

Lobbyists Registration Act

if that client were a corporation, the names and addresses of the clients parents and subsidiaries. Finally, the subject matter of the lobbying activity would also have to be disclosed.

Tier II lobbyists are often called "in-house lobbyists". They are employees of corporations or organizations who, as a significant part of their duties, lobby on behalf of their employers. Because the interests behind those lobbyists are more readily apparent than in the case of Tier I lobbyists who have an arm's length relationship with their clients, Tier II lobbyists are required to disclose only their names and the names and addresses of their employers. In both cases, the onus is upon the lobbyist to register, not the client or the employer.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, although a two-tier system was not part of the recommendations of the Standing Committee, as the Hon. Members for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez) and Glengarry—Prescott—Russell (Mr. Boudria) felt obliged to remind me, we believe the system is better suited to reflect the principles I mentioned just now. Furthermore, it contributes to administrative simplicity without sacrificing openness.

Mr. Speaker, thanks to a two-tier system, disclosure requirements will be more straightforward for most lobbyists, and registration will consequently be easier to administer. It is important that the system should not become an administrative burden, either for those who have to register or for the Government, or become a maze of red tape for those seeking to obtain information.

[English]

The Lobbyists Registration Act is a very solid proposal for a registry. It will provide the information needed so that the public as well as public office holders can find out who is making representations to Government. In a democratic society, the ability to find out who is lobbying is as important as the ability to lobby. This system requires only as much information as is necessary to identify who is lobbying for whom and, in Tier I, on what subject. The registry will not be burdensome for lobbyists to comply with or for the Government to administer. The amendments made by the legislative committee have improved the Bill in terms of the clarity of what is or is not lobbying, and who is or is not a lobbyist. I am pleased to put this Bill before you for final consideration.

• (1510)

Over the past weeks and months we have discussed and debated the who, what, why and how of the lobbyist registration system. I hope today that Hon. Members opposite will agree that the when is now.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: On debate, the Hon. Member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell (Mr. Boudria).

[Translation]

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I may say it is a pleasure to finally have

an opportunity to rise in the House and speak to the Bill respecting the registration of lobbyists.

The subject has been discussed for quite sometime. The House will recall that the first legislation in the United States was introduced and passed in 1946. So it would be inaccurate to say the Conservative Government invented the wheel in this respect.

The first Bill in Canada concerning the registration of lobbyists was tabled in 1969 by then Member of Parliament Mr. Barry Mather. The second Bill was tabled in 1974 by a Liberal Member, Mr. Ken Robinson, Member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore at the time.

In 1976, the late Walter Baker also tabled a Bill. In 1985, our colleague, the Hon. Member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez), tabled another bill to register lobbyists, and finally, also in 1985, the former Member for St. John's East, now His Honour the Lieutenant Governor of Newfoundland, tabled a Bill on the registration of lobbyists in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, we must not forget that the Conservative Government was elected largely on its promise to abolish patronage.

[English]

It is important to remember this mandate that the Government gave itself in 1984 during the election campaign. The Conservatives talked about the patronage, and they said that if elected they would reform the system. They said that they would reform the system of political appointments. They talked about the fact that, in their view, things could be done in a better way. Well, Canadians believed the Leader of the Conservative Party during the election campaign. After the election, Canadians became disillusioned by the Conservative Leader—who became the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) after the election—because he did not live up to the promises that he had made to the people of Canada.

You will remember that this Government was criticized by the Opposition, and rightfully so I might add, in a non-partisan way, of course, by members of the Opposition and by the Canadian people, the media, editorial writers and so on, for the way in which it was dealing with the issues involving public sector ethics.

On September 9, 1985, the Prime Minister decided that he had had it with scandals, with things going wrong in his Government, and he presented himself in the House of Commons and made an impassioned speech for reforming the public sector ethics that he had allowed to decay under his leadership, gave us a speech and a package of documents wrapped in a nice blue ribbon, although blue ribbons are very seldom nice. He asked a Page to table it right here on the table of the Clerk of the House of Commons. He sent a letter to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Turner), the Leader of the NDP Party (Mr. Broadbent), to all MPs and Senators, and gave instructions to his Ministers. In this speech of September 9, 1985, and in an open letter to MPs and Senators, the Prime