

*Conflict of Interest*

There is in one part that sense of happiness. But there is also a sense of sadness that, in fact, such legislation is required at all. Unfortunately, the legislation is required.

Why is it required? We could speculate on that for the rest of the afternoon and probably for the next weeks and months and never arrive at a final conclusion. In so far as I am concerned, I am of the opinion that these stricter rules are necessary because of the fact that rules in the past have been looked through much like an accountant goes through the taxation Act, in other words, attempting to find loopholes rather than the spirit of the legislation. When that happens it is unfortunate because, of course, if one Member of the House is found to be in a situation of conflict of interest in a certain measure, albeit not totally, that casts a dark shadow over all Members of Parliament.

• (1640)

Nevertheless, as an opposition Member, if we on this side of the House, or for that matter, a government Member is of the opinion that another Member has in any way abused the privileges that were given to him or her by the electors, it is of course his or her duty to report that publicly in order that the people of Canada can judge upon it. It is also the duty of that Member not to make allegations which would be unfounded, because that would cast the dark shadow, to which I referred earlier, unnecessarily and without foundation. That would ultimately ruin the credibility, not only of the person who made the accusation, but also many times of an innocent victim.

Today we are discussing Bill C-114, a Bill introduced in the House on February 24, 1988. How did we get into this mess? Well, it is difficult to say. Let me read a few quotes which would perhaps assist the House and Canadians in understanding about conflict of interest, abuse of power, and patronage.

On May 24, 1983, a prominent Canadian stated: "There'll be jobs for Liberals and NDPers too after I've been Prime Minister for 15 years and I can't find a living breathing Tory in the country". That was printed in *The Globe and Mail* on May 24, 1983.

On July 9, 1984, the same prominent Canadian stated: "I commit myself to set up criteria for quality which will impress the Canadian people. I think that what took place is completely unacceptable in an open democratic society. We are going to reform this instrument of our national life", referring to patronage.

On July 16, 1984, the same prominent Canadian said about patronage that it is a "fraud, a deceit and a sham". On that same date, the same prominent Canadian stated: "The method of making appointments could be corrected by dramatic measures . . . We are going to bring in a brand new dimension to them of objectivity and representation and fairness for all Canadians". On the same day, this Canadian, referring to his previous speech of May 24, 1983, stated: "I was talking to Tories then and that's what they want to hear. Talking to the

Canadian public during an election campaign is something else".

**Mr. Rodriguez:** Who said that?

**Mr. Boudria:** An Hon. Member asks who said that. In July, 1984, the same person said about a political appointee: "There's no whore like an old whore".

**Mr. Rodriguez:** I know who that is.

**Mr. Boudria:** I am not sure if those words are parliamentary, but I am sure of who made the statements to which I have just referred.

**Mr. Rodriguez:** Now I know.

**Mr. Boudria:** Let me quote a statement made on July 19, 1984, considering patronage. The same individual stated that he would "never resort to that kind of attitude". On July 20, 1984, the same prominent Canadian stated: "The overriding criteria will be competence and a willingness to serve Canada". Again, that statement was about patronage.

When talking about 19 political appointees on July 25, 1984, the same Canadian stated to his opponent in a television debate: "The least you should do is apologize for having made these horrible appointments".

I think the Hon. Member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez) has already guessed who this prominent Canadian is. I think you have also, Madam Speaker, and I think most Canadians have. Indeed, the gentleman who made all those statements is now the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) of our country. Perhaps that explains in part why we are in the mess that we are in regarding the credibility of public office holders, and regarding the attitude that public office holders are to have *vis-à-vis* conflict of interest.

**Mrs. Mailly:** Nonsense. We are in this mess because you are irresponsible.

**Mr. Boudria:** The Member opposite can say "nonsense". I challenge her to rise in her place and tell me which one of those quotes is erroneous.

**Mrs. Mailly:** Or out of context.

**Mr. Boudria:** I challenge the Hon. Member, and she knows, as I do, that every one of those quotes is precise, not out of context, and made to the people of Canada, or for the people of Canada to hear or read.

[*Translation*]

Madam Speaker, no legislation can be effective enough to prevent the abuses we have witnessed in the last few years. However, as a Member of Parliament, I accept this new legislation, although with some reservations that I will mention in a moment. The legislation is somewhat like Ontario's, except that Ontario's is superior, in my opinion, to what the Prime Minister has presented to us. The legislation covers Members as well as Ministers. It covers spouses to a lesser degree and, unfortunately, it does not cover the political assistants of Ministers and Members at all.