

Supply—Regional Development

It has been suggested by one of the Liberal members to my right that we should buy them all a Cadillac.

• (8:20 p.m.)

An hon. Member: You are hearing voices.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): There is one voice I am not going to hear too long without doing something about it. As has already been said in this house, the hon. member must keep it up so that he will be recognized by his own Prime Minister.

Mr. Perrault: You are being psyched. I did not say a word.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): This reference to buying them all a Cadillac is just a callous approach, such as the Liberal members have in respect of this particular problem. If there is a similar problem in Lauzon, then it is their responsibility to bring it before the house to see whether there is anything that can be done about it. I doubt whether the minister knows what it is all about, but at least they could put the tab in operation so far as the Lauzon workers are concerned. There are a number of questions which remain unanswered by the Devco people, not only before the committee but also in the consultations between the minister and the Devco corporation. This afternoon I made some remarks of a critical nature respecting what I think Devco should be doing and where they should be channeling their energies. Because of that the minister allowed himself to be exercised. Now I should like to ask him whether he will assume his responsibility and answer some of the questions which have been presented to him, and then I shall have further questions as we go along.

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): Which question?

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Mr. Chairman, I rise on a point of order. For the past 20 minutes and probably for 20 minutes before dinner I had indicated on a number of occasions certain questions which I thought the minister should take the responsibility for answering. I even repeated questions put to him by other hon. members, including the Leader of the Opposition. When I resumed my seat he then wanted to know what question I asked. I think that is a flagrant abuse of the approach to the whole situation.

[Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond).]

[Translation]

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): Mr. Chairman, I will speak somewhat reluctantly, as I am convinced that my words will be distorted. I thought that by speaking in French, I would make myself better understood, but things seem to be even more confused.

[English]

In respect of the question concerning negotiations with the unions, when I answered a few moments before the adjournment of the house at six o'clock I said that there were negotiations, but I said it depends on how one defines negotiations. If the reference is to negotiations in order to reach a collective agreement, that is not what I had in mind. Of course there were no negotiations of that type. However, if you mean discussions and meetings between the union and the employer, there have been discussions not only with the mine workers but with the other groups. Is that clear? I do not know why the hon. gentleman insists on using the term "union". Of course I used it; why not?

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Is the minister asking me a question?

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): No. I just told the member I used the term union.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. My point of order arises from the fact that the minister clearly indicated he was speaking to me and asked if it was clear. Therefore, on that particular point, I say, no it is not clear. The inference from the hearings of the area development committee will prove that point.

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): If this is not clear, then I am sorry because I cannot do better than that. I must use words to express opinions or ideas. It is very clear to me. I say there have been discussions. There have not been formal negotiations in the sense that those discussions were supposed to lead to a formal collective agreement.

[Translation]

With regard to the second question, the hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond said: "Where is it written in the act that Devco eventually intends to stop operating the coal mines?" Then he read the preamble, and it said precisely what I tried to explain to him. However, he said: "You can see that is not what it says". I shall therefore read the