

I would humbly suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the ruling you made on March 29, 1990, as a result of the complaint of the member for Kamloops, is appropriate in today's circumstances as well.

**Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond):** Mr. Speaker, some certain comments have been attributed to me by my friend, the honorary Parliamentary Secretary to the government House leader. I do not know if he is "honorary" or "honourable" of whatever, but I have to take him at face value.

It reminds me of the occasion when I defended a convicted individual in court in Halifax. The gentleman, at that time, was up for living off the avails of prostitution. When we went before the judge, the judge wanted to ask a specific question of my client—this is germane, Mr. Speaker—and he asked a question of my client. He said: "Were you at such and such a place on such and such a date?" My client responded: "Well, Your Honour, the weather outside is very nice." He would not answer the question which was put to him. When you hear the comments from the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader, he does everything but go to the substantive part of Standing Order 78.

• (1150)

There are certain preconditions, Mr. Speaker, in order to put this particular standing order into effect. They are outlined in Standing Order 78(1), 78(2), and 78(3). Those are the facts. To suggest that there was some sort of nefarious agreement which nobody on this side of the House has ever heard about, was ever informed about, or consulted about, is not accurate.

The hon. parliamentary secretary has made allusions to the fact that he had tried to attempt to get a hold of me. If the parliamentary secretary would be clear in his own thinking, he would know that we both have been trying to get hold of each other, to discuss a particular matter pertaining to the striking committee. That was the reason, Mr. Speaker, that I have attempted to reach him and he tried to reach me. There was never a scintilla of a sentence, a message—absolutely nothing with regard to wanting to talk. Not a smidgen, as they say in Newfoundland. Not one smidgen, Mr. Speaker, of an attempt to try to get any kind of an agreement and/or to discuss the prospects of an agreement.

### *Privilege*

The parliamentary secretary is correct. He saw me enter into an elevator after six o'clock last night, after the Minister of Privatization stood in his place and gave the notice. He—

**Mr. Speaker:** I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member but the various versions of what happened or did not happen may not be very much help to the Chair, keeping in mind past past rulings. I think we have heard enough. Both sides have indicated that they have a certain position to take on whether there was or was not adequate consultation or enough effort made.

I am much more concerned about the plain wording of the rule and what the minister may be required to say when he rises in his place. The minister said an agreement has not been reached. The plain wording of the rule says that the minister is to say that agreement could not be reached. I would ask the hon. member to address that point specifically.

**Mr. Dingwall:** Mr. Speaker, in response to your direction I will follow that, but for the record, the hon. member opposite has talked about process. He has tried to stack his argument with regard to process.

**Mr. Andre:** Order.

**Mr. Speaker:** Just a moment. In order to help hon. members, I have just indicated that this is a very narrow procedural point. I have allowed a certain latitude with respect to what was or what was not said.

I am asking anyone who intervenes or is recognized by the Chair to address this narrow procedural point. I am bound by rules. The rules say certain things. The minister said something else. That is the point I am coming to.

**Mr. Dingwall:** Under Standing Order 78, it is very clear. It states in 78(1):

— that there is agreement among the representatives of all parties—

Standing Order 78(2) says:

— that a majority of the representatives of the several parties have come to an agreement in respect of a proposed allotment of days—

**Mr. Hawkes:** Did that happen? Did either of those things happen?

**Mr. Dingwall:** Standing Order 78(3) states:

— has stated that an agreement could not be reached under the provisions of sections (1) or (2)—