

*Supply*

I have to think that Canadian taxpayers are very frustrated now. If they are not I think they would be if they knew they paid good money to send a member of Parliament to Ottawa to monitor government, to make propositions on public policy to government and to speak for them in government as government deals with public policy and spends the taxpayers' dollars.

Now the public finds out that lobbyists, which is now a \$50 million to \$100 million per year industry in this town, are doing as much or more to influence government decisions on policy and contracts than MPs do. That guestimate of \$50 million to \$100 million is almost more than the public is spending on Parliament itself. We are not able to track that money or that influence peddling, all of which is said to be above board. It is not illegal. It is being paid for by lobby interest groups that want their piece of the pie in Ottawa.

I want to make some constructive suggestions. I have only a couple but I feel very strongly about them. The first is that our current registration provisions are inadequate. Registration requirements are minimal and we need registrations that show the lobbying agencies. Where they have more than one client we need to know who the clients are.

Where the lobbying group is a public interest group such as the Dairy Council, a farmers' public interest group or lobby group, it does not mind registering. We still do require them to register. We want to know they are there. We want to know what they are doing. Of greater concern is the professional lobbying groups, the agencies that will work for anybody, for any purpose, for a dollar. Sometimes it is for lots of dollars.

This brings me to the issue of the contingency fee. Ordinarily I would hope the lobbying firm would have an hourly rate when it is hired to work for someone. It might be 50 bucks an hour. It might be 100 bucks an hour. It might be 1,000 bucks an hour. Whatever it is I think the public wants to know how much it is.

The problem we have now is that we have lobbying firms operating on a contingency fee basis. This means if a person says to the lobbying firm "I want that \$10 million contract, go and get it for me", the lobbyist says: "I will get it for you but you have to pay me 10 per cent". If the lobbyist and the applicant are successful, the

lobbyist will take 10 per cent off the top. That is \$1 million out of a \$10 million contract.

That is a heck of a way for government to spend its money. If to spend 10 million bucks it has to peel off the first million and give it to a lobbyist, there is something wrong about it. My point is that a contingency fee that is payable only if they got the contract and made a big, fat percentage must end. Contingency piggy-backs on the taxpayers' dollar is inappropriate. It adds to the price of the contract. It makes the lobbyist simply a hired gun who does not give a damn about public policy and distorts the orderly process of the government decision making when there is \$1 million in fees to throw around.

The contingency fee should be banned. We would have a strict regime of hourly rates. Most firms would not mind showing what their hourly rates are. In every case the client knows where there is an hourly rate.

Last, I want to deal with appointments. I want to point out a failure in one area of appointments. The Prime Minister has the right to appoint members to the Security Intelligence Review Committee. Those particular appointees are this Parliament's watch-dog in our security intelligence service. The act requires the Prime Minister to consult with each leader of the parties in the House before an appointment is made. What is the Prime Minister doing? He is sending a letter one or two days before the appointment is made in which he says to the leaders of the other parties whom he is appointing. In at least two cases the letter did not arrive before the appointment was made. That is not consultation. That is not following the spirit or the letter of the law in relation to appointments to positions of public trust and positions representing this Parliament.

I make note of that on the public record. I am not going to let the Prime Minister get away with it much longer. I am going to make him account legally if I have to for those appointments. I have warned him once. He has had one warning. It is not just a breach of the law. It is a breach of the spirit of the law. I call upon him to do it the right way next time. It is only in that way the system will work.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** It being eight o'clock p.m. it is my duty to inform the House that pursuant to Standing Order 81(17) proceedings of the motion have expired.