

Oral Questions

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I answered that kind of question fully and repeatedly yesterday when I said to the House, in response to several questions from several different quarters, that on the instructions of the Prime Minister I had personally met with the Assistant Deputy Registrar General in order to establish that there had been full, complete compliance with the code of conduct, which it is more properly called, by the Minister concerned. He assured me that there had been that full compliance. That satisfied me. Accordingly, I reported to the Prime Minister.

MINISTER'S WIFE'S ACTIVITIES

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, the Government has not challenged the facts of what the Minister's wife did, where she went to raise the money for her husband's company, or how she got it. Yet this morning when the Prime Minister was asked whether or not he believed that the Minister knew nothing of what his wife was doing the Prime Minister did not answer that question. That question has to be answered. Do the Prime Minister and the Government believe that the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion had no knowledge of what his wife was doing? Is that the position of the Government?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the position of the Government is that if the Hon. Member, or any other Hon. Member, believes that Mrs. Stevens has done something dishonourable or criminal, they should so state, and take the appropriate courses open to them, having made such a charge.

GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Mr. Speaker, the conflict of interest guidelines are for Ministers to obey. I am asking the Deputy Prime Minister whether he and the Government believe the Minister since, as the Prime Minister said, it is his duty and responsibility to see that the guidelines are enforced. Do they believe the Minister when he tells them that he had no knowledge of what his wife was doing?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, it is the responsibility of the Prime Minister and of the Government to ensure that there has been compliance with the code of conduct by all Ministers of the Government. With respect to this particular Minister, my advice to the Prime Minister, based upon the assurances I received from the Assistant Deputy Registrar General, was that there has been that full compliance.

KOREAN BANK LOAN

Mr. Raymond Garneau (Laval-des-Rapides): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. In answer to my question yesterday concerning the one-year interest-free loan of \$2.6 million granted by the company 622109 Ontario Ltd.

to the family business of the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion, the Deputy Prime Minister replied that at the request of the Prime Minister he had looked "once again, personally, into the same matter that I looked into last April 7", which was a loan from a Korean bank associated with Hyundai to the family business of the Minister. In reply to my question yesterday, why did the Minister refer to the loan made by a Korean bank which was a different loan from the one referred to in my question? Why did he make that automatic connection?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the application of the simple rules of logic suggests to me that the Hon. Member was probably absent on April 7 when the Hon. Member for Essex—Windsor raised similar questions based on similar newspaper articles. I do believe they were from the same newspaper. On that occasion I took the appropriate steps on the instructions of the Prime Minister, as I did on this occasion.

[Translation]

INQUIRY WHETHER A COMPANY RECEIVED FUNDS OR LOAN GUARANTEES

Mr. Raymond Garneau (Laval-des-Rapides): It was obviously not the same loan, Mr. Speaker. And now for my supplementary. Could the Deputy Prime Minister give the House the assurance that neither numbered company 622109 Ontario Ltd., nor any of its officers who made a loan of \$2.6 million to the family business of the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion, received funds or loan guarantees worth millions of dollars from the Korean Hanil Bank, the Hyundai Corporation, Magna International Inc. or any officers connected with any of these companies?

• (1420)

[English]

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the responsibility of the Prime Minister to the House and to the country is to ensure that there has been full compliance with the code of conduct which has been established for the guidance of Ministers of the Crown. That responsibility has been discharged. The Prime Minister, the Government, and I are satisfied that there has been full compliance with the code of conduct by the Minister. If the Hon. Member is going to suggest that something dishonourable or criminal has been done, let him say so and pursue the proper course.

ASSISTANT DEPUTY REGISTRAR GENERAL—INVESTIGATORY POWERS

Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is also directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. It concerns the possible conflict of interest in the transactions involving the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion. At