

*Supply*

wants to play and the tricks that he brought in this morning, and we will be a responsible Government.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Chair will recognize the Hon. Member for Saskatoon West.

**Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon West):** I have been following the debate today with some interest. I want to address my remarks to some of the questions which have been raised by Government Members, in particular by the apologists for the Government who oppose, and I think in an unthinking way, a very serious and very straightforward proposition, that is to say, that the House of Commons be given a mandate, through its Committee on Privileges and Elections, to review the present state of conflict of interest guidelines which were first brought down as a result of parliamentary inquiry, investigation and reference by this House ten years ago.

On a number of occasions we have attempted, as a Party and as individuals in the Opposition, to make this request. The Parliamentary Secretary who just spoke said that there should have been consultation as to whether the motion should go through as a matter of consent between the Parties. On different occasions, the question was asked in Question Period of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. MacEachen) as to whether or not they would consider a reference to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections. On each occasion, the Prime Minister or the Deputy Prime Minister refused to agree to that during the course of Question Period.

Therefore, there was only one course of action which could be taken by any responsible Opposition which felt that the honour and dignity of this institution were at stake with respect to these important matters involving conflict of interest, that is, to bring forward a motion on the first available Opposition day. We went further this morning, when the Leader of the New Democratic Party stood in his place and suggested that unanimous consent of the House be obtained. We sought such unanimous consent, and we in the House agreed that the motion would not be taken as being a motion of confidence, and would thus allow every Hon. Member, including those on the Government side, to vote in favour of the motion without any fear of the Government falling as a result of its passage. That has been denied, not by this Party, because we have agreed, through our House Leader—

**Mr. Nielsen:** Nor by the NDP.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:**—nor by the New Democratic Party, not by the backbenchers of the Government Party, but, rather, by Government Ministers. They were the ones who stood up and blocked this very reasonable reference—

**Mr. Riis:** That's right.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:**—of a motion to a committee.

**Mr. Nielsen:** It was the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

**Mr. Riis:** A shameful act.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** It was the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Blais), that great defender of integrity and politicians. He was the one who said, "Nay".

**Mr. Nielsen:** Maybe he wanted to call for advice.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** I say that it was tantamount to contempt of Parliament for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs to have taken that position.

I also want to point out that it is important that we have a review at this time—

**Mr. Blais:** I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Blenkarn:** You will get an opportunity at the end of the speech to ask questions.

**Mr. Blais:** Mr. Speaker, surely the hon. gentleman, in accusing a Minister of contempt of Parliament, is behaving in a way which the Chair ought not to accept. Indeed, those are very serious allegations which ought not to be made lightly. I would suggest that the hon. gentleman withdraw that statement.

**Mr. Lewis:** Nonsense.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker):** I want to indicate what was visually obvious to the House, that is, that I have just taken my place in the Chair following the departure of the Deputy Speaker. While I was being seated, I did not hear the Hon. Member's remarks. I would have some concern over an accusation that an Hon. Member has attempted to make before the House. However, before I go further, I would say that it is only a concern and not to be considered as a ruling.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** Mr. Speaker, I have great respect for this institution. When I say one has contempt for the institution, if I believe that to be the case, I do not believe that that is an unparliamentary term. If I believe that the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs has shown contempt for this institution by the position he has taken on this issue, that is a strong contention on my part. If it is unparliamentary, I will certainly withdraw it—

**Mr. Nielsen:** No, it is a contemptible position.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:**—because I respect this institution and everything for which it stands as being the last court of appeal for the people of Canada against arbitrary action on the part of a Government supported by a majority.

**Mr. McDermid:** Say it again.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** I want to make the observation that everyone publicly agrees that there are many good reasons for conflict of interest guidelines. The Prime Minister has spoken in very high terms on why there should be guidelines for Cabinet Ministers. He has mentioned this in the House and repeated it outside the House. In addition, all Hon. Members on this side of the House fully subscribe to that view. It is fundamental, going to the roots of the faith we have in our