

Oral Questions

● (1420)

REQUEST FOR MINISTERIAL ANSWERS

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): However you interpret the rules, Sir, we abide by them, but this Minister owes us answers. The Prime Minister owes us answers and so does the Deputy Prime Minister. I ask him once more how long has the Prime Minister known of the facts, as they are revealed day by day, of a conflict of interest, and perhaps beyond, surrounding the affairs of this Minister? When will the Deputy Prime Minister allow the Minister to face the music, stand up in this House of Commons and explain to the country what happened? When is the Deputy Prime Minister going to allow that to happen?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, he has been doing that—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Ouellet: What a farce.

An Hon. Member: Cover-up.

Mr. Nielsen: —and for two hours last night before the standing committee—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Nielsen: —answering questions.

Mr. Orlikow: Not so.

An Hon. Member: Whitewash.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. Could we try to do this today, please, without all the noise?

Mr. Nielsen: And doing so very adequately, it has been reported to me, without commenting on the committee evidence. But I can tell the right hon. gentleman that one of the difficulties is the nature of the accusations coming from Members opposite in his Party—

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Absolutely fundamental.

Mr. Nielsen: —and from the New Democratic Party, some of which, such as the one made by the Hon. Member for Prince Albert yesterday, constituted an offence against the laws of the land. If the Member believes that Magna is guilty or should be the subject of a complaint for breaking the laws of Canada, then surely he has a responsibility—

Mr. Orlikow: Answer the question.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. This is long.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): This is the highest court right here.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION

GRANTS TO MAGNA INTERNATIONAL

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion. Last night we learned that Magna International received unpublished grants for its operations in Markham, Ontario. We also learned that Peter Czapka, son of Tony Czapka runs two of those Magna plants. Would the Minister explain to the House how he can continue to perform his duties as Minister of the Crown when these obvious links between his private holdings and those of his public responsibilities have now been exposed?

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member has referred to certain transactions occurring, I believe he said, in Markham. He perhaps hasn't consulted with his leader. Certainly as Prime Minister the leader would have known those were Liberal transactions in the Memorandum of Understanding signed on August 27 and specifically referred in Annex One to that agreement.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Didn't have the guts to answer.

Mr. Ouellet: No guts and no conscience.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

ABSENCE OF PRESS RELEASES

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same Minister. In view of the fact he was the Minister who approved that, would he explain in the House, because Members on this side do not want to use the term cover-up, why no news releases were issued with regard to those grants? Does the Minister have something to hide from the Canadian people? Why does he not come clean and tell us the whole story, the complete story?

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Hon. Member should be enquiring of his leader or possibly Ed Lumley. Ed Lumley signed the Memorandum of Understanding on August 27, 1984. It contemplated \$50 million worth of transactions with Magna International, including the three Markham deals. They are itemized. For example, there is deal No. 207, 834 for hinges, the Multimatic deal. In truth they should answer to the House why no press release was issued with respect to the original memorandum of understanding.

● (1425)

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!