

do was rehash cases of the past, cases that the government might find embarrassing, cases that are of concern today, cases of mismanagement and cases of mischief.

If we were to catalogue cases of mischief let me say the opposition has no monopoly on them. We have a few over here and we do not have to go very far back. We can pin them right on present members. As a matter of fact, interestingly enough in this very House of Commons when I was debating my own private member's bill to establish a code of conduct for members of the government and others, I had occasion myself to refer to some of these situations. My great friend the former member for Winnipeg—Assiniboia, Mr. Dan McKenzie, participated in that same debate and I would like to refer to the *Hansard* for that day, March 20, 1984.

In the debate on ethics Mr. McKenzie wanted to give an example of conflicts and he referred to the Minister of Transport. Now it may not be known who the Minister of Transport was at that time but the name of Mr. Axworthy appears in brackets. He is a current member for the Winnipeg area. He was then the member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry. The Minister of Transport transferred the auditing of Canada Ports Corporation from the Auditor General of Canada to, guess who, a friend of his in Winnipeg, a Liberal hack. Ethics? Was there a concern on the part of the Liberal members for ethics in 1984? Apparently not.

• (1810)

As a matter of fact in that same debate we raised the subject of Mr. Coutts, a former executive assistant to Pierre Elliott Trudeau. He gave an interview to a reporter for a national newspaper. The inference of the interview was that if people had immigration problems they should call Jim Coutts and he would call the immigration minister, the member for Winnipeg South Centre. When Jim calls people like the then immigration minister they listen.

If we want to talk about mischief, if we want to talk about ethics, we can talk about many people. However, that is not going to solve any problems. That is not going to restore the confidence of the Canadian public in Parliament or in government.

The only thing that will restore the confidence of the Canadian people is a recognition by elected officials that they have a responsibility to the public and that they are

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willing to live by an ethical code of conduct. They will only demonstrate that by continued service in observance of that code of ethics.

It may well be, and I and many other persons in this place have wrestled with this problem in the past, that there is a real need to codify a set of rules as guidelines for members of Parliament, members of government and government officials. Many attempts have been made to do that.

However, there was never an attempt made to put those rules, those regulations and those governing principles into legislation prior to 1988 when the Prime Minister of Canada introduced a bill in this House attempting to codify rules of conduct as a guideline for members of government and other government officials.

That bill was introduced in February 1988 so that all of those involved and interested would have an opportunity to see a statutory code of the kind that I have described. That was the first time that anyone ever brought to the floor of the House of Commons an actual piece of legislation dealing with matters of public ethics.

Unfortunately, time ran out in that particular Parliament and Bill C-114 lapsed. However, it was subsequently introduced again. Through Bill C-43 we had the opportunity to view, examine, debate and discuss a further statutory code of conduct.

An hon. member: Bill C-43 was never debated.

Mr. Crosby: We had the opportunity. It was brought forward for debate.

An hon. member: No.

Mr. Crosby: I am sure if all members were in agreement that the provisions of Bill C-43 were exactly the kinds of provisions that would solve the difficulties that we now realize exist in terms of public trust—but that was not the case. People immediately gave indication that there were flaws in Bill C-43.

I myself was very concerned with the definition of dependent. I happen to believe that in the 1990s women have a very special place and position in our society, and that includes spouses of members of Parliament or any other person or official. I am not prepared to accept as part of the code of conduct that my or anyone's spouse has to accept any particular rules simply because of the office or position that I or anyone else holds. I realize