

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

## DESIGNATION OF ALLOTTED DAY

**Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, I rise simply to indicate that tomorrow will be designated as the second allotted day in this trimester.

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[Translation]

**QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER**

**Mr. Doug Lewis (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is it agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

[English]

**Mr. Speaker:** I wish to inform the House that because of the ministerial statement made by the Hon. Minister of National Health and Welfare, Government Orders will be extended by five minutes beginning at one o'clock p.m.

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[English]

**BUSINESS OF SUPPLY**

ALLOTTED DAY, S.O. 82—GOVERNMENT'S FAILURE TO PROVIDE INFORMATION—ALLEGED CONFLICT OF INTEREST

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition)** moved:

That this House condemns the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion and the Government for failing to provide full and satisfactory information on the blatant conflict of interest situation involving that Minister.

He said: Mr. Speaker, we learned this morning that the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion (Mr. Stevens) has offered his resignation to the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney). We also learned that he has asked the Prime Minister for what he terms an independent inquiry. In responding to that initial announcement we want to warn the Government and alert Your Honour that Parliament will not be stilled. We were blocked in two separate committees from getting to the root of this issue. We have been trying to elicit answers for two weeks during Question Period. A judicial inquiry may well be an attempt to take this matter away from the House of Commons. We are dealing with the comportment of a Minister and the public administration of the country. The Minister is responsible to the highest court of the land which is Parliament. We will not countenance a by-passing of parliamentary review and parliamentary accountability through an attempt to convert

*Supply*

this from a matter of parliamentary and political responsibility to a judicial inquiry.

In the last two weeks we have seen a piece-by-piece revelation of a blatant conflict of interest. That conflict of interest has reached such proportions that it not only smells of corruption, but we believe it is corrupt. It is using public office for private gain. No matter what the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Nielsen) may attempt to convince the country of through his stonewalling, it is a breach of the guidelines introduced by the Prime Minister outlining conduct for his Ministers.

I want to put on the record what the Prime Minister said on September 9, 1985, when he introduced the guidelines. He said:

It is a great principle of public administration—I could even say an “imperative”—that to function effectively the Government and the public service of a democracy must have the trust and confidence of the public they serve. In order to reinforce that trust, the Government must be able to provide competent management and, above all, be guided by the highest standards of conduct.

Those were the words of the Prime Minister of Canada at that time.

In an open letter to all Members of Parliament and Senators bearing the same date, the Prime Minister said:

The new Code leaves no doubt that the ultimate responsibility for the ethical standards of the federal Government rests with the Cabinet and, more particularly, with me.

He went on to say:

You will find no quasi-independent agencies in this Code that will allow the Government to shirk its responsibility by saying that the problem belongs to someone else.

I made that point earlier this morning. The Prime Minister cannot divest himself of his responsibility by shuffling it off to an independent inquiry.

In his letter to his Ministers of the same date the Prime Minister said:

I wish it to be understood clearly by all Ministers that they have an individual responsibility to prevent conflicts of interest, including those that might arise out of the activities of their spouses or dependent children on the dealings in property or investments which are owned or managed, in whole or in part, by their spouses or dependent children.

I believe that those guidelines cover the issues specifically. In Ontario there is now a sharing of property during the time of a marriage. Anything that Mrs. Stevens was dealing with, her husband owned jointly. In any event, the shares are registered in a majority fashion in his own name.

● (1120)

We brought this motion before the House today because the recently revealed activities of the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion constitute an obvious blatant and flagrant violation of the spirit and letter of the guidelines issued by the Prime Minister. Yet, the Deputy Prime Minister insisted on trying to bring the Minister's conduct within the ambit of those guidelines.