

The only kind of declaration that will satisfy the Canadian people and this House is an open and complete declaration by ministers of the Crown of all their holdings, and not all the blind trusts, open trusts, frozen trusts—sending the press up to the Privy Council offices on a wild goose hunt to find nothing. What have you got to hide?

Mrs. Sauv : Nothing.

Mr. Grafftey: You say nothing. Then tell us. If it is nothing, then let us see. Because only with this kind of open and full declaration will the Canadian people and this House be satisfied, and will the government led by the right hon. Prime Minister have played a leadership role in some small way in making this institution a little more meaningful.

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): We have just listened to some real oratory and some excellent positive suggestions by the member for Brome-Missisquoi (Mr. Grafftey).

I think that in taking part in a debate of this nature, in the ten minutes allotted to me I might just lay what I would call an introduction. I think that we as Canadians can be proud, looking over our history, and at the various governments—we have had two kinds to date, Liberals on the one hand and Conservatives on the other—that we have been fortunate to have experienced relatively few scandals of any significance which pertain to conflict of interest.

The first thing to remember is that no matter what rules we may lay down, the morality of the people themselves who serve in this chamber is of primary importance. I cannot forget the lessons I learned in political science from George Britnell, who was a great political scientist in the Province of Saskatchewan. He said you can legislate anything, but you can never really legislate morality. So I think that really the first few words that are necessary to set the tone for what I have to say are that we have been very fortunate in the kind of Canadians who have come here, and who are representative of Canadians everywhere in every segment of society; and our scandals as we look over history have been pretty unimportant. We have, therefore, been pretty fortunate and we can be quite proud as Canadians.

I think the most important part of this debate arises out of the amendment moved by our leader. I would hope, looking at it, that having been considered by both sides of the House, it would receive unanimous consent and endorsement. To my mind, if that happened it would be monumental because the first thing to do is to differentiate between the responsibilities of a cabinet minister and of a member of parliament.

All of us realize that to become members of parliament under our particular system of government we must first be elected. But when we are appointed cabinet ministers our responsibilities become entirely different from those of ordinary members. I want to draw a few illustrations, because you can use rhetoric but you need to get down to brass tacks when you are considering the difference between a cabinet minister and a member of parliament.

Conflict of Interest

Let us take a few examples. Consider the Bank Act. Members of the cabinet are the first to know whether they are going to take the 6 per cent ceiling off interest rates. They are privy to this knowledge long before other members of parliament. A cabinet minister is armed with knowledge that no other member of parliament possesses. Anyone with any knowledge of business knows that once interest rates are free the price of bank stock is bound to increase. We saw this very thing happen when the Bank Act was changed, when the interest rate was allowed to run free and the ceiling of 6 per cent was removed. The value of the stock increased. Even on the market today, in its most depressed state since 1970, the values of bank shares are still greater on the Toronto and Montreal stock exchanges than they were on the day it was announced that the Bank Act would be changed.

Another good example is in the field of transportation. The Minister of Transport and his cabinet colleagues were the first to know that a big airport was to be built and that, as a consequence, a great deal of property would be expropriated. Of course if land is to be expropriated it is subject to changes in value. This is why there have to be rules for ministers to prevent them making substantial sums of money either for themselves or their friends.

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One hon. member talked about running a country which had a budget of \$26 billion. That is a large amount; of course the government is the largest enterprise that we have in this country. But we also have people who are privy to knowledge concerning the gross national product, which is subject to changes in the field of taxation, to decisions made by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) and other ministers, which affect the shares of corporations. Thus people are armed with this knowledge. This is why we need men and women who have sufficient integrity not to use this information for their material gain and enrichment.

The amendment now before the House is suggesting that we start at the top, where the decisions are made, when it comes to dealing with conflict of interest. I think it is a monumental suggestion, and I hope it receives 100 per cent support. Surely we can forget partisan viewpoints in this regard. It was this party that initially suggested this debate, and it was the government House leader who came forth with a motion. Our leader came forth with an amendment that is practical from the point of view of dealing seriously and responsibly with this question of conflict of interest.

The second point I want to make, which is most important in terms of the cabinet, concerns the image of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau). The Prime Minister of this country must always set an example. If he is ever careless in so far as a conflict of interest is concerned, or if he leaves a wrong impression or does something that gives a wrong impression, his image suffers.

I should like to pay a compliment to two prime ministers who served during the time I have served. I refer to the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) who, whatever the critics said about him, was above reproach in regard to setting an example of the kind I have mentioned; and to the prime minister before him,