

Supply

Mr. Deans: Wait a minute. It goes on:

Mr. Shulte replied that he would refer this question to the Privy Council Office which I believe is the correct agency to consider this matter.

Mr. Lalonde: Right.

Mr. Deans: So, quite clearly, although the opinion was given by the writer of the document, Dr. Walsh, that he himself did not see the conflict, Mr. Shulte, who was there as the counsel, said that he thought the matter should be referred to the Privy Council Office for a decision.

An Hon. Member: Then what happened?

Mr. Andre: They amended the agreement, that is what happened.

Mr. Deans: There is no further memorandum to show that the Privy Council Office was either approached, considered the matter, or replied. However, there are the amendments to the agreement, as the Prime Minister said today—

Mr. Lalonde: They are not amendments to the agreement; they are amendments to the Treasury Board submission.

Mr. Deans: Thank you the amendments to the Treasury Board submission, in which the situation surrounding Mr. Gillespie was altered. Let me say to the Minister of Finance, I want him to think about this for a moment. It was quite clear that under the situation that had prevailed during the period leading up to April 14, 1981 that there was serious doubt as to whether Mr. Gillespie was indeed not violating the conflict of interest guidelines. In order to correct that, the Treasury Board submission was changed to rechannel the funds. I put to the Minister, if you ever needed more evidence that in fact an agreement was entered into from which Mr. Gillespie benefited, which he otherwise would not have been entitled to, what more proof do you need? Mr. Gillespie, quite clearly, was not entitled to participate as he had been participating. The decision of the Government was then to change the Treasury Board order to allow him to be able to participate. I put to the Minister that that is quite clearly preferential treatment. Who else but Mr. Gillespie could be in that situation? So right off the bat we have a prima facie case of preferential treatment accorded to Mr. Gillespie. He got what he otherwise would not have been entitled to by virtue of a change that was made to a Treasury Board order.

An Hon. Member: Or he was in conflict before.

Mr. Deans: He was in conflict, that is what I am saying. He was in conflict right up until April, 1981. Otherwise, why change it? The only reason they changed it for him was because he had been in conflict and they were not willing to run the risk of having him maintain himself in conflict, and so he was given preferential treatment. I do not think that is an unreasonable conclusion to draw. It may be arguable, I concede, but I do not think it is unreasonable to draw that conclusion.

I want then to suggest that if one draws that conclusion, it is therefore equally valid to draw the conclusion that the information contained in the memorandum that I just quoted was brought not only to the Assistant Deputy Minister's attention

but would, undoubtedly, because of the conflict of interest question, be brought to the Deputy Minister's attention, and should have been brought to the Minister's attention.

I say to the Minister that under no condition should the Minister have agreed to sign any document that conveyed benefit to Mr. Gillespie that he had not been entitled to receive as a result of the guidelines that were in place. That is the basis for the argument that I make. The Minister then has to assume his responsibility. His Ministry altered the rules of the game. They did this because they knew that Alastair Gillespie was clearly in conflict. The Minister signed the approving orders to alter the rules of the game. The Minister in so doing assumed the responsibility for conveying on Alastair Gillespie a benefit that he would not otherwise have been entitled to. It is for that reason, I say to the Minister, that I seriously question his judgment. I do not question his honesty; I do not question his character; I question his judgment, damn it, and that is why I am here.

I put to the Minister that he, at the time that this matter was brought to his attention, should have taken a look at the guidelines that pertain to Ministers of the Crown. It says quite clearly in the guidelines:

In any official dealings with former office holders, Ministers must ensure that they do not provide grounds or the appearance of grounds for allegations of improper influence, privileged access or preferential treatment.

I say to the Minister, in all fairness, based on the argument that I have put, an argument that I believe if it was put in a court of law, if it were a law that we were dealing with, would be sustained; an argument that I believe if put before an impartial tribunal—which have asked for, incidentally, and have been refused—would be sustained.

I put to the Minister that there is no doubt in my mind, and I raise it for no other reason, that Mr. Gillespie violated the guidelines; that the Ministry altered the terms to accommodate the violation; and that the Minister signed the document to accommodate the alteration of the terms which enabled them to circumvent the guidelines. There is quite clearly the appearance of grounds for allegations of improper influence. More important, there is certainly the appearance of grounds for allegations of privileged access, and there is most certainly the appearance of grounds for preferential treatment.

I say to the Minister that although he made an eloquent speech defending what in fact was not in question, he has not addressed himself to the matters that I have put before him. He has not addressed himself to the question of whether, in signing the document which altered the terms and conditions, he in fact aided and abetted Alastair Gillespie in getting benefit, potential and immediate, to which he would otherwise not have been entitled. And I say this to the Minister, although no doubt he does not care. He does not even listen, which is unfortunate. It is unfortunate there is a majority on that side of the House, it truly is, because if there was not, they would