

### *Election Expenses*

who form that party. I believe it is possible for the committee to look again at this aspect and do something about it.

I will try to finish my remarks. I am afraid I misled the hon. lady from Kingston and the Islands (Miss MacDonald), who might be seeking the floor after me, when I told her I would be finishing earlier. I apologize to her and I shall try to finish in the next two or three minutes.

**Miss MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands):** Thank you.

**Mr. Lewis:** I believe the limits of expenditure for parties and for individual candidates are still too high. They may not be too high ten years from now, but they are still too high. They permit a party and its candidates to spend a total of \$7 million or \$8 million dollars. I made a rough calculation; it works out to a total of about \$4.5 million for the party on the basis of 30 cents for each elector, and another several million with respect to the total of the candidates of that party if it runs candidates in all or most of the constituencies.

For any party to be able to spend seven, eight or nine million dollars in total during an election is still too expensive a proposition, particularly when one considers that the federal treasury is paying money out to the candidates. I realize, of course, that it is included in the ceiling—I am not under the impression that it is in addition to the ceiling—but if money is to be paid out in various ways then I think it should be possible to make election expenses much more modest than the bill now contemplates. I wish it were possible to persuade the minister to lower the ceiling so that we would have no need to worry about the amounts which might be spent by some other candidate or by some other party.

I read the clause about deductibility from tax of contributions to parties or candidates a little differently than did the hon. member for Shefford (Mr. Rondeau). It is possible to read this clause so as to mean that the deduction is applicable to \$500 in total. The minister might ask the law officers to look at it again because some of my hon. friends have asked me questions about it, too. He might make sure there is no possibility of interpreting it in a way which he did not intend—that a person could make a number of contributions, tax being deductible with respect to each. The minister seems to indicate by movements of his head that he agrees and it is the intention of the government to set a limit of \$500 upon total contributions. If there is any doubt, the clause should be amended so as to make that intention clear. I will simply add that I would prefer the limit to be \$300.

I end my remarks in the same way as I began. I congratulate the minister for having brought in a bill which does contain the major elements of good election expenses law. I am very happy to know that my hon. friends and I have made some contribution to the nature and thrust of that bill. My hon. friend from Regina-Lake Centre committed us yesterday to having no more than two speakers in this debate. He was the first; I am the second and the last from my party. I hope with all my heart that it will be possible to end this process of second reading today and send the measure to committee. I hope the committee will act on it expeditiously, and that the House will be able to

[Mr. Lewis.]

pass it on third reading within the next few days in the hope that its provisions may be available in time for the next election so that our democratic process will be improved. I am sure everyone agrees that improvement is desirable.

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## PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel):** It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 40, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of the adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Central Nova (Mr. MacKay)—Natural Resources—Statement by Minister of Regional Economic Expansion that more processing must be done in Canada—Government position; the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Knight)—Agriculture—Termination of Prairie Farm Assistance Act—Disposition of funds—possible establishment of disaster program; the hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona (Mr. Roche)—Manpower—Possible unification of Local Initiatives and Opportunities for Youth programs—Request for statement.

● (1700)

It being five o'clock, the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper, namely, private bills, notices of motions (papers), public bills.

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## PRIVATE BILLS

[English]

CENTRE AMUSEMENT CO. LIMITED

**Mr. Hugh Poulin (Ottawa Centre)** moved that Bill S-6, respecting Centre Amusement Co. Limited, as reported (without amendment) from the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Private Bills and Standing Orders, be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

**Mr. Poulin** moved that the bill be read the third time and do pass.

Motion agreed to and bill read the third time and passed.

**Mr. MacEachen:** Mr. Speaker, I understand it is agreed that we proceed now until six o'clock or earlier to discuss the objections that have been placed before us by members from Alberta with regard to the report of the Electoral Boundaries Commission.