

I will read again to a citation from Bourinot's Second Edition as I did on April 6, 1989, as reported at page 175 of *Hansard*. Obviously the impact of it did not sink into the hon. gentlemen who sit on the treasury benches opposite. It states:

The principal purpose of the House of Commons, in fact, is the consideration and criticism of the Estimates and the taxes required to meet the public expenditures; and the committees in question are the parliamentary machinery by means of which the House chiefly exercises its political and constitutional functions.

We are here today because the Government ran into a problem yesterday. I suggest to the Government that it is of its own making. It is one that it had to deal with. By failing to deal with it, it has effectively limited the opportunity for Members in the House to receive the Budget in an orderly way and to deal with it in an orderly way.

• (1640)

Notwithstanding what we have just heard from the Right Hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark), I say that the position the Government found itself in last night was clearly one of panic. I was here at 5.55 p.m. last evening when the Hon. Government House Leader, the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lewis), came into the House. He was clearly exercised. He was ashen. He was running back and forth. He sat down on the other side of the House and he was clearly upset. I said: "What's the matter?" He did not hear me, or if he did he ignored it. He tried his motion and it failed.

We have had a version of events from the Right Hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs that needs to be corrected. I would like to set the record straight.

**Mr. Friesen:** And this guy knows.

**Mr. Milliken:** Last evening I was here and I observed these facts. Perhaps the Hon. Member was not.

At 5.55 p.m. the Minister of Justice came into this House and he asked that the sitting of the House be continued for the purpose of considering Bill C-9, which was then under discussion.

*Privilege—Mr. Milliken*

Why did he not come over to the Opposition House Leader and say: "We have a problem. There may be a problem"? He admitted in Question Period today that he thought that there might be a problem, that there was a possibility of a probability of a chance of a leak. It was a flood. The Minister might well have known that.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) phoned him because he was so concerned. He obviously thought that what he was hearing from the reporter was his own budget speech. He called the Government House Leader and said: "Do something, we are in trouble here. We are in a pickle". He came running into the House. He left his committee meeting and came over here to try to get us to sit late. He now blames us as members of the Opposition who are here doing our job.

There were more than 15 of us here. We stopped that motion last night. He now blames us for stopping consideration of Bill C-9 because, he says: "Really what I wanted to do was read the Budget. Consider Bill C-9 until I am ready to read the Budget and then I will come in to read the Budget". That is what he was really trying to do.

He was on Canada AM this morning. Some Hon. Members may have seen him. You may have seen him too, Mr. Speaker. There he was waxing eloquent, talking about British parliamentary tradition as though it were the most wonderful thing in this great spirit of co-operation he was talking about and how always under British parliamentary practice there was tremendous co-operation between government and opposition. Where was it last night? Why did he not come over here, come clean and say: "There may have been a leak. We may need your help"? He did not do that.

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

**Mr. Milliken:** Then, having had the House adjourn at 6 p.m., he did not use Standing Order 28(3). I want to read it because obviously the Secretary of State for External Affairs has a strange comprehension of common English. He has failed to grasp the essentials of this rule. He said that it only applied during a recess. Nonsense. He said that it could only work if there were 24 hours' notice. Nonsense. Read the rule, I say to the right hon. gentleman. I will read it for him.

**Mr. Clark (Yellowhead):** Read the whole rule.