

**Senator Murray:** It is not a leak. I called the Privy Council Office.

**Senator Frith:** No. I asked, "Legally?"

**Senator Perrault:** It must have been slipped under the door.

**Senator Murray:** It wasn't slipped under the door. It was passed on May 20, and I called someone in the Privy Council Office, who sent it to me just before the Senate sat today.

There are some very familiar names on these redistribution commissions. The former Premier of Prince Edward Island, now the Honourable Mr. Justice Campbell, is the chairman of the commission of that province. The former Attorney General of Nova Scotia, now the Honourable Mr. Justice Pace, is now the commissioner of that province. The former head of the Combines Investigation Branch, now the Honourable Mr. Justice Henry, is the chairman of the commission of this province. These are just a few of the names that leap off the page. I am sure that in such competent hands—

**Senator Flynn:** They were very well picked.

**Senator Murray:**—it will be possible for these commissions to complete their work. I was delighted with these appointments, because the government had 60 days, from March 30, in which to appoint these commissions, and they accomplished the task in approximately 40 days.

The point I make, therefore, is that the process can be speeded up and that we need not expand the process to fill the maximum allowable time. It just might be that if the rest of the process proceeds as expeditiously, or more expeditiously, we could have the redistribution in shape for the next federal election, certainly if it takes place in 1984. Otherwise, honourable senators, I have no comments to make on the bill. I am primarily concerned, as I have indicated, with what is not in the bill, and with those matters that I insist should be reformed and attended to by the government and Parliament before the next federal election.

**Hon. John M. Godfrey:** Honourable senators, Senator Murray has made some very useful suggestions about indexing certain things, in effect, and there is one that I would like to add, which is the \$100 limit on disclosure as far as contributions to campaign funds are concerned. If you are going to index other things, I suggest that that should be raised to at least \$200.

**Senator Murray:** I thank the honourable senator for that suggestion. I hasten to say that I carefully avoided suggesting that the expense limits should be indexed to inflation, but I did say that the government and Parliament should consider whether the expense limits should be raised to take some account of recent inflation. There may be a case—indeed, the case has been made—for the proposition that in a number of larger rural and northern constituencies, which may, however, have smaller populations, there should be special and higher limitations. I simply make the point that these matters can be, and ought to be, disposed of well before the writ is issued for the next general election.

**Senator Godfrey:** I only used the word "index" for brevity.

**Senator Flynn:** Your suggestion is based on your experience as a collector?

**Hon. Louis-J. Robichaud:** I would like to have some information on what was referred to as a permanent voters' list. Apparently, it exists in Quebec, and I would like to know something about its functioning.

A permanent voters' list, to me, seems impossible. I checked this afternoon the list of senators here, and I find that 26 are missing since 1976. If we want to project that, how can a list be permanent with some going and some coming? I would like to ask for some clarification. I really do not know how it could work.

**Senator Flynn:** It is revised continuously by the returning officer.

**Senator Frith:** In general, honourable senators, what happens—they do this in Australia—and the reason it will cost extra money, as I understand it, is that it just becomes one of the things you have to do when you move. You have to give notification, and there is a commission that keeps track of where everybody moves to, and then those moves are incorporated into the permanent list.

**Senator Flynn:** And there is a revision before an election.

**Senator Frith:** There is a revision before an election. That is the Australian system, I think. It does require, as Senator Robichaud implies, a great deal of additional attention in following the moves that the population makes in order to keep the list, as effectively as possible, always up to date. That is why it costs extra money beyond what is already spent. His point is, as I understand Senator Murray, that it is worth it.

**Hon. John M. Macdonald:** Honourable senators, I just want to say a few words to show that I am in agreement with the bill and its principle. The idea of shortening election campaigns to 50 days is, I think, a very good one. Like Senator Murray, I would have liked to see a few other things considered at this time, but that has not been done.

So far as the 50-day idea is concerned, I think I am right in saying that the government can give a longer period than 50 days if they wish, but 50 is the minimum. I have no doubt that in many cases that would be so. Nomination 28 days before polling day does present some difficulty. I can anticipate that at the time of the first election under the new system it might be difficult to arrange to hold conventions, particularly in the smaller areas where the three parties might want to hold their conventions at approximately the same time. We do not always have large halls. There might be one hall, and all the parties cannot use the hall at the same time. However, I dare say that difficulty can be overcome.

● (1610)

I am not impressed with the argument that we should have permanent lists. Enumeration is a good idea. It gives us a completely new list. It is not all that difficult to make. There is the idea that the returning officer must gather all the enumerators and instruct them, and so on. But it takes very little time. The parties usually can get their enumerators without very