

courage supplementary questions which are not supplementary but additional questions.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate very much the opportunity to address this matter briefly. I understand the spirit in which you have addressed your remarks.

Some Hon. Members: Sit down.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: The Speaker has not yet—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The Chair is prepared to accept some brief interventions at this time, but they must be brief. I will certainly hear the House Leader for the Official Opposition on the matter. But the Chair has indicated the views and the procedures that, in the opinion of the Chair, should be observed in the House.

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon West): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The point which I would like to make very briefly is that I appreciate very much that it is within your discretion to allow supplementary questions to be put. There is no question about that. I would like to assist you by saying that in making your assessment of whether a matter is an appropriate supplementary question, it should not be based upon whether it is addressed to one Minister and only one Minister but, rather, it should be based on the subject matter. A supplementary question can indeed affect more than one Minister in dealing with one particular topic.

Accordingly, the citation from Beauchesne's to which you referred states that supplementary questions are within the discretion of the Speaker. But this refers only to the extent to which supplementary questions may be asked. The citation referred to by Your Honour indicates that supplementary questions may be addressed to "a" Minister, not "the" Minister, not the Minister to whom the original question was posed but to a Minister.

I fully understand, Mr. Speaker, that it is your responsibility to ensure that the questions are indeed supplemental. I take no argument or issue with that particular point. However, the concern which I have, and which I think Hon. Members of my Party have, is that you were making a ruling that Members may not ask a supplementary question of a Minister other than the one to whom it was first addressed.

Mr. Speaker: The Chair is perfectly clear. The general rule is that the supplementary question should go to the same Minister. There are circumstances—

Some Hon. Members: No, no.

Mr. Pinard: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order—

Mr. Dick: You are not a dictator yet.

Mr. Speaker: I am sure the Hon. Member for Lanark-Renfrew-Carleton (Mr. Dick) will want to think about that a little bit.

The Chair is indicating a general rule. The Chair is making it quite clear that there are circumstances in which there is a

Point of Order—Mr. Blaikie

shared responsibility between Ministers, or in which a Minister may indicate that he does not have the responsibility and that the question should be directed to another Minister. There are situations in which supplementary questions can be directed to another Minister, but they should be supplementary—as the Hon. Member for Saskatoon West (Mr. Hnatyshyn) has clearly stated—arising out of the question which was asked. That is the key. As a general rule, it does not give the Hon. Member asking the question licence to go hunting and to ask questions of any Minister who happens to be in the House.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Point of order—

Mr. Speaker: I have heard the Hon. Member for Saskatoon West. There are one or two other Members who would like to speak. The Hon. Member and I do not have much difference of opinion on the subject, if any. The Hon. Member for Simcoe North.

Mr. Doug Lewis (Simcoe North): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Based upon the year and a half in which I organized Question Period, I would like to suggest that we can only agree with your submission that it has to be by subject matter. However, I urge on you the view that there are often occasions when the subject matter is the same but it comes down to what you just said, a shared responsibility among Members. It is our right and duty to ask questions, and often we have to use that tactic. I urge upon you that that tactic continue to be allowed.

• (1510)

Mr. Speaker: If there is an additional point of order, the Chair will recognize the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-St. James.

Mr. Keeper: Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that I be heard on this question.

Mr. Pinard: Why?

Mr. Keeper: Since the ruling directly affects my behaviour in this House.

Mr. Speaker: The Chair has indicated it will review *Hansard* carefully with regard to the Hon. Member. I suggest the Chair will be quite prepared to listen privately or discuss—

Mr. Keeper: Privately?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Chair has made a ruling with respect to the Hon. Member. The Chair is prepared to review *Hansard*. As I have indicated, they are close and difficult situations to call. The Chair does not wish to violate the rights or privileges of any Member of the House, but in the interests of everyone there has to be more discipline in terms of the nature and scope of the supplementary questions which have been asked. The Hon. Member for Regina West (Mr. Benjamin).