

These rule changes were negotiated in good faith. I outlined the history of what happened. There was every indication that there was a high level of consensus and agreement. That is why we proceeded with them and that is why we are proceeding them now.

In a sense, these reforms are stage two of parliamentary reform. The McGrath report was stage one. This is not the be all and end all. I think we need a stage three to reduce the particularly bad and damaging aspects of our adversarial system.

We need to do this with some urgency. We need to recognize that we have a responsibility to this institution and I hope, pray and to a degree expect that after some genuflection towards our partisan instincts, goodwill and common sense will prevail. We will deal with these rules in some reasonable fashion, have them in place and the country will judge and I think see that they work a little better than the rules they are replacing. Hopefully, that will give us the energy to carry on with phase three.

[Translation]

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Pursuant to Standing Order 38, it is my duty to inform the House of the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment: the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier—Official Languages; the hon. member for Edmonton East—The environment; and the hon. member for Saint-Léonard—The economy of Montreal.

We continue the debate with the hon. member for Cape Breton—East Richmond.

[English]

**Mr. David Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond):** Madam Speaker, much has been said by the government House leader, but I wanted to refer to a number of passages which I think will clarify some points for members on both sides.

I rose in my place as the opposition House leader and indicated the following to the government leader as well as my colleagues. I wish to quote from those remarks. This is from *Hansard* February 25, 1991:

This is the first time that I have been called upon as opposition House leader to co-operate with the government in arranging the business of the House. I want to make it perfectly clear that I hope I

### *Government Orders*

shall be in a position to provide this kind of co-operation on most occasions.

It should be noted, however, that co-operation is very much a two-way street. It is my intention to approach discussions about House business as my predecessors have done in a reasonable and understanding manner, and I expect that the leader of the government in the House will do the same.

While the underlying assumption in parliamentary democracy is that the majority shall in the end prevail, it is essential as a facet of the process that the minority has the right to express its views in full. This House represents all of the people of this country, including the 57 per cent who did not vote for the government in the last federal election.

I quote those words because we, as the Official Opposition, have attempted at every opportunity to be reasonable, to be pragmatic, to try to facilitate what we believe to be the important business of the House. What are some concrete examples of that? We agreed with the government on the setting of the budget debate. It needed a consent order from this House, which it received from my party and, if I may indicate, co-operation was also forthcoming from the New Democratic Party.

There was speedy passage of the borrowing bill. I believe, if my memory serves me correctly, and I am sure hon. members opposite will jump to their feet and correct me if I am not, it was I who indicated in our discussions that perhaps an extension of the hours might be appropriate in order to give members of my party as well as others an opportunity to debate in full the contents of that particular piece of legislation.

We co-operated in expediting the passage of the agricultural bill, which our critics debated very vigorously in committee, as well as on the floor of the House of Commons. However, due to the pith and substance of that bill they thought it very appropriate that it have passage in order to provide farmers who are in desperate need with some form of financial assistance in the foreseeable future.

In the expediting and completion of the Parliament of Canada Act, my predecessor, the member for Ottawa—Vanier, did a superb job on behalf of our party. We again demonstrated to members opposite our willingness to co-operate and give quick passage of that particular piece of legislation once we received the amendments from the upper House.