

*Supply*

keeping the cattle out of the cornfield. Perhaps the Prime Minister feels that after so many glaring infractions it is a little late in the day to try to impose guidelines on Ministers who are acting as uncontrolled as March hares. Perhaps he believes the grandfather of the late Adlai Stevenson who said: "There's no use beating on the log after the coon's gone out".

Whatever the reason, the Prime Minister seems to have completely given up on his Ministers. However, that does not remove the onus, nor does it erase the right of Canadians to have the assurance that the highest standards will be followed by those in public life. If the Prime Minister feels that he cannot discipline his Ministers—we can certainly see that he might feel that way—there remains an alternative. It is to support this motion and turn the job over to a committee. What is needed is a set of clear and explicit guidelines which have clear penalties. We need guidelines with teeth. We must have guidelines which will be followed by Ministers, and failing that they must face the penalty of dismissal, because they are certainly not following the traditional course and submitting their resignation when they are caught, as any honourable Minister would do.

We hope that the Government would see its way clear to support this motion which has been devised in the public interest, and indeed devised by this Government and not by the Opposition.

At the present time, the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister have given the Cabinet carte blanche. There is nothing to stop any Minister or former Minister, on the very day he steps out of Government, from stepping into a lucrative job and acting as a negotiator with the very Department that he once headed. This is a situation which is repugnant to every single Canadian.

It is regrettable that the Prime Minister, the author of so many impeccable guidelines, does not seem to be able to grasp the elements of public morality. Perhaps this is natural for someone who makes use of official transportation when he goes on his holidays. Perhaps in a Cabinet in which there are Ministers who telephone judges and others who have a knack of penmanship, it is natural to expect a certain elasticity about rules of public behaviour. Perhaps this is also an explanation for the selective amnesia that occurs time after time when we attempt to question Ministers.

Canadians expect something more. They expect standards to be set and they expect standards will be followed. Since the Government seems incapable of dealing with the decay in official morality, then Parliament should take on the task. That is the purpose of this motion and it deserves support from all Members of the House.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The rules of the House permit a period of ten minutes for questions and answers at this point. Are any Hon. Members rising to ask questions?

**Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain):** Mr. Speaker, I thought that the Government would have wanted to respond to the comments of the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr.

Nielsen). However, while I can understand that the Government may want to wait and answer both statements, and I have no choice but to accept that, I do not agree with that method.

I believe it is unfortunate in many ways that the subject matter for today's discussion should have to come before the House. I think it is unfortunate that the question of suitable and adequate guidelines dealing with the behaviour of Cabinet Ministers and senior public servants of any Government have not been clearly established by now. Guidelines should have been established that are subject to one interpretation and easily understood by Members of the House of Commons and the public.

Some weeks ago it became apparent that it was possible, at least under the circumstances presented to the House, to make more than one interpretation of how the present guidelines should be enforced. I had no difficulty with interpreting those guidelines and I believe that many other Members had no difficulty with interpreting the guidelines as well. For some reason, Members of the Cabinet seem to have some difficulty with interpreting the guidelines in a way that we believe to be quite clear and easily understood language.

We must first consider who the guidelines are designed to protect. It is clear that the guidelines are intended, in the first instance, to protect Members of Parliament from either inadvertently or unwillingly acting in a way which would bring themselves, the Government and the House of Commons into disrepute. They are also intended to protect senior public servants so that they may clearly understand the parameters within which they are supposed to operate. They are meant to describe clearly what behaviour is acceptable and what actions might infringe upon being acceptable. The guidelines are intended to protect the public and give it some confidence in the way its Government, Members of Parliament and senior public servants conduct themselves under the day-to-day rules of business that must be carried out by the Government and its agencies. The guidelines should be sufficiently understood by the public so that they can be sure that the Government, those of us involved in Parliament and those responsible for making policy decisions, are not receiving or giving special consideration in any way.

Finally, and I believe most importantly, the guidelines are intended to protect the institution of Parliament. That is the sad consequence of raising incidents that have brought into question the judgment of Cabinet Ministers, senior public servants and perhaps even the integrity that those people have displayed or failed to display in making decisions in the public interest. The very fact that the actions of Ministers of the Crown and senior public servants have been brought into question in Parliament undermines the confidence that the Canadian public has in the institution of Parliament.

It is therefore important that whatever guidelines are implemented must be clear and subject to only one interpretation. They must be guidelines that have received the approval of the entire House of Commons and are made known to