

dealings with his Department,—I emphasize “his Department”, Mr. Speaker, in order to clarify the connection with this question,—if this company “provided” him, interest-free, with the sum of more than a quarter of a million dollars, what is this supposed to be if it isn’t a benefit in excess of \$200? It is not exactly peanuts!

● (1420)

[English]

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, in response to the Hon. Member I would invite him to read, once again, the question he put to me yesterday and then the answer that I gave.

ACTIVITIES OF MINISTER'S WIFE

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, my question yesterday was very clear. Assuming the Minister did not know of this loan, assuming we believe that, would he deem it appropriate in the future to let his wife negotiate an interest free loan for companies doing business with his Department?

Mr. Speaker: Order. Next question. Order, please. The Hon. Members know the rules about which questions are in order and which are not. Order, please. Does the Hon. Member have a question to the Minister, not about government policy but about his ministerial responsibility?

Mr. Boudria: Supplementary now, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker: Yes.

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed again to the Minister concerning his Department. Does he feel it is appropriate that his wife should negotiate such a deal when his Department is involved in granting to the same business that his—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order, please. The question is to the Minister about his ministerial responsibilities.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER'S POSITION

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, seemingly we have to accept your definition of ministerial responsibility. I will direct my question to the Deputy Prime Minister. Considering the Minister in question said yesterday he did not get a direct benefit from a company doing business with his Department—my question goes to the heart of the conflict of interest issue here—does the Deputy Prime Minister agree that the Minister did get a benefit from the loan negotiated by his wife?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, let us put into sharp accurate focus the question and answer yesterday, which will be found at page 12996 of *Hansard*. The Member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell asked the following question:

Oral Questions

Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question concerns Section 35 of the code. Even if the Minister did not know before, now that we have told him and he knows that he benefited from a company doing business with his Department, has he or does he intend to file a declaration under the benefit Section 35 of the Code which compels him to file when he has received a benefit from a company doing business with his Government? Has he done so, does he intend to do so and, if not, why not?

That, Sir, was the question. The answer by the Minister is the following:

Mr. Speaker, the short answer to that is, I have received no such benefit.

An Hon. Member: We can read. Let him answer.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

An Hon. Member: Who are you trying to protect?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order. The Hon. Member for Hamilton East will withdraw that comment which the Speaker just heard her make.

Ms. Copps: Could you tell me what I am to withdraw?

Mr. Speaker: Only to say, “I withdraw the comment”.

Ms. Copps: I am not sure what the comment is you are asking me to withdraw?

Mr. Speaker: The suggestion that the Chair is trying to protect anybody that the Hon. Member just made. The Hon. Member will withdraw that.

Ms. Copps: I did not suggest that the Chair was to protect anyone, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member is withdrawing that implication and I accept that.

REQUEST FOR MINISTER'S RESIGNATION

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that the Deputy Prime Minister is avoiding the most serious questions that go to the root of ministerial responsibility. I want him to answer my question this time. Does he agree that the Minister received a direct benefit as a consequence of the loan negotiated by his wife? If the answer is yes, would he not agree that this is a conflict of interest and the Minister should leave his job?

● (1425)

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I answered as I did because the Member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell and the Leader of the New Democratic Party distorted the question that was answered yesterday by rephrasing it.

Mr. Broadbent: I am asking a different question.

Mr. Nielsen: The Minister said yesterday that he complied not only with Section 35 of the Code but with the entire Code, which I have been saying for a week now.