

Oral Questions

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Hon. Member knows that the comments in his preamble are out of order.

Mr. Tobin: Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Crosbie: Sit down, Tobin!

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THE ADMINISTRATION**CONFLICT OF INTEREST GUIDELINES—LOAN NEGOTIATED BY MINISTER'S WIFE**

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Deputy Prime Minister. For a week we have been attempting to get an answer from the Minister. Up until today the Deputy Prime Minister has been answering, whether we like it or not. I wish to ask the Deputy Prime Minister this question. Whether the Minister gets a direct benefit from the loan obtained by his wife goes to the very root of the conflict of interest principle. I want the Minister to answer these questions. Will he tell us whether he agrees that the Minister is deriving a benefit? If that is so, should the Minister not leave his post? Will he answer those questions now, yes or no?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman might not be happy with the division of responsibilities and my responsibility as Acting Prime Minister to respond in the House with respect to the administration of the Code of Conduct and the Minister's responsibility for the Department which he heads. However, those are the facts of life. I do not share with the Hon. Member the accusations which he makes in the form of his questions. I am required, and have done so, to ensure that compliance is had with the Code of Conduct, to which all Ministers must comply.

ACTING PRIME MINISTER'S POSITION

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, once again, that was no answer to the question. I say to the Minister with great seriousness, in the parliamentary system of government there is no place for the fifth amendment, which is a moral cop-out on the part of this Minister. That is what it is.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

● (1450)

Mr. Broadbent: I will try it this way. Is the Minister now telling the House that on a question which goes to the root of the principle of conflict of interest, namely, whether the Minister obtains the benefit which goes to his wife, the Minister who claims responsibility for dealing with those issues would not have the courage and the integrity to answer the question? Is that what he is saying?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman can try it whichever way he pleases. He and all Members who have been asking questions on this matter for seven days have been trying to have me say what they would like me to say. I am not going to say what they would like me to say. I am going to discharge my responsibilities by telling them that I am entrusted with ensuring that the Code is complied with, and that that Minister has complied with the Code.

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CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD**DOMESTIC PRICE OF WHEAT—EFFECT ON PROCESSORS**

Mr. Reginald Stackhouse (Scarborough West): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for the Canadian Wheat Board. The prospect of domestic wheat price increases is concerning the processors of many flour-based products in that they may become non-competitive with imports from the United States. What action is the Government considering to safeguard the viability of Canadian food processors who are already paying six cents per pound more than their American competitors?

Hon. Charles Mayer (Minister of State (Canadian Wheat Board)): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member has raised a question of concern to all of us in the industry. As he will know, the parliamentary committee is investigating ways by which we can accomplish an increase in the domestic price of wheat, and at the same time ensure that there is fairness to processors, manufacturers, consumers, and farmers who are facing some very serious price competition. Before any decision is made, we want to ensure that all those considerations are being taken into account. At any rate, no decision will be made or no price increase will come into effect before the first of August.

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[Translation]

THE ADMINISTRATION**ETHICS—GOVERNMENT'S POSITION**

Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal—Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister.

Today, in an article by Paul-André Comeau appearing in the newspaper *Le Devoir*, I read, and I quote:

The federal Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion should have the courage to hand in his resignation to the leader of the Government.

Doesn't the Deputy Prime Minister agree it is immoral to defend his Minister's stand and that the people of Quebec can no longer trust this Minister with the Canadair dossier and the Matane paper mill project?