

FREEDOM OF MEDIA COMMUNICATION—COURT TO  
DECIDE

**Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West):** Mr. Speaker, given that the constitutional guarantee of freedom of the press and given that fledgling democracies around the world are in the process of fighting for this important right, is the Government position now that news reporters are only going to be allowed to report the information that the Government wants Canadians to know?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, the Charter is clear. Everyone has the following fundamental freedoms; freedom of conscience and religion, freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication.

The Canadian Bill of Rights, which was pooh-poohed by Members opposite on many occasions, also recognizes the fundamental freedom of the press. The rights are very clearly defined. The law is clear and I am sure the courts will dispose of this in the manner that—

**Mr. Keyes:** What is your policy?

**Mr. Mazankowski:** The Member asked me what my policy is. I have simply outlined the support of the Government in terms of basic fundamental rights of freedom of speech, freedom of expression and freedom of the press. Mr. Speaker, the court will take those things into consideration.

REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT TO COME CLEAN

**Mr. Ian Waddell (Port Moody—Coquitlam):** Mr. Speaker, I can tell the Deputy Prime Minister that the public is concerned that the Government not hide behind the RCMP, not hide behind the court process, but would come clean with the events.

I know the Minister is a serious man and I put the question to him seriously. The Minister just said a moment ago that the process is clear, that the Charter of Rights is clear. Is it really that clear; the line between a journalist doing his job and what is a criminal offence?

The other day, I tabled a Bill, which was a film Bill in this House, which I got as a leaked document. Does that now mean that in the future I could be charged with a criminal offence and the journalists who use leaked

documents, any leaked document, can be charged with a criminal offence?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is a lawyer, I believe. But surely that is a matter for the courts to decide. I am not going to make a decision on the floor of the House of Commons, or express an opinion.

The position of the Government is very clear. We support the fundamental rights in the Charter and we also support the upholding of the law. The courts will balance that measure and come down with a verdict.

**Mr. Waddell:** Mr. Speaker, I am not convinced it is so easy. The whole House is in possession now of my film Bill. Does that make the whole House guilty of possession? I think the Deputy Prime Minister has to deal with this. He can't hide behind the court process.

**Mr. Speaker:** There may be some difficult lines here. But one of them clearly is that the Government of Canada is not responsible for the administration of justice which takes place at a provincial level.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Speaker:** The Hon. Member is a very capable counsel, we know that, and I would ask him to keep that in mind in putting his question.

**Mr. Waddell:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I understand it.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH FOR JOURNALISTS

**Mr. Ian Waddell (Port Moody—Coquitlam):** Mr. Speaker, the Government in dealing with this matter in a broader way, not the detailed prosecution, but in dealing with it in a broader way, did the Government give any thought to the implications of freedom of speech for journalists? Is the Government prepared to bring in a Bill, for example, a Bill to deal with whistle-blowers or a Bill to deal with people who give information to journalists or Members of Parliament which they believe and which in the end run will prove to be in the public interest? Has the Government dealt with that?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, just again to remind the Hon. Member in the House, these are charges laid under the Criminal Code by the RCMP upon consultation and advice from the Attorney General's Department of the Province of Ontario. Those are the facts. What the