

*Supply*

**An Hon. Member:** Former.

**Mr. Nielsen:** I know who he is, but the President of the Privy Council obviously does not. I suggest that he correct the record and allow me to inform him that late yesterday afternoon I did write such a letter. The Government having failed to do so, I took it upon myself to ask the ADRG to undertake the investigation, in no way near the terms of the motion of the Hon. Leader of the New Democratic Party.

**Some Hon. Members:** Order, order!

**Mr. Nielsen:** So let us clear that up. I made the letter public. I have not seen any reply.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Nielsen:** If the Press Gallery has seen a reply, I certainly have not. I am waiting anxiously for the reply.

**An Hon. Member:** Tell your Leader.

**Mr. Nielsen:** I did not tell my Leader anything about it. I am the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Harquail:** Mr. Speaker, we are witnessing a very interesting conflict between the former Leader and the now acting Leader of the Opposition, leading into my question to the former Leader of the Opposition. He said it was not his intention and he disliked very much besmirching or attacking anyone's reputation on the floor of this House, especially someone who would not be here to defend himself. He has always said that.

He commenced his remarks today by making the statement that it was not his intention to attack anyone's reputation. That is in direct conflict and shows a split in attitude between himself and his present Leader, the man who just identified himself as Leader.

My question has to do with the Right Hon. Member's position when he was heading the Clark administration. Did he establish financial guidelines for Ministers during his term of office as Prime Minister?

**Mr. Clark:** Mr. Speaker, let me first of all indicate that we were told by the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. MacEachen) that guidelines have no effect now, they are only for guidance. We are now told by the President of the Privy Council that there is no one who can judge these Ministers when they violate their guidelines—when they state that the level of their conscience is not strong enough to meet the standards of centuries of parliamentary practice.

Regarding the question put by the Hon. Member for Restigouche (Mr. Harquail), first of all I should tell him that in my opening remarks I was only quoting the Minister of Finance. I admit that is dangerous. I was quoting the Minister of Finance, so if he has a quarrel with my remarks let him speak to the Minister of Finance—let him write him a letter. If he cannot get him directly he can write "Dear Micky" and it will be passed on in a memorandum later on.

As regards the guidelines, yes, there were guidelines established by my administration. If he needs further information on them I would refer him to the spouse of the Hon. Member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie).

● (1600)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker):** Is the Hon. Member for Restigouche (Mr. Harquail) rising on a point of order?

**Mr. Harquail:** Yes, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker):** I will expect the Hon. Member to come within a matter of seconds, not minutes, to his point of order, which is an appeal to the rules of the House.

**Mr. Harquail:** I only want to make one point, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the new rules regarding the ten minutes, I think there must be an opportunity for debate and an opportunity for exchange. Also I think that we have to apply the word "fair", and, in fairness, give opportunities to Hon. Members on both sides, when they are posing questions, as has been admonished by the Speaker, to put a pointed question and to get a pointed answer. We have not seen that this afternoon.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker):** The Hon. Member refers to the Standing Orders of the House and, accordingly, at first blush he may have a point of order. I will not spend more than a couple of seconds to indicate that all Hon. Members should be aware that the ten-minute exchange of comments and questions are new rules of the House. If there are people who think that I am not doing the best I can in that regard, I wish they would let me know directly.

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Mr. Speaker, I only want to make one remark about the guidelines which the Leader of the Opposition established at that time. They were so badly screwed up that the wife of the Hon. Member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie) said, "Your guidelines, Mr. Clark, I will not abide by them", and the Right Hon. Member for Yellowhead (Mr. Clark) had to go back to the drawing board.

**Mr. Clark:** That is not true.

**Mr. Chrétien:** He could not even meet the request or the requirements of the wife of one Member.

**Mr. Clark:** Mr. Speaker, I know that the Hon. Minister would not want to mislead the House. In fact, the spouse of the then Minister of Finance was concerned about the guidelines, but she adhered to them because in my Government, I am proud to say, not only did the Ministers adhere to the guidelines, so did their spouses. We were a Government that respected guidelines, in distinction from this Government.

**Mr. Chrétien:** Anyway, Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak in this debate, I want first to situate the context of the issue before the House. It is very evident from long experience in the House that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Nielsen) enjoys