

3) Access to Government: The requirements which paid lobbyists must fulfill should not act as a barrier impeding access to government.

4) Administrative Simplicity: The administrative requirements contained in the system of registration should be held to the minimum needed to accomplish the system's goals. It would not be the intention to make registration so onerous as to discourage lobbying by anyone with modest means or create a bureaucratic system requiring substantial resources.

Following the release of the discussion paper, the matter was referred to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Education, Privileges and Procedure.

B. HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMITTEE STUDY

The Standing Committee on Education, Privileges and Procedure (hereafter cited as the "Standing Committee") chaired by Adam Gopler, M.P., began study of the Government and Corporate Affairs discussion paper in November 1988.

After a series of hearings on the subject of lobbying, the Standing Committee issued its report in the end of January 1987. The report reviewed the issues regarding a registration system and stated that it would involve too much paperwork, high administrative costs, and would interfere with client confidentiality. The lobbying industry suggested that a system of self-regulation would be a more cost-effective and less objectionable means of achieving standards of ethical behavior. The Standing Committee, however, sided with the proposal of a registration system, who contended that such a system would eliminate much of the mystery surrounding lobbying and thus remove the favorable atmosphere of congeniality and informality which sometimes attends the activity. Indeed, it was suggested that registration would allow lobbying with a better needed sense of legitimacy. The most controversial argument from the Standing Committee's perspective, however, was that registration was an important aspect of the overall effort needed to ensure an informed public and thus the health of Canadian democracy.

In its report to the House, the Standing Committee stated that the public's right to know and be informed about who is trying to influence government policy was paramount. It attempted to strike a balance by recommending that reporting procedures required of registered lobbyists be kept to a minimum in keeping with the principles of access to government, clarity and administrative simplicity.

C. BILL C-82: THE LOBBYISTS REGISTRATION ACT

Six months after the Standing Committee published its report, the government introduced legislation on the registration of lobbyists. The purpose of the bill was to create a registration system for paid lobbyists so that government officials and members of the public would know who is attempting to influence government.

Bill C-82 did not reflect all of the recommendations found in the Standing Committee's report. However, it contained a major new feature which was not mentioned in either the report of the Standing Committee or in the Government and Corporate Affairs discussion paper. Lobbyists were to be divided into two categories: Tier I or "professional" lobbyists, and Tier II or "other" lobbyists, each with its own set of reporting rules.

On 14 March 1988, following second reading, Bill C-82 was referred to a House of Commons legislative committee chaired by Keith Bunker, M.P. Despite criticisms made of the bill during committee study, it was referred to the House for a final vote. The bill was subsequently given third