

[English]

Mr. MacInnis: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege.

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): You spoke enough this afternoon.

Mr. MacInnis: The minister keeps bringing my name back into this matter. He is supposed to be explaining to the House what Devco has done. He referred to 1,000-odd jobs provided by Devco. I ask the minister, who says he is interested in the miners, to tell us how many miners got these jobs. On my question of privilege, I want to correct the minister on the remark he made about unsubstantiated charges made—

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): There is no question of privilege.

Mr. MacInnis: Mr. Speaker, you are not without help. The minister in referring to my remarks said—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Order, please. This is not a question of privilege. The hon. member had the opportunity this afternoon to make his speech. He has already participated in the debate.

Mr. MacInnis: Mr. Speaker, on the question of privilege, how can you rule there is no question of privilege when I have not stated what it is. If Mr. Speaker wants to jump the gun again on behalf of his colleagues in the House—

Some hon. Members: Shame.

An hon. Member: The Chair has ruled.

Mr. MacInnis: When the minister stands in his place and says I have made baseless accusations against the officers of Devco, he must substantiate it. I can substantiate all the statements I made. They can be supported, and I will support them with no less than a letter written to me by this minister who claims my statement is baseless. I have in my file a letter signed by the minister himself, which makes a liar out of Mr. Blackmore and makes a fool out of the minister.

[Translation]

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): Mr. Speaker, that is the only way the hon. member can discuss things. He says that he can prove his charges. He did not say that he had so far.

Cape Breton Development Corporation Act
As for me, I am asked to prove that I am right. We are not before a court here. This is probably why one day when he was in my office with the officials of the United Mine Workers of America, the president said at one point: You know, the M.P. does not give our views on the matters we are discussing.

I recognize it was somewhat humiliating. It happened here, in my office, and there were many witnesses. That was not something new for as regards all the problems we had, to cope with, we tried to have consultations with the miners' union, as Devco has done. Problems may not always be solved to their full satisfaction, but the union leaders who are commissioned to speak on their behalf of the miners, do not speak the same language as the hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond. It is another story altogether and as for me, I prefer the opinion of the union leaders to that of the hon. member, who spoke to us all afternoon and is still making tonight assertions that are not only false but somewhat "sickly".

At any rate, what I am trying to say—

[English]

Mr. MacInnis: Mr. Speaker, on a question of privilege—

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Order, please. The hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond on a question of privilege.

[English]

Mr. MacInnis: Mr. Speaker, my question of privilege arises from the fact that the minister has now stated that a statement I made was false. I would ask the minister to substantiate that statement, or do as would be expected of any hon. member in this House and stake his seat on the fact that he can prove it.

[Translation]

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): Mr. Speaker, I cannot reply to the hon. member as to the number of jobs created for the miners, the list of which I gave a while ago, but I am inclined to believe he is probably right in saying that the majority of those jobs are probably not filled by miners. Although I did not check that assertion, I am ready to admit *a priori*, that he is right, because such a thing is possible. At any rate, I will check that but I am inclined to think that, in that field, his information is correct.