

the Government has made 593 appointments by virtue of Order in Council. That information is on public record. Members must understand that those 593 appointments include a number of categories. They include Commissioners for Oaths, honorary consuls for Canada abroad, diplomatic appointments, commissions of inquiry, and the list goes on. I would be surprised if former Staff Sergeant Hendrik Kornelius Morlag and Sergeant Carl Singbeil of the RCMP, who were appointed to the rank of inspector, would consider themselves as being recipients of patronage appointments. I would be surprised if Keith W. MacLellan, who was appointed as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Canada to the Syrian-Arab Republic, could be considered by any decent and fair-thinking Canadian as having received a patronage appointment. Is the appointment of people such as Bud Drury to CN a patronage appointment?

I have lived in Saskatchewan all my life. I have also lived under a New Democratic Government in that province. So I do not have to be lectured by members of that Party with respect to paying off their friends. I understand that once in a while outstanding and decent people were appointed to positions by the New Democratic Government of Saskatchewan. They appointed my mother to the Human Rights Commission. I paid tribute to them for that. That was an exception. I can tell Members that my mother was not in there with a bunch of Tories. However, the people who were appointed to boards and commissions, certainly were not unfriendly to that Government.

I believe that the Hon. Member for Thunder Bay-Nipigon is an honourable Member who has a very deep interest in fairness. The motion which was put forward by his Party today is tied to a vote. That has required Members of Parliament to return from their constituencies on a Friday afternoon. The cost to Parliament to run this House for one day is \$450,000. Does the Member think that it is more important to talk about the Minister of Supply and Services (Mr. Andre), who awarded a contract at the outset of our administration to a company in which the brother-in-law of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) was involved, than it is to consider the plight of the people of this country who are looking for jobs? Does he not think that it would be more important for the Opposition to come forward with a statement of how it thinks it can improve Canada? Does he think that this kind of debate is edifying to the people which he fought so hard to represent? Does he not think that we would be better served in this House of Commons if we debated the issues which affect the well-being of the people of Canada? I ask him those questions in all seriousness.

Mr. Epp (Thunder Bay-Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, given that the Government House Leader said very similar things in a more impassioned sense before I began speaking, I think that I have answered those questions.

I think this is a good use of time. It involves the question of granting untendered contracts to relatives and friends. That is a question which is important. Canadian people are interested in it.

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His mention of a \$450,000 expenditure strikes me as being contemptible. I do not know what goes into adding that up, but people know, to some extent, how few of us are in the House when we are debating important matters following Question Period. To be told that Members have come back from their ridings will not impress my constituents. What is the \$450,000 for? Did the Government House Leader propose to shut down the House and not let us have an Opposition Day in order that we could forward something which was important to us? I trust not. I believe that that kind of contempt for Parliament and for the good sense of the Opposition is not something which the Government House Leader is actually trying to make. But I am not sure what the point of the \$450,000 was.

I repeat, this is important business. It was appropriate to raise this matter because the Government refused to answer the question of whether it is acceptable to grant an untendered contract to a relative of the minister of a Department with which that contract is involved. It is a perfectly good question. The refusal of government Members to deal with that and instead to wax indignant about other matters, only confirms my belief that they know what the answer is and they do not dare give it.

Mr. Fraleigh: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to comment and put a question to the Hon. Member opposite. I would suggest that the people of Canada are watching and are interested in seeing this House debate productively. What NDP Members are doing today is very transparent, and they know it. They can sit and grin all they want, but the people of Canada are not so stupid that they cannot see through what the NDP is doing today.

They speak about this momentous motion which is before the House. However, there are no hordes of opposition Members in their seats. It is a vital matter and we do not have a full House. I suppose that I should not direct any of my remarks toward the Liberal benches, because no one is there to hear them. I can understand what the NDP thought it was doing, and so do the people of Canada. They can see through sheer sham, and that is what this debate is all about.

The suggestion was made that no government Member was willing to respond to the question with a yes or no answer. I want to take this opportunity to respond. It is yes—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Order, please. I regret to interrupt the Hon. Member but the period for questions and comments has now expired. I will recognize the Hon. Member for Calgary West (Mr. Hawkes) on debate.

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is Saturday and I will be in the good old City of Calgary for my regular monthly public meeting. The first thing which I will brag about is this contract. I will brag about the fact that we have a Minister of Supply and Services (Mr. Andre) who instructed his officials to look around for a firm that for \$26,000 would do the work which firms historically have done, and which would go one step further and provide advice to save Canadian taxpayers half a million dollars in the coming