

*Supply*

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Pinard:** Mr. Speaker, the former Leader of the Opposition deliberately refused to answer my questions. I have asked him very clearly, first, is it true that the new Leader of his Party has written a letter to the Deputy Registrar General seeking for a formal inquiry in this matter?

Second, did he receive an answer, and if so, what is it? It is as simple as that.

If he does not have the courage to answer those two questions, that proves the phoney aspect of the motion and it proves that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Nielsen) is not able to substantiate his own speech and his own attitude in the House.

**Mr. Clark:** Mr. Speaker, I am advised that the Leader of the Opposition has indeed sent a letter of that kind. I do not know if there has been a response. The Leader of the Opposition has not seen a response to a letter of that kind.

We would be concerned, naturally, if, before an official of the Parliament of Canada had an opportunity to reply to the Leader of the Opposition, regarding his competence to judge a matter of this kind, there would have been an intervention by the Government.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Clark:** We know that this is a Government which telephones judges. We hope that this is not a Government which tries in advance to silence the Assistant Deputy Registrar General.

**Mr. Pinard:** Mr. Speaker, I still want the Leader of the Opposition to answer the second part of my question. On what grounds does he insinuate that anybody on this side would have phoned or talked to the Deputy Registrar General on this subject? If so, I dare him, I challenge him, to state that outside the House of Commons and I challenge the former Leader of the Opposition to make a formal accusation that any Member on this side would have done that.

What I am asking the Leader of the Opposition is, how is it that the motion moved by the Leader of the NDP is in the same wording, or almost the same wording, as the letter that would have been sent—

**An Hon. Member:** How did you get the letter?

**Mr. Pinard:** —or the request that would have been made by the existing Leader of the Opposition—to an inquiry in that case by the Deputy Registrar General? Is that true? Is that a fact?

**Mr. Clark:** Madam Speaker, what I have said is that I hope there has not been that kind of interference.

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

**Mr. Clark:** I will check the record. But we know the record of this Government, which is, after all, a Government that phones judges.

Let me ask the President of the Privy Council a question. How does he know the language of the letter of the Leader of the Opposition to the Deputy Assistant Registrar General?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker):** I will recognize the Hon. President of the Privy Council, followed by the Hon. Member for Restigouche (Mr. Harquail), and that will complete the ten-minute period.

**Mr. Pinard:** Mr. Speaker, the question was very straight. The answer is that I do not know about the wording of the letter.

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

**Mr. Pinard:** What I know about is that the answer of the Deputy Registrar General has been made public. I know that the Press Gallery had this answer before I raised my question to the Leader of the Opposition. It is strange that the Press Gallery knew about this answer in which the Deputy Registrar General says that he has absolutely no authority to make that inquiry, when the Leader of the Opposition tell that he does not know about this answer and that his Leader does not know about it.

I ask him again, how is it he is asking for an inquiry when he knows, when his Leader knows, that the Deputy Registrar General has no authority to carry out such an inquiry, and that that has been made known to the Press Gallery even before I asked my question?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker):** The Hon. Member for Restigouche (Mr. Harquail).

**Mr. Clark:** Mr. Speaker—

**An Hon. Member:** What about the question?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker):** I think I can rely on the Right Hon. Member for Yellowhead (Mr. Clark) to understand when I say that the Chair has permitted a particularly sharp and excellent exchange of debate. But the Chair is concerned that other Members ought to be able to enter the debate. I know that the Right Hon. Member for Yellowhead will find it quite acceptable and that it will be quite simple for him to handle any remarks that he may wish to make in terms of the President of the Privy Council.

I will now recognize the Hon. Member for Restigouche.

Is the Hon. Leader of the Opposition rising on a point of order?

**Mr. Nielsen:** No, Mr. Speaker, on a question of privilege. The President of the Privy Council has become confused, as the record will show. He has been referring to the Right Hon. Member for Yellowhead as the Leader of the Opposition.

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