

The Prime Minister tells us that he is going to bring about new guidelines, but let me put to you, Mr. Speaker, that nobody is asking for new guidelines. I do not mind if they bring in new guidelines. What in effect the Prime Minister is saying is that the old guidelines were not sufficient. I suggest the old guidelines were sufficient. The old guidelines say "avoidance of preferential treatment". That is on page 2, Article III, where it states:

● (1220)

Ministers shall not accord preferential treatment in relation to any official matter to relatives or friends or to organizations in which their relatives or friends have an interest.

It goes on to say, and this is important:

Ministers must also take care to avoid placing, or appearing to place, themselves under an obligation to any person or organization which might profit from special consideration or favour on their part.

You and I both know, Mr. Speaker, that Ministers do not operate independently. Ministers are part of a collective. That collective is known as the Cabinet. Each Cabinet Minister is responsible as part of the whole for the operations of the political business of Canada. Therefore, it is important, and I think the Minister of Supply and Services (Mr. Andre) will agree, that in matters such as the granting of the right to do business with the Government, careful checks should be made to ensure that no person appears to be given preferential treatment.

That, of course, is the essence of our argument in this regard. That is why the questions that I put were so carefully phrased. Had this been a tendered contract, had the firm of Lawson Murray submitted bids and had it been the winning company when the tenders were opened, we would not have had even a question, let alone an issue. We would not have asked for the kind of response from the Prime Minister that we have asked for. Neither would we have been put in a position, and we were put in the position, of embarrassing the Minister of Finance. We would have been able to accept that the business of Canada was being conducted according to the highest standards, as the Prime Minister frequently promised would be the case.

The Prime Minister can say, and sometimes does, that he was left with a terrible mess by the outgoing Government and that the practices of the outgoing Government were certainly no better than the practices that he is pursuing. The Prime Minister might say that the practices he intends to implement at some future date will be more severe and the guidelines more stringent and restrictive than the guidelines that were in place under the previous administration. That is fine. I commend him for that. I commend the Minister of Supply and Services, if he has any hand in developing the guidelines, if that be the case; but that of course is in the future and we are talking about the present.

It was the same Prime Minister who with great obvious concern appeared over television in a Leaders' debate during the election of the summer of 1984 when the then embarrassed Prime Minister, now Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Turner), was trying to explain how he was stuck with the job

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of making appointments that had been promised or announced by his predecessor. I remember well watching television as a clearly upset then Prime Minister, now Leader of the Official Opposition, said: "Look, I had no option. I was told if I didn't do it, the Government might fall, so I had to go ahead and do what I did. I mean I had to do it that way." I remember with all the flair that the Prime Minister is now known for that he leaned forward and said: "Sir, you had an option. You had an option to say no."

That was when this debate started. The Prime Minister then went on to tell the country that under his administration things would be done differently, that the highest degree of concern for the public would be exercised and displayed, that the Government would not allow the kind of actions that had previously been acceptable under the Liberal Government to continue under his Government. The public of Canada had every reason to believe that in all of the matters touching upon patronage and contracts the Government of Canada, this Government, would not pursue the same line pursued by the previous administration.

That has turned out quite different from the reality. The reality has been that this Government has followed in exactly the same way the patronage appointment route that was the order of the day under the previous administration. This Government has, I must say with some dismay, managed to find a place at the trough for almost every Tory bagman and for all defeated candidates. If they did not come to the trough, it was by their own choice because the opportunity was there. They have been able to reach out and find people who were incapable of withstanding the pressure of the availability of public funds for their own use. This Government has in fact betrayed the people of Canada. This Government has failed to do what it promised it would do.

This latest example serves to remind the public that what the Prime Minister says and what the Prime Minister does are frequently quite different. What the Prime Minister says, he expects Canadians to believe. When he does something else, he expects them to understand that he had no option. I suggest it is clear on its face that this action taken by the Minister of Supply and Services on behalf of the Government was wrong. This action undermines public confidence. This action should never have been contemplated. The Minister of Supply and Services should admit that that should not have been done, although perhaps within the guidelines it was not specifically excluded, although I suggest it was, and that the Government in this instance acted improperly and does not enjoy the confidence of the House of Commons in this regard.

**Mr. Redway:** Mr. Speaker, *The Toronto Star* in an editorial today indicated that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) has a hard enough job to do without having to absorb unfair shots against his integrity from the Opposition. Does the Hon. Member agree with the position of *The Toronto Star*? If so, would he like to withdraw the Opposition motion today?

**Mr. Deans:** Mr. Speaker, I have heard some pretty silly questions in my time. That one must come close to being the