

the Minister's suggestion, I took the opportunity yesterday to meet for an hour with the Assistant Deputy Registrar General in order to find out what investigation took place of the matters alleged in yesterday's newspapers.

Is the Deputy Prime Minister aware of the fact that no investigation took place and that the Assistant Deputy Registrar General informed me and my colleague from Windsor that in fact he had no power, or staff, to conduct an investigation into such allegations as those which appeared in *The Globe and Mail* yesterday? How could he tell the House that there has been full compliance in this particular case, when in fact there has been no investigation—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to see at least one Member of Parliament is doing his homework and learning the facts of life as they apply to the Assistant Deputy Registrar General. Of course I am aware of those matters, and he should be. If he was not told today, I am sure the Assistant Deputy Registrar General would tell him now, if he phoned him back, that there has in fact been compliance with the code by the Minister.

REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE REFERRAL

Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, would the Deputy Prime Minister kindly explain how he can give these repeated assurances to the House when in fact there has been and will be no investigation by the official who was responsible for this particular task and assured us that in fact he does not make those decisions but that he commends them to the Prime Minister who makes the decisions? Will the Government now agree to send the matter to the Standing Committee on Elections, Privileges and Procedure so that we can have a full investigation of these very serious allegations?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member's progress is encouraging. If he energetically pursues that learning curve, he will discover that the code of conduct which is in place for public office holders—

An Hon. Member: Requires a resignation today.

Mr. Nielsen: —does not require any investigation. It requires compliance. That compliance has been had. In respect of his suggestion, he knows, or should know, that there are processes available to him, and indeed to any other Member of Parliament, who wishes to invoke those procedures. He had better continue his studies.

Oral Questions

MINISTER'S BEHAVIOUR

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. I remind him that the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion has blatantly ignored the Prime Minister's direct instructions when he referred to "the responsibility to prevent conflict of interest including those that might arise out of the activities of spouses". Will the Deputy Prime Minister explain to this House why he believes this incredible behaviour, in conflict with the Prime Minister's directive, is now acceptable behaviour?

• (1425)

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): I suppose that is about the finest example of hang before trial that I have ever heard, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Broadbent: We just want a trial. Let's have an investigation.

Mr. Nielsen: If the Hon. Member wishes to charge the Minister with having done something dishonourable or of a criminal nature, he has that option open to him if he cares to take it on the floor of the House of Commons, and there are also procedures and processes available to him to invoke, should he care to do so.

GUIDELINE PROVISIONS

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I thought the Deputy Prime Minister would have guts enough to answer the question. Obviously he doesn't.

Will the Deputy Prime Minister explain to this House why the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion is not in violation of Section 31(2) where it reads in part:

—being placed or the appearance of being placed under an obligation to any person or organization that might profit from special consideration by the office holder.

How has the Minister not contravened those guidelines? Explain that to the House.

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I shall explain to the Hon. Member that, should he choose to have the courage to do so, there are procedures and processes available in the House of Commons and in its procedures for him to make that kind of charge and take whatever appropriate procedures are necessary in order to follow through on it.

An Hon. Member: This is the same defence you used last fall.