

Supply

directors of Curragh Resources, a member who is supposed to consider what happened at Westray like all of the others in an objective fashion?

We could go on with this, but as I said yesterday, that House is a Liberal house and a house of glass, silence within. They have a curious cast willing and able to condemn others but not to see the wrongs that they have perpetrated themselves. I do not condemn them for having within their number people who are going to make mistakes and people who we would prefer not to have here.

Just in case the hon. member thinks that I am not being completely fair and non-partisan in this, yes the Ontario government has had its difficulties and we have had a circus of condemnation of that entire government on the basis of the errors of a few. Even as I stand here, in the province of Saskatchewan, some MLAs are being accused of improper use of government funds. This transcends a party but it should be put in proper perspective.

I see where Henry Kissinger said that 90 per cent of politicians give the other 10 per cent a bad name. That is the kind of stereotype we hear about. It is less than 10 per cent of politicians who give 90 per cent a bad name. Most people in this place are here because they believe they have something to contribute to the country. We should not engage in a game that tarnishes the whole endeavour of politics in the way this kind of debate does. We are collaborating with those who, to their own advantage, would like to take politics down to the lowest level. I submit that the hon. minister was correct. All too often the press gives itself the power to run a country by words and condemn those who really have the responsibility all too much.

• (1700)

Unless I be misunderstood, I am disappointed and I think hon. members on all sides should be disappointed that the rules and the ethical guidelines that the Prime Minister introduced in 1985 were not followed by proper legislation governing conflict of interest and that we have not yet adopted a set of ethical guidelines for all of us in here. If you have any doubts about where my party stands, we support it.

I have to agree with my colleague sitting here that it is not rules, regulations and bureaucracy that will do it. It is to have a commitment that this life we live is not a life to advantage ourselves. I mean in the sense of lining our pockets, but I also mean in terms of making others on the slimmest of suspicions be the object of punishment and calumny for political advantage. That is wrong.

The highest form of ethical behaviour is to come to this place and behave in a fashion that reflects well on the people of this country, but more than anything else we are here to act for the welfare of a nation of which we must be proud or we would not be here.

I think it would be the preference of most Canadians that we stop the name calling. Oh, no, that does not mean to disregard the wrong that we do, but it is about time we put more emphasis on those things that matter most to people. We must engage, as we were elected to do, in the process of governance and representing those who sent us here.

I hope that I do not have to get into a debate ever again which is reflected in name calling, scandal mongering and accusations of guilt of those who have not been proven guilty. If there is wrong-doing, let us root it out, but let us root it out on the basis of fair definitions of appropriate conduct in this place. The best way to do that is if the government were to introduce Bill C-43 and get it adopted in this House as soon as possible.

Mr. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence): Madam Speaker, I am so happy to hear the member finally get to the points at issue in the debate. If he was really sincere about talking about conflict of interest guidelines or about those practices and regulations that are going to bring honour to members in this House, then he might have followed his own advice and turned his oratorical skills in that direction at the very beginning.

It is unfortunate that we engaged in cheap, partisan shots that have a very selective view of the history of this House, of all three parties and of individuals who have served in this House.

I am not going to descend to the same kind of name calling by innuendo practised by members of his own party, but if he cares to learn some of those names, I will be happy to give him a list. I must say that if the road to Heaven and to propriety is paved with self-righteous indignation, the hon. member on this issue at least would probably be behind the wheels of a Lamborghini.