

became president of the Board of Economic Development Ministers in November, 1978. He held that post until the Liberal government's defeat in the 1979 election. He continued to serve as a Member of Parliament until the Clark government's defeat in December, 1979, at which time he announced he would not seek re-election.

On February 18, 1980, the date of the most recent election, by sheer coincidence, this particular ad appeared in the *Financial Times of Canada*:

The Rt. Hon. Roland Michener, chairman of the board announces the appointment of the Hon. Robert Andras, PC as Senior Vice President of Teck Corporation. Mr. Andras left a successful business career to devote the last 14 years to public service and held a number of Ministries in the Federal Government during a period of 11 years ending in May, 1979, the most recent being president of the Board of Economic Development Ministers and president of the Treasury Board. Mr. Andras will also be a director and member of the executive committee of Teck Corporation and a key member of the management team responsible for continued growth of the economy.

Having regard to his appointment, Mr. Andras was quoted in the *Vancouver Sun* on July 12, 1980, as saying:

The fact that I had been a senior minister and, therefore, one might consider well connected with the power structure I'm sure was not a negative thing.

By accepting this position with Teck Corporation less than eight months after he ceased to be the super minister of the Board of Economic Development Ministers, I believe Mr. Andras seriously violated the principle of both the August, 1979 and May, 1980, guidelines for the conduct of former ministers.

● (1740)

Let me just briefly, and without taking up too much more time, illustrate what happens when the skids get greased and the right person is appointed to the board of directors of such a corporation. On August 6, 1980—

Madam Speaker: Order. I will concede one point to the hon. member. Those guidelines apply for two years, but I believe the election was held in May of 1979, and Parliament must have been dissolved six or eight weeks before that, so we are very close to the two years, but I will concede to the hon. member that the two years might not be up.

However, that being said, the fact that a former minister, or even a present minister, would have violated the guidelines of conflict of interest does not constitute a question of privilege.

Mr. Oberle: Madam Speaker, it does violate my privilege to act effectively in my responsibility to represent a very important area of Canada. I will come to that by illustrating now what happens when a person as well connected with the central power structure as Mr. Andras considered himself to be joins such a corporation and becomes active in greasing the skids.

On August 6, 1980, Senator Olson dispatched a cable which was recently tabled by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde) in the House. The cable was in connection with Teck Corporation's activities in beginning a megaproject in British Columbia—in my constituency, in fact—in connection with the export of coal from northeastern British Columbia. I will not quote the whole document, but I

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would like just to put on the record two salient sentences in the document. In fact, Senator Olson used this document to convey to the province of British Columbia that the federal government was no longer interested in making available public funds to enhance the economic viability of the project. This is what Senator Olson said:

The current proposal from British Columbia, however, provides no indication that either government could directly recover its investment.

“Either government” being the government of British Columbia or the Government of Canada. Another sentence says:

—we wouldn't want to be in the situation where southeast and northeast producers were being played off one against the other, or worse, Canadian interests being played off against other international competitors.

In other words, the coal producers in the province of British Columbia had asked the federal government for a very significant subsidy on freight rates to get the coal to tidewaters and also for very significant subsidies to build a port in Prince Rupert and to help through other departments and agencies with the procurement of infrastructure.

Something happened between October 6 and February 9 because after consultation with people who were formerly well connected with the power structure, such as the Hon. Ron Basford, who is now the coal czar of British Columbia, being engaged at a daily rate of \$600, and other well connected Liberals who are involved in this particular scheme in British Columbia and after they were asked to act and grease the skids and remove the blockage that had obviously occurred in Ottawa, this happened on February 9, 1981: the same minister sent another communique to Victoria. This time he said that the federal government was prepared not only to assist with a fixed throughput charge to the port of Prince Rupert and to help on a 50-50 basis to put in place the facilities at the port, but also to assure between now and 1989 that the coal would be dispatched at a fixed rate of \$3 per tonne, which is called a throughput charge. The federal government also committed itself through the CNR to an expenditure of \$225 million for the upgrading of facilities.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Really, I do have to interrupt the hon. member. Will the hon. member not co-operate with me and conclude immediately, or will I just have to determine the matter right now, after having listened to the hon. member since 5.20? He has not yet discussed the matter of privilege which he wants to bring before this House. Nothing in what he has said has related to privilege. I do not want to read the riot act and give him the definition of privilege, but he knows in his heart of hearts that he has said nothing which relates to privilege. He is actually using this occasion to air a number of facts about which he is aggrieved. This is not the time to raise these things, but he is in fact doing so. I must consider that to be unfair to other hon. members who might have questions of privilege to raise this afternoon but who will not be able to do so.

So in the interest of the House the hon. member should come to the point. This would be in the hon. member's interest as well because I think there is a certain credibility attached to