

*Point of Order*

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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**POINT OF ORDER**

## QUESTION PERIOD

**Mr. David Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond):** Mr. Speaker, prior to me putting my usual business question, I seek the guidance of the Chair.

The Leader of the Opposition as well as my colleague from York South—Weston asked a question of the Deputy Prime Minister in his capacity as the leader of the government on the floor of the House of Commons.

Statements were referred to regarding comments made by the Deputy Prime Minister in his previous incarnation on the floor of the House of Commons.

The questions that were asked of the Deputy Prime Minister, I suggest, Mr. Speaker, and I seek your guidance, were made to that minister in his capacity as the leader of the government asking as to whether or not this government assumes responsibilities for a very, very serious report with regard to the Dryden air disaster.

I seek the assistance of the Chair to indicate as to why the Chair was so quick to rule those questions out of order.

**Mr. Speaker:** Let me respond to the hon. member for Cape Breton—East Richmond.

I do not know that I was that quick. I was listening pretty carefully. Second, the thrust of the questions as I remember them—I do not have the “blues” in front of me—was basically directed at a former minister as to whatever capacity they may have been asked now as to whether or not that former minister ought to do something, for instance, resign.

It can be argued, I suppose, that there is a fine line here, but that is the way I ruled at that time and I guess we are stuck with the ruling. I cannot undo it.

I will look very carefully at the exchange and I will see if I can assist members. The hon. member has asked why. There is the reason. When I look at everything that was said, perhaps his question will seem very pointed indeed.

I am just saying that at the time that was my impression of the situation and that was my ruling.

The hon. member for Cape Breton—East Richmond, I think has another matter to raise before we get into the usual question which arises out of another argument that took place this morning on a procedural point.

**Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to my questions during Question Period, you ruled both of my questions out of order.

The first question was ruled out of order, not on the basis that it was directed at the wrong minister but on the basis that I was accusing the minister of deliberately misleading Canadians. I did not say that.

In my question, I asked the government why Canadians were misled when the former transport minister assured Canadians that safety was the number one priority.

A judge of the Supreme Court of Alberta has now concluded that this accident “was allowed to happen but there was some responsibility on the part of this government”. It seems to me that it was an appropriate question to ask.

There was no suggestion that the minister deliberately misled the House on numerous occasions in 1985, 1986 or 1987, but the facts now bear out that contention that in fact the minister did mislead the House. Safety was not the number one priority of this government at the time. Restraint was.

**Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons):** Mr. Speaker, on the same point, I must object to going on and on, repeating into the record that misinformation and so on.

The hon. member stood up and quoted remarks of the Deputy Prime Minister when he was formerly the Minister of Transport and then asked why the minister misled the House and misled Canadians. In other words, he implied that what he was saying was false and then said: “Will he resign?”

• (1510)

Citation 367 of Beauchesne’s is very clear, very straightforward. “A question may not be asked of a former minister seeking information with regard to transactions during his term of office”.

The question was out of order, quite properly decided so by the Speaker. I do not think this should be as an opportunity to repeat accusations by way of this point of order which was ruled out of order in the first place and