

Government Orders

ment appears to be a fine source of patronage. In any case, that is what my grandmother would say in such a situation.

In the red book, the word "openness" appears almost as often as the word "employment"; it is surprising that it is nowhere to be found in Bill C-52, and it is not in Bill C-43 either.

Legislators must look at the goal of openness as a whole. The government's right hand must know what the left hand is doing. Yet, in the red book, they talk about the citizens' confidence in the system, the undue influence of lobbyists; they talk about openness, the sacrosanct integrity, involvement, etc. The red book should not be quoted just for wishful thinking. We need an appropriate legislative policy. Now is the time to take action while we have a bill before us.

Why make laws amounting to half-measures? Bills C-52 and C-43 as they now stand are cases in point and deal with two closely related subjects. There should be a legislative link between the two. Government contracts, procurement and buildings automatically remind us of lobbyists. The Bloc is probably the only party in this House to see that link. But it is there!

The Pearson affair, which this House is very familiar with, shows what happens when you mix government contracts with lobbyists' pressure. Will we prevent similar situations with Bill C-52 before us today or Bill C-43? No, Mr. Speaker, not the way these two bills are now written.

Laws are supposed to mean something and not be just rhetoric, so a law should be passed to change things and not just to put up a smoke screen to hide shameless patronage, like what has been going on in those departments for decades.

Something else that would contribute to the much-desired openness, which is just wishful thinking on the part of the government, could be a reality or well on the way to becoming reality if the financing of political parties was reformed as suggested by the Bloc Quebecois member for Richelieu. But no, we saw the government's true face. It refused the hand that we extended to it on this issue.

Although we could say more about the pretense of openness desired by the government, I will return to Bill C-52 and probably we will have a chance later to talk about this famous openness that the government would like to have. However, it never acts openly when it has the chance.

What we refuse to do is to give second reading to Bill C-52 because the principle of the bill does not provide for a precise code of ethics to make the contracting process transparent and to show how the Department of Public Works and Government Services acquires all the goods and services.

For this purpose, we propose five things that would provide a basis for obtaining this desired transparency. The Bloc's five proposals are as follows: one, create a public supervisory commission; two, a code for contracting out; three, consult all

federal MPs; four, make public servants accountable; and five, control advance payments by the government.

Sometimes I hear ministers say that the opposition never makes any proposals. Well, here I am making proposals. Besides, we often make proposals but you do not listen to them. I am giving you some very clear proposals and I will explain them.

Let us take a closer look at these proposals. The first one is to create a public supervisory commission. Among other things, this commission would submit monthly reports on all government contracts that go through the department. With such a system, the frustrating delays currently experienced with requests submitted to the minister under the Access to Information Act would be avoided. These periodic reports would help streamline government operations. This would be a simple, accessible and understandable process.

Finally, this public supervisory commission would have the power to question any vague or obscure contract violating the applicable rules of procedure. This judicial power could also be used in cases of influence-peddling or patronage.

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Also, the proposed code for contracting out takes into account the fact that this activity represented a \$5.2 billion market for the year 1992-93 alone. Such an important economic sector must be subjected to some government guidelines.

This issue is too important for civil servants, trade contracting firms, as well as Canadians and Quebecers to be taken lightly. In that regard, the Bloc would have liked the bill to set rules, or at least a legal framework compelling the federal government to adhere to specific standards regarding contracting out activities. If the government is prepared to do it for the lobbying industry, which is not a \$5.2 billion market, it can also do it for the contracting out sector.

Canadians, unions and management could only win if there were specific rules in that sector. And do not try to tell me that contracting out is a cyclical thing. When such a practice has been in use for ten years, it is there to stay.

I would like it if someone could tell me why parliamentary committees use private printing companies to publish their reports when that service is provided here in the House of Commons.

Then there is the consultation of federal MPs. I believe we are here to represent our constituents. We could be asked to do more, and that would be a good thing. As a third element for transparency, the Bloc Quebecois suggests that all federal members of Parliament should be consulted. This proposal is based on the Liberal commitment to enhance the role of members of Parliament. Hence, it is important to give more responsibilities to members of Parliament and to inform them of the contracts placed by the new department in their ridings. Such consultation outside the House of Commons will provide