

Supply

and on that basis alone, because he failed to foresee what was going to happen in the Falkland Islands dispute, Lord Carrington had the honour and the courage and the respect for the traditions the respect for the public place of public people, that he stepped down.

Some Hon. Members may have read the excerpts in the recent issue of *New Yorker*. Let me quote for the House:

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher didn't want to accept Carrington's resignation, but he gave her no choice, saying in their private conversations what he later said publicly, which was this: "I was wrong in the assessment of what they (the Argentines) were doing and therefore I am responsible." He declined to share the responsibility with the Ministry of Defence or with the intelligence services, which may have miscalculated Argentina's intentions. Mrs. Thatcher told reporters that she had "spent a lot of time Saturday and Sunday trying to persuade him not to put in his resignation." But, she continued, "when he put this to me as a point of honor and said there had to be honor in politics, I was not at liberty to refuse." Nothing more was involved than the "point of honor"—no concealed disagreements over policy, only Carrington's determination to take full responsibility for what he described as "a humiliating affront to this country."

That was a Minister who acted within the traditions of this Parliament. He resigned on a point of honour because he was a man of honour, and that is the course that should have been followed by the Minister of Finance.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: I should make a distinction and underline a point. There has been talk about the unusual importance of the Minister of Finance to this Government. No one who knows the state of affairs in the world would deny the unusual importance of Lord Carrington to the Thatcher government in Great Britain. The difference is not in their importance; the difference is in their standards, and it is an unhappy day for this Parliament when we have to admit that the standards of the Parliament in Westminster appear to be higher than the standards of the Parliament of Canada.

What we have here, to aid Ministers and to aid the public, is a system of guidelines established so Ministers will not be operating in the dark and the public will have some basis on which to judge the performance of those who sit on the Treasury benches. We have those guidelines. They are designed precisely to create confidence in the system. Let me quote from the guidelines outlined in the Prime Minister's letter to the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. MacEachen), the man who was sitting silently at Port Hawkesbury before the expiry of the date. The letter dated April 28, 1980 reads:

The precept of fulfilling one's official responsibilities in an objective and disinterested manner lies at the very heart of our system of government. Ministers, therefore, have an obligation to meet the highest standards of conduct and to arrange and conduct their personal affairs in a manner which does not conflict or appear to conflict with their public duties and responsibilities.

That is the relevant excerpt from the letter of the Prime Minister to all of his Ministers. That is the standard which should guide them. I underline the point. Not only is there the question of avoiding conflict, but there is the question of avoiding the appearance of conflict as spelled out in the

guidelines that were presented to that Minister and to every Minister on the Treasury benches.

The guidelines deal with two cases. They deal with serving Ministers, people who are now serving in the Cabinet, and the guideline there that is relevant to this debate is, and I quote:

In any official dealings with former office holders, Ministers must ensure that they do not provide grounds or the appearance of grounds for allegations of improper influence, privileged access or preferential treatment.

That is the guideline as it applies to serving Ministers.

As it relates to former Ministers, first of all, the guidelines concerning former Ministers are restricted to two years. There is one that is of particular relevance here, and I quote:

• (1530)

Within a period of two years of leaving office, Ministers should not:

lobby for or on behalf of any person or commercial corporation before any department or agency for which they were responsible on an ongoing basis during the last two years of their participation in the Ministry.

Those are the guidelines which apply to former Ministers. Those are the guidelines which apply specifically to the act of lobbying, which we believe was carried on by the former Minister, Alastair Gillespie, within the period prohibited by these guidelines, of which he was aware.

There are two cases, but there are times when those two cases come together, because, Mr. Speaker, if a serving Minister knows a former Minister is breaking the guidelines, and helps him break those guidelines, then that serving Minister is guilty also. The Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. MacEachen) is guilty. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) is guilty. The Minister of State for Mines (Mrs. Erola) is guilty.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: That, Sir, we allege is the case here. We believe that the guidelines applying to serving Ministers were broken. We believe that the guidelines applying to former Ministers were broken. But that is not for us to decide. We have established a place and a procedure which allows precisely these questions to be judged. What has been proposed by the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Broadbent) and what is supported by this Party, is precisely that. This question of allegations that guidelines have been broken should go to the officer whom Parliament appointed to judge these allegations so that a fair and impartial judgment can occur. That is what we are asking. We are asking that the Liberals stop the cover up, that they allow a fair judgment to be made by the very officer whom they have appointed precisely to judge cases of this kind. That is what we are talking about.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: Let us look at the facts of this case as we know them. Let us review what has happened here.

[Translation]

Someone on the other side said that it is about time. I agree. I am taking part in this debate because I want to say exactly what has been going on this morning.