

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Chair has heard the Member for Yukon. In the judgment of the Chair, a preliminary ruling was made by the Speaker and the Chair has examined it very carefully. The Speaker very carefully said that she wanted the Minister to examine the matter further and see if it would be possible to table a document "without any injury to any matters of public interest." That is a direct quote from Madam Speaker. The Chair at this point would like to hear what the Minister has to say relating to matters of public interest.

● (1510)

Mr. Nielsen: Don't let him reflect on that ruling.

Mr. Regan: Mr. Speaker, the question which was asked by the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans) was where a reference was made to the telex. I will not read those references.

Mr. Nielsen: You can't.

Mr. Regan: I did not quote from the telex, but if you were to read my two answers to the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain, it would indicate the words used in the House that could in any way conceivably relate to the only telex I had in the House.

Mr. Nielsen: He is being allowed to reargue his case.

Mr. Regan: If the Hon. Member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) would just be quiet, I might be able to be briefer.

Mr. Nielsen: You are rearguing your case which has been ruled upon.

Mr. Regan: I am not doing any such thing.

Mr. Nielsen: You certainly are.

Mr. Regan: The Hon. Member is a little rusty.

Mr. Nielsen: At least I am not dense.

Mr. Regan: I want to say beyond that that the conversations which took place between High Commissioner Power and Prime Minister Adams in any event were held in confidence. To reveal these telegrams to the House would break the confidence of the conversation, not only with Prime Minister Adams but with other Prime Ministers whose conversations are reported in the same telegram. Such a course would be contrary to the basic conventions of international communication and could adversely affect our ability to have such conversations.

The tabling of the telegram would further involve some risk to the security of the Canadian diplomatic communications service. It would not be possible to table the telex or telegram without harm being done to the public interest. Therefore, I would have to lay that before the Speaker for consideration.

Mr. Nielsen: I submit, Mr. Speaker, without any reflection upon the Chair, that the Minister, if you will examine what he

Point of Order—Mr. Nielsen

said today in the "blues", has been allowed to reargue a case which was put to the Speaker last Friday and upon which she made a ruling.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Yvon Pinard (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, like my colleague who can interrupt other Members who have the floor on a point of order, I thank you for recognizing me on a question of privilege. You have stated clearly yourself that this was not a ruling by the Chair, but that there had been a tentative or preliminary ruling leaving the door open for additional arguments which might enable the Chair to make a final decision.

Under these circumstances, the Minister cannot be faulted for having discussed or questioned a ruling which has not been rendered by the Speaker. That is why I suggest that the only thing the Hon. Member is trying to do once again is to waste the time of the House.

[*English*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Chair finds itself in the same position as before. The Chair would like to hear the Hon. Member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) and to hear the balance of his statement at this point.

Mr. Nielsen: I am surprised that the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Pinard), who should know better, was allowed to smuggle in under the guise of a question of privilege further argument on a point of order when I was prevented from doing so myself.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Nielsen: Madam Speaker made a ruling and that ruling must not be reviewed. Unlike the President of the Privy Council, she left no doors open with respect to the production of that document. She ruled that it was one of those documents which should be produced.

Mr. Regan: Which one?

Mr. Nielsen: The Minister was only waving one at the time.

Mr. Pinard: Which one?

Mr. Nielsen: What a cop-out! They are now playing the old shell game with documents that should be produced in the public interest. They are saying, "Which one?" We saw him wave one. We saw him quote from it. We must accept his word when he says, "we didn't read from it", but by his own admission he quoted four or five words from that document. That area must not be reviewed, but the Minister was allowed to do it, and that is the only reason I am covering the same ground. He realized his mistake a little further on in the submission and got to the real crux of the matter, which was the only door left open by Madam Speaker at the time she made her ruling. That was, that if the Minister, upon reflecting upon that document, made the decision that it was against the interests of national security—I think the words she used