

Adjournment Debate

Over the past couple of years the commission has held cross-country hearings and has received hundreds of submissions, some of which deal with accounting issues. The commission was given a very broad mandate by the government and was asked to do a comprehensive review of the electoral legislation. I am advised that the commission is expected to make its report in January of 1992 and one would fully expect that commission, after over two years of work, would address the issue of election expenses and make appropriate recommendations for this House to consider.

The amendment proposed in this bill may well be worth while. I am not disputing that. I cannot find myself supporting it at this time because, as the member for Kingston and the Islands indicated, we need a larger package of reforms and I think we should be looking at the larger context of electoral reform before we proceed with any one single amendment. There may well be other provisions in the Canada Elections Act which would need to be amended as a consequence of this.

In conclusion I just want to say that I think members would be well advised to wait for the report of the royal commission which will be received shortly.

[*Translation*]

Madam Deputy Speaker: The time provided for the consideration of Private Members Business has now expired. Pursuant to Standing Order 96(1), this item is dropped from the Order Paper.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*English*]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

RACISM

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce): Madam Speaker, on September 19, I asked the Prime Minister if he would implement stronger measures to combat increased racism in Canada, but unfortunately I did not get a very satisfactory answer at that time. I have referred the matter to the adjournment debate tonight.

I pointed out on that occasion that during the past summer there were several serious racist incidents in

Canada, particularly in Halifax, in Montreal, and in other Canadian cities as well.

A major story was printed in the *Montreal Gazette* of July 31, 1991, following the killing of Marcellus Francois, a young black person by a Montreal policeman. The *Montreal Gazette* reported it and the headline was as follows: "Race Relations; Official Silence is Deafening. Politicians have to speak out to ease tensions and to soothe tempers".

Not enough action and not enough leadership have been shown by political leaders at all levels, and that is why I was asking our government to take more effective action.

I realize that the responsibility for these incidents is not just the responsibility of the federal government. It is important that leadership be shown. I think there are many things we could do at the federal government level that would show examples to the other levels of government, the provincial governments and the municipal governments. We could implement more affirmative action, especially in the justice system, with our police forces, in our courts, in our prosecution and in our parole.

Unfortunately we do not see many black faces in our justice system. Consequently, when the matter of law enforcement is necessary, it is very often whites against blacks in certain situations.

In Montreal over the last few years, three young blacks have been killed by the police, two without cause in the cases of Anthony Griffin and Presley Leslie. There is the recent case of Marcellus François, and that case is still under investigation.

There seems to be an attitude at times that if you are black or if you are an Indian, then you must be guilty, and our justice system reacts accordingly.

In Halifax, on September 12 of this year a special committee said that sweeping changes were needed in Nova Scotia to deal with increased racism. That committee was set up after the riots which took place in the month of July. That committee made 94 recommendations, some of which applied to the federal government and in particular to the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency. All the recommendations of the royal commission with respect to Donald Marshall have not yet been implemented.