

*Point of Order***PRIVILEGE**

## ALLEGED LACK OF CONSULTATION—SPEAKER'S RULING

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier rose earlier this morning on a question of privilege concerning whether or not the hon. minister had given valid notice pursuant to the provisions of sections 78(1), 78(2) and 78(3) of the Standing Orders relating to time allocation.

The hon. minister said "I am informed that to date agreement has not been reached under the provisions," et cetera. I point out that he also said "we will try to get an agreement with the opposition parties on a reasonable length of time".

There has been considerable discussion this morning with respect to what is or what is not required under the Standing Order in terms of consultation or exchange of views between the government and others in the Chamber.

I want it clearly understood that my ruling today does not turn in any way, or on any particular, on any of the comments that were made during arguments as to the question of discussions between, or lack of discussions between, anybody in this Chamber at all.

My ruling does not take anything away from rulings of past Speakers, and especially my ruling of some months ago, in March I think of last year. It made it very clear that under the rules it is not for the Speaker to go behind the statement of the minister and try to make a factual ruling as to whether or not discussions were adequate or inadequate or, for that matter, try to strain the rules and to try to give an interpretation that substitutes for the plain wording of the rule.

I have also indicated that it might be in the interests of the House that the entire rule was looked at again, reconsidered, and perhaps redrafted.

The rule I am bound by, and this place lives by the rule of law, is the plain words of Ruling 78.(3) and it states:

A Minister of the Crown who from his or her place in the House, at a previous sitting, has stated that an agreement could not be reached under the provisions of—

[*Translation*]

In English:

(3) A Minister of the Crown who from his or her place in the House, at a previous sitting, has stated an agreement could not be reached—

[*English*]

It sometimes happens that when one has to try to interpret what is meant by words, some guidance or some difference shows up between the English and the French. There is, in my opinion, absolutely no difference whatsoever in the meaning of those words either in English or in French.

As I have pointed out, the hon. minister said: "I have been informed to date that agreement has not been reached." I find on this very narrow ground, but one which I cannot ignore as your Speaker because it is clearly there in the rules, that the minister should have said "could not be reached." That is what is required under the ruling and, as a consequence, I have to rule that the notice given yesterday is not valid. Of course, it is for the government to decide whether it wishes to give the notice again.

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**POINT OF ORDER**REQUEST TO REVERT APPLICATIONS  
PURSUANT TO S. O. 52

**Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan):** I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I had given you notice earlier today of my intention to rise at the appropriate time to seek your judgment on a matter of an emergency debate.

I wonder if the House would agree to revert to that point to allow me to make that presentation?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** Members have heard the request. Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** Sorry. It is not agreed.

Orders of the Day.