

regulation, a policy, a program, or the awarding of a contract? Here again, the promise has not been kept.

This is probably the most disappointing aspect of the bill. Indeed, merely requiring that all lobbyists disclose the government department or agency contacted is clearly unsatisfactory. Real reform should help us find out the names of the people lobbyists are trying to influence. While in opposition, a lot of the current ministers, cabinet and government members were very harsh with lobbyists, but now they seem to have changed their minds. Maybe because lobbyists are hanging around their offices all the time.

For example, in June of 1993, the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell said that the public had the right to know who is doing what to whom and for how much money. At the time, he thought it was unfortunate that these considerations were not included in the legislation.

He also said, on February 16, 1993, that he was one of those who favoured a registration system as long as loopholes were eliminated and the parties concerned required to provide useful information. He went on to say that the system could be improved by providing accurate, concise and valuable information.

In conclusion, the Liberal government was obviously under pressure from the lobbyists and from friends who hire them. This shows, I think, that we probably should have started by amending the political party financing legislation in order to be able to examine quietly and without undue pressure the issue of lobbyists, unlike what seems to have happened with this bill. I hope that the working committee will take note of these recommendations.

[English]

The Deputy Speaker: It being 2.10 p.m. and pursuant to a special order made earlier today, it is my duty to put the question on the motion to the House.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to.)

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: The House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

Private Members' Business

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1410)

[English]

CRIMINAL CODE

Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops) moved that Bill C-211, an act to amend the Criminal Code (cattle rustling and range cattle) be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I want to first of all say thanks to the members of the House for agreeing unanimously to refer the subject matter of this bill to the standing committee on agriculture.

Thanks also to my colleague from the neighbouring constituency, again very much part of cattle country in central British Columbia, for agreeing to second this private member's initiative and also to acknowledge my intern from the University of Michigan, John, who has worked so hard to prepare an awful lot of research material to make this bill possible in this presentation today.

The bill does really two things. Acknowledging the fact that cattle thievery or cattle rustling has become a very serious issue not only in western Canada but throughout Canada over the last number of years. One of the reasons it has become such a significant issue and is escalating in its nature is the minimal fines attached to the situation if anyone is ever caught rustling cattle.

We would all appreciate that to catch somebody rustling range cattle is not an easy situation. It is difficult. Those are wide ranges particularly in western Canada. A lot of cattle are simply also grazing in community pastures and for someone to come along late in the day or in the evening and capture a few cattle or in some cases to shoot and slaughter cattle on the range is something that unfortunately is increasing.

To give members an idea of how serious the courts take this, in a recent case in British Columbia involving an individual from the community of Lytton, British Columbia who was caught rustling cattle, stealing cattle and given a one-year suspended sentence, he had to pay \$300 as a reflection of the seriousness of this crime. The stolen property in this case was cattle.

What kind of signal would that send to people who may be caught up in this objectionable activity? If one gets caught, one might get a \$300 fine. To put that in some context, the value of cattle these days, I suppose one could generalize and say that some cattle might be sold on the market for \$1,500 and others for less, but an average price per cow would be about \$1,000.