

*Lobbyists Registration Act*

which one of its subsidiaries it is arguing for. In the case of the large multinational which I raised a while ago, if it were lobbying for or against a tobacco initiative, it would be totally different than if it were lobbying for or against something pertaining to its food production department.

I want to keep my comments very brief in this regard because we made the point at committee that we need a more transparent system. The Government has offered us a system of registering lobbyists after considerable controversy.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, you will recall that the Conservative Government had some very serious problems and it still does, during the summer of 1985. Subsequently, and as I said, the problems are still with us, the Prime Minister made a statement in the House and sent letters to Hon. Members, dated September 9, 1985, in which he discussed the issue of public sector ethics, and Lord knows the Government certainly needed some ethics at this point. However, in this case the Government announced that it would draft a new code for public office holders. Furthermore, instructions would be given to Ministers, imposing specific limits on the hiring, on a permanent or contract basis, of members of their families. Lobbying legislation would also be forthcoming, Mr. Speaker. I just want to quote, very briefly, one paragraph of this letter to show that we need the amendment I am proposing to the House today, if we are to meet the objectives the Prime Minister set in his letter of September 9, 1985. He said and I quote: "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 . . .", mark those words: "at an early date", ". . . 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 . . ." Now listen carefully, Mr. Speaker, the next sentence is very important: ". . . we will require, among other things, paid lobbyists to register and identify their clients." That does not apply to the Tier II lobbyists I referred to earlier. ". . . 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 . . .", and finally: ". . . I have accordingly asked my colleague, the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, to prepare, on an urgent basis, legislation to govern lobbying activity" . . . "On an urgent basis", Mr. Speaker . . . that was September 9, 1985. It is now July 15, 1988, in a session extended by this Government.

I think it is clear that the Conservative Government has again failed to keep his word. In any case, I believe that with my amendment and the amendments moved by the Hon. Member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez), we could at least try to provide a measure of transparency throughout the system, something the Prime Minister himself had asked for. Mr. Speaker, I would ask all Members in the House to support the four motions before it today, and more specifically, a motion I

moved myself, Motion No. 7, which is not very exacting but which nevertheless would be better than the system proposed by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Andre).

[English]

**Mr. John R. Rodriguez (Nickel Belt):** Mr. Speaker, can I get a clarification? Since I have three amendments, do I get 30 minutes to debate? Do I see you nodding? He is awake. The Speaker is always awake when I am on my feet. I don't get away with anything around here.

I want to direct my comments to the three amendments which stand in my name on the Order Paper. Bill C-82 is the Government's response to the unanimous report of a standing committee of the House of Commons. The committee studied the issue of lobbying as a result of an open letter to Members of Parliament and Senators dated September 9, 1985, signed by Brian Mulroney, Prime Minister of Canada. Among other things that he said to Members of Parliament and Senators was the following:

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, 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.

It was as a result of this letter that the committee studied the issue of lobbying and produced a unanimous report. In that report we recommended that lobbyists be registered. We recommended that the item on which they are lobbying be registered and that the client who hired them be registered.

The standing committee did not recommend a two-tiered system. Bill C-82 makes a differentiation. The committee has always held that a lobbyist is a lobbyist is a lobbyist and that whether lobbyists are hired by a private company or an association such as the Pharmaceutical Association, their activities are identical. The purpose of their existence is to try to influence the legislators with respect to regulations and/or laws.

Bill C-82 has attempted to set up a two-tier system, Tier I containing all of those who are identifiably lobbying consultants such as GCI, PAI, and a host of other lobbying consultants. Tier II would cover associations and unions. The Government proposes to require different information from the two tiers. The first group will be required to name their client and the issue on which they are lobbying. However, Tier II will be treated entirely differently. They need only declare who they are. In other words, all they have to do is hand over their business card. That is the only registration required.

I used to think that the most powerful lobbyists were the Frank Moores type. I thought those were the powerful lobbyists, the ones with clout. I have since had reason and opportunity to change my thinking on that question. In fact,