conservative	1,874,083	
	C.C.F.	201,060	
	Social Credit	69,252	
	Others	
			3,275,611

The reason I have outlined these figures is in order to point out that in 1949, it would have cost the country then, if they paid all expenses, approximately \$6 million. In 1953 it would have cost the country about \$8

[Mr. Speaker.]

million. In 1957 it would have cost the country about \$11 million; and in 1958 it would have cost the country approximately \$13 million. With regard to the question of specified expenditures being paid out of the general revenues of Canada, I suggest we must realize that elections are now costing a lot of money, particularly the last three elections which in some instances have resulted in minority groups as in 1957 and 1962, and in addition we do not know what is before us at the present time. On that basis I say that I am opposed to such a large amount of money being paid out of the general revenues of Canada when the money has to be provided by the taxpayers of this country. That is the first point I wish to make.

The second point I wish to make, as I said at the beginning, is that every person is different and reacts differently to circumstances. May I also suggest that in this great country each of our 265 constituencies is different. What it might cost one candidate or a number of candidates in one constituency to conduct an election campaign might be an inadequate amount in another constituency and too much in another.

By way of example I want to refer to my own constituency of Bow River. Those few members of the house who have not visited the province of Alberta may be unfamiliar with the fact that in that constituency alone there are five distinct industries representing five distinct interests. In one part there is the lumber industry. Then we have the national parks. We have the anthracite coal area of Canmore and the subbituminous or soft coal area of Drumheller. We have a mixed farming area north of Calgary and a grain farming area surrounding Drumheller and Munson. One third of the city of Calgary is also in the constituency of Bow River and in the Thornecliffe area are the entrepreneurs and in the Forest Lawn area are the workers. I suggest that it might cost a candidate more to campaign in that constituency than in one where the only industry is farming or coal mining, or a constituency comprised solely of city people.

The second thought I would put forward with regard to setting a specified amount for this purpose, in addition to the fact that constituencies are different, is that today election campaigns are different from what they used to be. Today we have television which is a very expensive medium, and if one party uses it the other party uses it. What would it cost the country if all election expenses were paid out of the general revenue fund of Canada?

I should like to ask the hon. member this question. How would we control the number of candidates running, for election? In the