So he said at the time, and there were two more components in the program of the Prime Minister.

[*English*]

I will read to you from page 9 of the document of the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) of September 9. He said:

> The fifth component of this comprehensive approach to public sector ethics is the undertaking of this Government to introduce into the House of Commons, at an early date—

—remember the words "early date", Mr. Speaker—

> —legislation to monitor lobbying activity and to control the lobbying process by providing a reliable and accurate source of information on the activities of lobbyists. We will require, among other things, paid lobbyists to register and identify their clients.
>
> This will enable persons who are approached by lobbyists for Canadian corporations, associations and unions, and by agents on behalf of foreign governments and other foreign interests, to be clearly aware of who is behind the representation.

The Prime Minister continued:

> I have accordingly asked my colleague, the Minister of Consumer and Corporate affairs, to prepare, on an urgent basis, legislation to govern lobbying activity.

This document is from September 9, 1985. Days and months passed. Just before Christmas, 1986, the then Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs stood up in the House of Commons and informed us that he would table in the House, not a Bill or any other means to control the activities of lobbyists, but the consultation or discussion paper which I have here, entitled *Lobbying and the Registration of Paid Lobbyists*. The document is quite extensive. It describes different alternatives for registering lobbyists, including the alternative of doing nothing at all. Of course, this was a great disappointment to a number of us who were hoping at the time that we would see early legislation. However, the positive aspect of this report is that the issue was referred to a parliamentary committee. Unfortunately, I have little use for the contents of the report itself because they were not very inspiring for our committeee. However, the issue was sent to the Standing Committee on Elections, Privileges and Procedure in early 1986.

● (1530)

That committee consisted of Members from all sides of the House and I want to give credit to Members from all Parties who were on that committee, under the able chairmanship of the Hon. Member for Peace River (Mr. Cooper). We had extensive hearings in Ottawa, Washington, and Sacremento, California. We heard the opinion of Canadian lobbyists, Canadian pressure groups, ordinary Canadians, as well as Members of Parliament about the question of the registration of lobbyists. In Washington and California we interviewed lobbyists and legislators.

It became apparent from our hearings that lobbyists are seen very differently in the United States than they are in Canada. For instance, lobbyists in Canada will use every trick in the book to call themselves anything but lobbyists. They will call themselves government consultants, consultants in government affairs, public relations personnel, and many other names. In the United States, however, people involved in that profession are very proud to call themselves lobbyists. Indeed, in Washington lobbyists will identify themselves as such, in the phone book and elsewhere.

It was interesting to note that most Canadian lobbyists were reluctant to have a registration system or any system that would impose any burden on them. The few who were in favour, with some exceptions, wanted a system of self-registration that was administered by their profession. However, in the United States most lobbyists thought it was perfectly normal to have a system to register their activities. Indeed, they had no difficulty with the principle that they should register what they do.

Members of the committee asked lobbyists in the United States if they objected to registration. They agreed that they were conducting private transactions on behalf of private corporations, but that their job was to communicate with public officials. They felt that it was only normal in that case that they should be asked to register. Indeed, some of the lobbyists in Washington to whom we talked were actually using the registry in the United States as a form of advertising. They told us that they would use the registry to show potential clients all the customers for whom they had lobbied over the last year, and used it as a tool to show a potential client their efficiency. Needless to say, the different attitude shown by the Americans was fascinating.

Once our hearings were completed outside the country last summer, the committee came back to Parliament and proceeded to draft a preliminary report. Let me repeat that Members on all sides of the House were quite co-operative but, unfortunately, the year progressed quickly and our work was interrupted by the summer recess. Furthermore, the Prime Minister decided to end the session and start afresh—we all know how well that worked—which delayed the committee's work for another month. In November the committee received a new reference and the members of the committee went back to work.

I believe that this unanimous report represents a compromise of members who tempered their views in committee. I sought less than I wanted in the report and probably some Members opposite put a little more in the report than they really wanted.

While a unanimous report is not unique, when one considers that most of us began from very different points of views on the issue of registration of lobbyists, the fact that we managed to reconcile our differences was remarkable. I never thought that Members on the government side who sat on the same committee as the Member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez) and I could ever agree on the time of day. However, partly because of the good chairmanship by the Member for Peace River, and the co-operation of everyone, we managed to agree on much more than that. Ultimately we agreed on the very substantive report that was tabled in the House earlier this year.