

the media have requested an impartial investigation into the facts. That is what is going to happen—

Mr. Kaplan: Also for de Havilland?

Mr. Nielsen: —and surely that is, in all fairness and reasonableness, what opposition Members want.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): What about Parliament?

Mr. Nielsen: I have answered the question with respect to Parliament. That impartiality, which is absent in the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues by virtue of the conduct of his own caucus Members, ensures that there will be no such impartiality in this place.

Mr. Gauthier: With 211 MPs? Come on.

PRIME MINISTER'S POSITION

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister and is based on the assumption that he has recently talked to the Prime Minister. In the House on May 2 the Deputy Prime Minister said:

—compliance by the Ministry with the Code of Conduct. That is the beginning and end of his responsibility. He has done that. I am satisfied, as is the Prime Minister, that that has occurred.

In other words, he was satisfied that compliance had occurred. In his letter of resignation to the Prime Minister the Minister repeats that he is innocent, says he has complied with the code and, in addition, with the provisions in the letter sent to him on September 9 by the Prime Minister. He is still contending that he is innocent of any violation.

Has the Deputy Prime Minister consulted with the Prime Minister? If so, does the Prime Minister still believe that the Minister has not violated the code with regard to conflict, or the letter of September 9?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister will obviously stand by his responses made in this House and elsewhere with respect to this matter, as do I. I am sure that neither one of us will prejudge, as the hon. gentleman would have me do, the result of an impartial investigation into the facts. Surely that is what he wants and surely that is what is in the best interest now with regard to all the circumstances.

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, if there is one person who has prejudged the case it is the Deputy Prime Minister who made only one phone call on this whole matter.

GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): I want to be very clear on what the Minister is saying. I understand him to be reiterating the Government's position, namely, that the former Minister has violated neither the code pertinent to conflict of interest guidelines nor the letter sent to him by the Prime Minister on September 9. Is that the Government's position?

Oral Questions

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Acting Prime Minister): When the hon. gentleman accuses me of having made one phone call, he states something which is totally false. He should know that and should use words with more caution than to fling about accusations of that nature. I made a good deal more than one telephone call and had a good deal more than one discussion.

Mr. Broadbent: Answer the question.

Mr. Nielsen: I stand by what I have said in this House during the last two weeks.

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, it will be interesting for the whole country to learn that the Deputy Prime Minister stands by what he has said because the whole country has, of course, appropriately reached a different conclusion.

CONDUCT OF INQUIRY

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): When will the Deputy Prime Minister be in a position to tell us who will be conducting this inquiry and what the terms of reference of the inquiry will be?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, that must obviously be done without any delay. It is a matter which is under current consideration by the Prime Minister and his advisers. I can assure the hon. gentleman that there will be no delay in bringing about an impartial investigation as to the facts in these circumstances.

[Translation]

NATURE OF INQUIRY MENTIONED IN STATEMENT BY MINISTER OF REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION

Mr. Jacques Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a question to the Deputy Prime Minister and try to clarify the nature of the proposed inquiry that was mentioned in the Minister's statement this morning. Earlier, the Deputy Prime Minister seemed to be saying that the Opposition had asked several times last week for an independent inquiry. Perhaps I may refresh his memory and say that the Opposition was specific in its request, and my question is therefore: Will the inquiry be held as requested by the Opposition parties last week, namely, before a committee of this House? This option was turned down twice by the Conservative majority last week, before two different committees. Where will the inquiry be held? In Parliament or somewhere else, hidden away from the public eye?

● (1425)

[English]

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I will ignore the intemperate accusations in the question, on this occasion. The impartial investigation which is being considered will be governed by terms of reference broad enough to encompass all of the accusations, allegations—unfounded or whatever—