

said to him: "You got Maz a doctorate. I want you to get me a doctorate. I want a hat like the one you got for Maz that says: "Doctor Maz". I want a hat for me that says: "Doctor John".

He had Fred Doucet and his brother and like amoeba they just split. Fred has gone off and formed his own company with his brother Gerry.

Another great lobbyist in Ottawa, Jon Johnson, who is a great Tory as well, helped the government as a consultant on the free trade agreement. The Prime Minister appointed Mr. Johnson's sister a senator. He called Fred Doucet the eighth wonder of the world. He started a lobbying firm and within the space of about four years made it into the top ten largest lobbying companies in Canada.

Then of course came 1989 and who starts the lobbying first? Among others was one Hughie Segal. He started a firm called Earnscliffe. That has some sort of gothic resonance to it. Like Heathcliffe, Earnscliffe has some gothic resonance. In that firm is Harry Near. He is one of the principal's of the firm and is on the national campaign committee of the Conservative government. Billy-the-kid Fox, who used to be press secretary to the Prime Minister, is in this firm and he too is on the national campaign committee of the federal Conservative Party. He appears every Thursday morning on *Canada AM*. He is defending the government's position and appears along with Michael Kirby and Gerry Caplan, one the Liberal, one the NDP. This guy, Mr. Fox, is coming up here and lobbying public office holders.

Mr. Doucet is lobbying public office holders. Mr. Ouellet who is hoping to get placed on the national campaign committee of the Conservative Party is up here lobbying public office holders.

When I raised this I said, is the optics on this not bad? They do not see anything wrong with this. I cannot understand why any person who is prosecuting a private interest would then turn around and approach his political friends, his political colleagues, public office holders, to get a contract or to get a procurement, or to get legislation changed, or whatever.

Supply

Today Mr. Ouellet and his colleagues came before the committee and said we had it all wrong. He said the public did not care about those things. It is only a few people up here in Ottawa and the press.

Mr. Speaker, you have been in politics a long time and you know that the people care, just as the people care through every one of us here. We represent the public interest and not only must the public interest be separate from private interest, not only must it seem to be separate, it must in fact be separate.

This company that came before us today, GCI, one of its members is a retired general. He was a deputy minister of transport and the provincial governments and the federal government hired him to co-ordinate some policy for transportation in Canada. Within two weeks of having finished that contract, he had as a client one of the interests in the shipowners association. Does anybody see anything wrong with that or is it just me? I do not think so.

• (1850)

The perception of the public is that these lobbyists were here in Ottawa, proliferated like rabbits and are nothing but escort services for clients. That is what I think.

I can just see it. I am sure if an aeronautics company hires Billy Fox to be their consultant it is not because he knows all the intricacies of aeronautical engineering. He does not. What he does know are important people in high places. That is the perception.

When we were dealing with conflict of interest, one of the things that came out was that even if there is an appearance of conflict, then there is conflict. That is the argument that Sinc Stevens never understood.

In spite of the fact that there may not have been any communication between him and his wife at night in the sanctity of their room bordered by a space six feet by four feet, even when they talked on a Saturday evening about the Christian gold coin and other ways of making money, even if that did not happen and I will accept his word that it did not happen, the perception was that his spouse was going off to a client of the department of which her husband was minister to get an interest-free loan.

The perception was there. Where there is perception, there is reality. Mr. Speaker, you have been here a long time. I am sorry to hear you are not going to run again.