

Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) is said to have jokingly remarked that all he had to do was what Martin Goldfarb told him to do. He was referring to how he won the election. During the Conservative interregnum, we switched from government by Goldfarb to government by Gregg of Decima Research. There was still some evidence that the ruling party felt it was wise to use polling as "the creative arm of government", which is how the Gallup people describe themselves.

As I move into the debate, I want to say that I think this is an issue which all parties and all governments, provincial, federal, Liberal, Progressive Conservative and NDP, must wrestle with in that none of us is pristine pure when it comes to this particular technology and politics. Therefore, I do not think that any great self-righteousness on the part of anyone is justified. I like to think, however, and I think it could be established, that the Liberal Party has in fact pioneered many of the dangers to which I will refer over the course of my remarks.

I would have felt better about the speech of the hon. member for Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe had he seen fit to mention the "Preserve it, Conserve it" campaign in Ontario which was clearly a subliminal way of implanting within the Ontario population a positive identification with the words "Progressive Conservative". So let us not kid ourselves. This is an issue which all of us need to be thinking about because all of us, when we are in government, are tempted to use these kinds of instruments.

In 1980, the polls released by the Liberals cost an estimated \$5.2 million. The budget for advertising that year was \$60 million. It would appear that the government spent about \$5 million-plus to take our pulse and about 15 times that much telling us what our pulse was and how they would go about fixing it up. It was expected that advertising costs in 1981 would increase by 8 per cent to 20 per cent. The size of the increase in advertising expenditure, however, was much higher. It is estimated that 1981 spending was up in the neighbourhood of \$100 million, a 66.6 per cent increase in spending. The size of this outlay is responsible for the federal government's leap in position from the seventeenth major advertiser in the country in 1970 to the largest major advertiser in the country in 1980.

Typical of government attitudes to this expenditure of tax dollars is Frank Miller's observation. I am referring to a Progressive Conservative cabinet minister in Ontario, I believe. He was quoted as saying, "You do not always follow the polls, but at least you know what is saleable". This theme of saleability also appears in federal documents which point out that public relations campaigns "will be an ideal environment in which to begin to sell and keep selling the legitimate notions of our own policy initiatives."

There are a number of issues involved when we discuss the role of polls and the role of advertising. First, of course, there is the considerable waste of public spending to influence public opinion, a spending which is not only criminal when one contrasts it with the more useful ways in which this money could often be spent, but which in the long run also emasculates the concept of parliamentary democracy. The use of

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public opinion polls and advertising was particularly evident in the constitutional debate. However, as horrible as the constitutional advertising was, it may have done us the long-term favour of stimulating the debate about government and advocacy advertising, because what we saw was an attempt on the part of the government to circumvent Parliament.

I will not go into this area in my speech on the role of polls and advertising, but I think that this discussion goes along with the discussion of parliamentary reform and reform on the part of the fourth estate, the media. We must do a great deal of work to make Canadian politics more alive, more relevant and more human so as not to concede to the trends which the increase in polling and advertising represents. What polling and advertising does to our parliamentary system of government and politics is to make political organizations redundant, in a way. That is why we have Members of Parliament and constituency organizations. That is what we are supposed to have in grass roots movements which keep in touch with the people. The job of everyone here is to try to take as good a reading as possible of the opinions of the people, however diverse, because the opinions of the people are never homogeneous. We must bring that back and give fair voice to the opinions of the people. We do not always have to agree with the people, and I will refer to that later. But what we are seeing here is an increasing redundancy of our traditional party system and it is not a good thing. The cabinet should not be able to circumvent its own caucus, its own government backbenchers and find out public opinion from Goldfarb. Surely, that is why there are Liberal backbenchers. If they do not provide that particular function, then what good are they?

The second concern is the threat to free speech which is represented by this trend when so much media time and space is devoted to advocacy advertising by the government, spending public money frequently for very partisan purposes. Many groups do not have the money to go on prime time TV to sell their particular points of view. These are groups with opinions which are different from those of the government, groups with different opinions about the environment, groups with different opinions about the validity of megaprojects, and groups concerned about the way in which Crown corporations, such as CN, go about the business of economic development. These groups do not have the money. Where is the justice in this? Where is the free exchange of ideas in that, I ask Your Honour? We see a very serious threat to the ability of all Canadians to make their ideas known and have them debated. The Canadian public should have equality of access to the media.

The third concern is the moral dishonesty of spending money in the first place to detect biases and then spending more money to feed them, first through polling and then through advertising. This is very vividly demonstrated in the way in which the government advertises it is changing unemployment insurance legislation to curb abuses when what it is in fact doing is setting up the climate for further emasculation of the unemployment insurance program. That is what is really