

*Canada Elections Act*

names of their backers? We are asking that question merely to know why the principle of equality among citizens is not enforced as far as the obligation to disclose the sources of campaign funds is concerned?

This is not the first time that the question is raised and remains unanswered. Indeed, the same unacceptable excuses are given and the people who are always asking the same questions are far from satisfied. They know how to get information and are quite aware that as far as the excise tax is concerned, there are some injustices.

We do remember that at a certain time the Canadian government passed a legislation to levy new taxes. All taxpayers were supposed to pay to the federal government the tax provided in the new legislation. But through amendments and withdrawals of some customs tariff items, we managed to establish a favoured list. The best example of this is to be found in Bill C-198, that was passed on June 23, 1966. I take the liberty to quote some excerpts of that bill according to which would be exempted from the federal 12 per cent sales tax:

(f) tractors...for use exclusively in the operation of logging, such operation to include the removal of the log from stump to skidway, log dump, or common or other carrier.

Nothing was forgotten. In fact, the article even added this, that can be read in the text, and I quote:

(h) machinery, logging cars, cranes...blocks and tackle and wire rope—

All these articles were also deleted from the famous taxable machinery list. While loggers still pay the federal sales tax on power-saws, special iron-capped shoes, and iron helmets, the wearing of which is compulsory, the lumber company which buys equipment is only required to sign a form and forward to the government to get back the 12 per cent excise tax. All mining and oil companies which develop Canadian resources enjoy the benefits provided for in the item which appears on page 6076 of *Hansard* for June 7, 1966, and I quote:

(e) gasoline-powered and diesel powered self-propelled trucks...for off-highway use exclusively at mines and quarries.

The following were also exempt from the famous tax:

(j) machinery and apparatus, including drilling bits...for use in exploration for or discovery or development of petroleum, natural gas or minerals.

While those companies are exempt from the famous 12 per cent tax, the worker who uses

[Mr. Godin.]

the tools essential to the maintenance of his machines always has to pay it. Once again, we have a double standard. And oil companies, forestry development companies and mining companies are just the ones we suspect of contributing to the old parties' campaign funds.

As regards income tax, the situation is the same: one rate for the worker and a different rate for the companies. As far as I am concerned, most of the injustices that Canadians have to suffer at the present time have their origin in campaign funds. Because they contribute to the latter, exploiters of all kinds successfully press for the passing of the legislation of their choice and in the manner that is most profitable to them. The present scarcity of money, which is an invention of the banks that wish to increase their interest rates, is a further example.

● (4:40 p.m.)

Recently I gave a copy of the Canadian Constitution to a young man of 19. He was quite surprised to learn that, according to the Constitution, the central government has the right and the duty to fix interest rates. However, he did not see why banks are now increasing their rate of interest. Proofs in hand, I explained to him that conditions had changed since the Canadian government gave up its rights in this regard by passing on March 21, 1967, Bill C-222 respecting banks and banking.

In passing this bill containing a very precise section in that connection, the government was simply giving up its rights and privileges regarding the establishment of interest rates.

Though this bill was sponsored by the former Minister of Finance, the hon. member for Eglinton (Mr. Sharp), under the Liberal government of Mr. Pearson, I shall never forget that on March 21, 1967, 60 Progressive Conservative members preferred to abstain from voting and did not take part in the division. Therefore, for all these reasons and many more, I suspect also that banks contribute important amounts of money to the campaign funds of the old parties.

On the occasion of the reform of the Canada Elections Act, I think it is necessary not to request an explanation but to call for the final suppression of this unjustified practice whereby the big political parties are free to collect funds for their campaign treasury without having to disclose the identity of the contributors. This is clear! We demand that the big political parties be