



Recent Publications and Documents

Conflict of Interest Guidelines for Cabinet Ministers, Document tabled in the House of Commons, May 1, 1980, 11p. and appendices.

On May 1, 1980 Prime Minister Trudeau's guidelines for cabinet ministers were tabled in the House of Commons by Yvon Pinard, the President of the Privy Council. The purpose of such guidelines is to require the divestment of those interests which pose a high probability of creating conflict situations; to disclose interests which have a lesser, but not unknown, potential for conflict but which through disclosure would inhibit a self-serving decision; and to exempt assets for personal use and commonly-held investments which have virtually no abuse potential such as residences, automobiles, household goods and works of art. Also exempt are cash and deposits except foreign currency held for investment purposes, savings bonds, various types of savings plans, and loans to relatives, or non-relatives where the amount is less than \$5000.

Certain activities are completely prohibited, including professional, corporate, commercial, consultant or management positions; directorships or offices in commercial corporations except philanthropic or charitable organizations not receiving federal government funds; and active membership in union or professional associations.

Assets which may be publicly disclosed include interests in family businesses and companies whose stocks are not publicly traded provided they are local, do not contract with the government and do not control shares of public companies; farms; other real property not likely to create a conflict of interest; and interests in trust assets provided

administration is at arm's length. If not disclosed, these assets must be sold or placed in a blind trust.

Unlike the guidelines issued by the Conservative government in 1979, the rules do not directly apply to spouses or dependent children of Ministers. However, Ministers must not transfer their assets to their spouses or dependent children to avoid the guidelines. The guidelines are also applicable to exempt members of the Minister's staff (such as executive assistants, senior policy advisors) as designated by him. Other staff members are subject to the Public Servants Conflict of Interest Guidelines.

The Editor
