

*Motions*

Our report made several recommendations. They include the adoption and implementation of a system of registration of lobbyists. We recommended that the Government consult with members of the lobbying industry to discuss the formation of an association of lobbyists, in addition to the system of registration so that we could have both a system of discipline based on rules set out by the industry while, at the same time, having a registry that we all advocated.

We recommended that there be a definition of lobbying. It was defined as attempting to influence either directly or indirectly any governmental decision, whether it be legislative or administrative.

We recommended a definition of who should be in the category of lobbyists and who should be left out. We made several other recommendations in the report. The time is passing quickly and the report has been in the hands of the Government for almost a month. Given the compromise that all Members made—

**An Hon. Member:** You are a great one to say that.

**Mr. Boudria:** The Hon. Member who unfortunately did not participate in the committee may think that the issue is very funny. However, I am not only saying that opposition Members did good work on the committee, I think Members on all sides worked well. Perhaps it was largely due to the fact that the Member in question was not there. In fact, it is probably 90 per cent of the reason why we managed to produce a unanimous report.

However, we also recommended in our report that those who lobbied as volunteers and did not charge for their services should not have to register. We did not want to interfere with anyone's freedom of speech, which is a very important distinction and a concern that was raised by members in that committee. While we wanted those who charge a fee for interfacing with public officials to disclose what they were doing, we were unanimous in our view that we did not want anyone to be precluded from contacting a public official. That is very important to us who are in public office.

● (1540)

I believe if those laws were made too strict, they could affect the very privileges of Members of Parliament to obtain input from the constituencies which we are charged to represent. The privileges of Hon. Members are indeed at the centre of this issue. That is why I think it concerns Hon. members on all sides of the House, and need not be dealt with in perhaps quite as partisan a manner as some other things with which we deal. I have been known to be partisan every now and then myself. I remember well what happened to me last year, and you will probably recall as well, Mr. Speaker. However, I try not to be too partisan when dealing with this kind of issue.

The committee thought that lobbyists should be required to register their names, the names of their firms, the contact person, and their address and phone number. We felt lobbyists

should register the name of their client and the client's place of business. The lobbying activities which are taking place should also be registered.

Some of us would like to have gone one step further, and I am one of them, and registered the fee a lobbyist receives for an activity as well as his disbursements. In other words, a person could go to the register and see that one particular lobbyist was lobbying the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) trying to get a concession for such and such an industry, that the lobbyist was paid \$10,000 to do this and that he spent half of that wining and dining people. The importance of that is that there would then be a greater level of transparency.

I am not saying that Members of Parliament or cabinet Ministers have no right to meet anyone for dinner. What I am saying is we would create an atmosphere whereby the public would have a right to see who did what to whom, for whom, by whom, and at what cost. That is an important element.

In the State of California, for instance, the legislation governing lobbyists there prevents a lobbyist from entertaining an individual Member of the Legislative Assembly at a cost greater than, I believe, \$10 in any calendar month. I think that is just getting a bit carried away. I can imagine a lobbyist taking a Congressman to lunch at a cost of \$12.50 and asking the Congressman to give him \$2.50 because he is not supposed to spend any more than \$10. I think that would be onerous and we do not want the system to be that way.

I think we want the system designed in such a way as to have it simple and acceptable, not only to people in the lobbying business but to Members of Parliament, to people in Government. The system should be easy to work with and one which will not be expensive to operate. The last thing we need is to set up a bureaucracy of a large number of people in order to administer the rules. Having said that, I think the system would be better if we could register the fees.

In closing, I must say that as a compromise our parliamentary committee inserted a provision in our report that in two years time the same parliamentary committee should perform an evaluation of the registry of lobbyists. At that time the committee, while reviewing the registry, could decide to add certain criteria. It is my sincere hope that two years from now, or two years from the passing of the legislation, the parliamentary committee will want to add the fees of the lobbyists in the registry. I think that would make it far more meaningful.

I want to conclude by again congratulating all Hon. Members who participated in the committee from all sides of the House, representing all political Parties, under the chairmanship of the Hon. Member for Peace River, who did a great job of chairing the committee. The challenge is now up to the Government to prepare the legislation and to send it back to our committee so that we can go ahead and do the job.

**Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey—White Rock—North Delta):** Mr. Speaker, I am happy to participate in the debate on this particular subject which is so important to the health of this institution. I want to join previous speakers in paying tribute to