

Conflict of Interest

[English]

Mr. Boudria: Madam Speaker, I am sorry if the Hon. Member is not hearing clearly what I was saying. I will attempt to speak more slowly to make sure she understands everything in the future.

Mrs. Mailly: Go outside and say it.

Mr. Boudria: Again, perhaps I will repeat so that even the Hon. Member for Gatineau (Mrs. Maily) will understand.

The Member across the way and some of her colleagues are saying that I am insinuating and making false accusations.

Mr. Siddon: Total innuendo.

Mr. Boudria: I suppose the RCMP is making false accusations and that the Conservative Members of Parliament who, over the last 10 days, have made all kinds of comments in the House are making false accusations. In other words, the Member is probably suggesting that everyone who disagrees is crazy but everyone who agrees with her is all right.

Mrs. Maily: What you have just said is morally bankrupt.

Mr. Boudria: That "I am all right, Jack" attitude, Madam Speaker, is totally inadequate. Canadians have had enough of it.

I have a newspaper article for September 23, 1987. I can provide this article for Members opposite if it pleases them. In this one we read:

At 8.45 a.m. this morning, David Kilgour was still stewing.

He has been stewing now for 173 days, ever since that Saturday in April when he warned the government it had better clean up its act or else.

The article continues:

Kilgour said he would either cross the floor or else quit altogether if the government failed to meet his two conditions: (i) Pay attention to the economic woes of Western Canada, and (ii) Come up with some suitable conflict-of-interest guidelines.

An Hon. Member: What are you referring to?

Mr. Boudria: I think I am referring to conflict of interest guidelines. I am even referring to a request that a Conservative Member made. Surely I have the right to make that speech and I have the right to be heard. If the Member wants to be heard, I can yield the floor to her momentarily, she can make her point and I can come back to my speech provided that time is deducted from the amount of time that has been allotted to me. I know she will have ample opportunity to speak later.

As I was saying, the Hon. Member for Edmonton—Strathcona (Mr. Kilgour) was saying that the Government had to come up with some suitable conflict of interest guidelines. Those remarks came from a September 23, 1987 newspaper article from *The Ottawa Citizen* written by one Roy MacGregor. This was not the only case. There have been others. I could read on and on from newspaper clippings of various cases involving conflict of interest. I could refer to Members individually but it is not the purpose of what we are doing

today. We are trying to propose rules which are better. If I am provoked by the Member across, we could get into this further.

I want to indicate to the House and to the Government that what is proposed to us today may be part of the answer, but it is certainly not the full picture. The Government has offered us only a partial set of rules involving conflict of interest, not a total package, and it has left many questions unanswered.

I have been asking myself, Madam Speaker, and you have probably wondered about this too, as I am sure most Canadians have, why this Bill was presented to us on February 24, 1988. Shortly before that, in 1988, there had been a number of issues raised in the House of Commons concerning conflict of interest. The Prime Minister, in the Throne Speech of 1986, had promised a new set of conflict of interest rules. It is interesting to note why we needed a new set of conflict of interest rules in 1986 when the Prime Minister had invented a new set in 1985 which he said were the best in the western world. If they were the best, how would they need to be fixed up? In any event, in 1986 in the fall Throne Speech here we were again with the Government committing itself to new rules regarding conflict of interest.

Lo and behold, the Government forgot about the necessity of having new conflict of interest rules until a few other problems arose, namely the Commission of Inquiry into Facts of Allegations of Conflict of Interest Concerning the Honourable Sinclair M. Stevens. This report was tabled last year and after it was tabled the Government presented us with a Bill on February 24, 1988, the same Bill that we are reviewing today, Bill C-114, entitled an Act to provide for greater certainty in the reconciliation of the personal interests and duties of office of Members of the Senate and of the House of Commons, to establish a Conflict of Interest Commission and to make consequential amendments to other Acts. This is the Bill that was presented to us on February 24, 1988.

• (1710)

On that date, the Prime Minister wrote to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Turner), and presumably to the Leader of the third Party as well, and this is what he said in the letter that he sent to my Leader:

Dear Mr. Turner,

I enclose a copy of a Bill dealing with conflict of interest for Members of the Senate and the House of Commons, which I intend to table later today.

The Bill sets forth the Government's proposals in respect of conflict of interest. Its provisions, which affect the rights and privileges of all Parliamentarians, address some of the most difficult and complex issues facing persons in public life today. It deserves the most careful scrutiny by all Parliamentarians, and I invite you, as I am also inviting Mr. Broadbent, to join with me in asking all our colleagues in both Houses to review these proposals in the constructive spirit with which they are being put forward by the Government.

Listen to the next sentence, Madam Speaker: