

The Address—Mr. F. Roy

However, the only ones concerned were Social Crediters who, it must be said, gathered all their votes in Quebec and, in so doing, obtained more votes than there were voters in six other provinces. By bringing in more than 513,000 ballots in the province of Quebec, members of the Social Credit Party of Canada obtained more votes than the total of votes in Nova Scotia where 11 members of Parliament were elected democratically. The members of the Social Credit Party of Canada obtained more votes than the total of the votes in New Brunswick, which added up to 337,000 and which resulted in the democratic election of 11 members of Parliament. The Social Credit Party of Canada obtained as many votes in Quebec alone as the total of the popular vote in Manitoba. With 513,000 votes in Manitoba, 14 members of Parliament were elected democratically.

I could go even further and talk about Prince Edward Island, and also about Saskatchewan, where 489,000 votes elected fourteen members to the House of Commons, that is fewer votes than the members of the Social Credit Party of Canada obtained. In the case of Newfoundland, the figure is 201,000. Let us make a quick mathematical operation. I have taken the liberty to do so since this seems to be the popular thing to do these days. Therefore, if we divide the total of the votes obtained by the Progressive Conservative Party by the number of Progressive Conservative members, we find that each member of this minority party—as we know that no party holds a majority in this House—represents 32,000 voters who exercised their right to vote. As for the Liberals, they represent in the House of Commons an average of 40,000 votes.

● (1300)

An hon. Member: That is a lot!

Mr. Roy (Beauce): It is a little better. The members of the New Democratic Party represent in the House of Commons 78,800 votes each. However, the five members of the Social Credit Party of Canada each represent 105,000 votes. Mr. Speaker, that is 330 per cent more than what each Conservative member represents in the House. Were we to calculate the proportional representation of the members of the Social Credit Party of Canada in relation to the vote obtained by the Conservative members, we would be entitled to 16 members in the House instead of five. Nobody would then question the recognition of our party or the privileges which it should obtain. If I did the same calculation with the votes given to the Liberal members, we would get 13 members in the House. This is a higher number than the one mentioned in the only provision on political parties granting an additional allowance to the party leader. Mr. Speaker, one must be careful when attempting to regulate democracy. Mr. Speaker, I move the adjournment of the House since it is one o'clock.

[Mr. Roy (Beauce).]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It being one o'clock, I do now leave the chair until 2 p.m.

At one o'clock, the House took recess.

● (1400)

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

Mr. Roy (Beauce): When the House took recess for the lunch break, Mr. Speaker, I had just started to deal with something I consider of utmost importance because it relates to our civil liberties. As a matter of fact, our civil liberties have been so much trampled on that we do not realize the extent of their erosion. Since when, in Canada, does Parliament have the authority to rule on the existence of parties in the House? When, before today, did Parliament ever assume this right? Never. But the climate is such that it dares do so. This is a serious matter and gives one food for thought.

Before his appointment to the American Senate, Senator Irwin had been chief justice of the supreme court of his state. He had been one of the first American judges to have a convicted murderer released because he had felt that the rules of procedure had not been adhered to and the accused's rights respected. In support of his action, he had stated that what really matters is not the final verdict rendered in a criminal case but the way this verdict came about, for it reflects on civilization as a whole.

What matters here is not the existence of two, three, four or five political parties, but the right of the people to join them. One party more or less is of no consequence, but the manner in which it appears or disappears bears witness to the depth and value of our democratic liberties. And what is the first principle of the parliamentary right? It is to protect the minorities in the House against all possible abuses from the majority. That is the situation in which we find ourselves today, where attempts are made against the political choice of the people.

Mr. Speaker, in our political system the fact that five, six or twenty members of the Social Credit Party of Canada sit in the House is basically a transitory phenomenon on the political level, just as it is for 60, 80 or 120 members of the Progressive Conservative Party, but the way these five, six or ten members of the Social Credit party are treated in the House is concrete evidence of the respect and consideration the government has for the right of the people to elect their own representatives. The fact that the Progressive Conservative Party acted that way in this affair came as no surprise since it has always despised the Quebec voters and still does. This is certainly unfortunate but needs not be proven any more. The fact that no Liberal noticed anything is just an exchange of courtesies.