

Monday, April 14, 2003.

Mr. Howard Wilson  
Office of the Ethics Counsellor  
22nd Floor, 66 Slater Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0C9 Via fax, e-mail and post

Dear Mr. Wilson,

I write to you today on behalf of the 65,000 supporters of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation (CTF) with respect to the "perceived" and "real" conflict of interest that is now occurring with Ministers of the Crown continuing to maintain their positions while campaigning for the leadership of the Liberal Party.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister John Manley along with Canadian Heritage Minister Sheila Copps both occupy influential positions at the Cabinet table with considerable taxpayer provided resources at their disposal. Serving as a Minister of the Crown and as a Member of Parliament is difficult enough task at the best of times. Participating in the campaign to become leader of the Liberal Party severely limits Mr. Manley's and Ms. Copps' ability to effectively serve as Ministers of the Crown with respect to time and activity pressures not to mention the real conflict of interest inherent in using government resources for private partisan pursuits.

The Saskatchewan NDP leadership campaign in 2000/2001 and the more recent Ontario PC leadership campaign in the spring of 2002 provide ample evidence of the ease with which private partisan pursuits can masquerade as public business thus resulting in the misappropriation of public resources.

Mr. Wilson, please treat this letter as a formal letter of complaint for investigation. I anxiously await your response and urge you to counsel the Prime Minister on this issue.

Sincerely,

Walter Robinson  
Federal Director