

Supply

This is the relevant section:

—it has been passed through the fund for administrative reasons:

So it is being passed through the fund for administrative purposes. This is federal money. The Minister has misled the House. Will he now have the decency to stand up and say that perhaps he has forgotten about this document which he tabled yesterday?

Mr. Chrétien: The Hon. Member said I misled the House. It is very terrible. There was another memorandum sent the day after, I understand, containing instruction that the money must come from the Oil Substitution Fund. The Hon. Member should read the whole file. Perhaps I am learning a terrible lesson in that I may have given too many documents to the Hon. Member and he has become confused.

Mr. Clark: We know the truth.

Mr. Lewis: Did you give them all?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): The Hon. Member for Vancouver South.

Mr. Fraser: I wonder if I could ask—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Order, please. I am sorry but I am not certain whether the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans) is rising for the question and answer period or to seek the floor on debate. I thought it was the latter, so I excluded him.

Mr. Deans: Debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources is rising on a point of order.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, come on!

Mr. Dingwall: Mr. Speaker, I have just one comment. The Hon. Member for—

Mr. Lewis: One question!

Mr. Dingwall: —for Central Nova (Mr. MacKay), who just spoke—I just wanted to make one comment.

Mr. Lewis: Point of order!

Mr. Dingwall: I would like to—

Mr. Andre: That is not a point of order!

Mr. Beatty: You are the Parliamentary Secretary. Ask him in his office!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): If the Hon. Member wants to raise a point of order, he should refer to the Standing Orders of the House. If he wants to ask a question, he must wait because I have already recognized the Hon. Member for Vancouver South.

Mr. Beatty: The Parliamentary Secretary is asking his Minister a question.

Mr. Pinard: So what is wrong with that? You do not like the truth?

Miss MacDonald: That shows how much they ever get together.

Mr. Fraser: I would like to ask the Minister a question. Several days ago the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. MacEachen) said that those guidelines are self-enforcing, there is no monitoring agency, they are left up to the conscience of the individual to follow, and Ministers are to follow the guidelines "according to our judgment", in other words, they will judge themselves. At the same time, the Deputy Prime Minister was critical of the Opposition and said that, in its dealings with this matter, it was not acting according to the principles of natural justice.

One of the principles of natural justice is that no man shall sit in judgment of his own cause. That goes back to the seventeenth century. Can I ask the Minister, on behalf of the Government, whether it is the position of Ministers, the Government and the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) that there is no judgment to be exercised by anyone else except the particular Ministers as to whether or not there could be the appearance of a breach of the guidelines? Is this to be something that—

Mr. Lalonde: The Prime Minister and Parliament.

Mr. Fraser: —is to be completely decided by the Minister who is involved in seeing or hearing something?

Mr. Lalonde: That is what we are debating today.

Mr. Fraser: Is it that Minister who is to decide, or is there no one else who can make a judgment?

Mr. Lalonde: We are passing a judgment today.

Mr. Chrétien: There are two aspects to the question. As far as the Minister is concerned, he is responsible to the Prime Minister. If the Prime Minister concludes that his Minister has acted improperly, he will ask him to resign.

In this case, the Prime Minister has accepted the word of his Minister of Finance. I am glad to be sitting next to the Minister of Finance and saying that I also think that the Minister acted in an entirely proper fashion. This is the court for Ministers. Their responsibility is in relation to the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister takes the necessary action. In this case, he has kept his confidence, rightly so, in my judgment, in the Minister of Justice.

In relation to the public, there is another court, which is this House of Commons. At 5.45 o'clock p.m., everyone will have a chance to express their views.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!