

that the member was guilty of breaching the secrecy of the budget. In that case, a motion was presented by the member in question, which is not the case here. The member for Kenora-Rainy River himself said, "My privileges as a member were abused because of a false report published in a newspaper, and I, as the victim of this report, move that the question be considered by the Committee of Privileges and Elections," and that is what happened, with the consequences of which the House is aware.

Now, Madam Speaker, if I may be allowed, since my colleagues on the opposite side seem to be far more interested in indulging in petty politics than in actually referring to parliamentary practice or conventions, the convention which forms the basis of any debate on a breach of budget secrecy is that a member who wants to make a formal charge should rise and charge the person in question, thereby risking his seat. That is the political convention that has always governed the matter of budget secrecy in the House, and it is this type of convention that the members opposite should have the courage to follow if they truly have reason to believe that a parliamentarian has breached the secrecy of the budget.

Madam Speaker, obviously, they lack that fortitude and moreover the facts, namely, the answers given here in the House, clearly show that there has been absolutely no impropriety on the part of parliamentarians.

So what do they want to do? These are innuendoes, but they are not supported by any valid precedents because there are none. I challenge any member, those to my left who were shouting just now—the member for Calgary Centre (Mr. Andre) who was shouting as well—I challenge any one of them to dare rise and make a formal charge, therefore putting his seat in the House in jeopardy and to quote a single precedent justifying a motion for referral to the Committee of Privileges and Elections, on the basis of a breach of budget secrecy.

I repeat, the case of the member for Kenora-Rainy River does not apply to this situation, because he was the victim, he presented the motion himself and his personal privilege was involved. In any case, I do not think there is a single Progressive Conservative member here in the House today who has enough guts—they shout a lot, they hurl abuse, even those who are not in their seats, but there is not a single member who has the courage to rise, to observe the parliamentary or political convention, and say: I accuse a parliamentarian of breaching the secrecy of the budget and I am prepared to stake my seat on it.

Madam Speaker, the House is waiting for a demonstration of bravery. I ask any Progressive Conservative member to be bold enough to rise, to make that formal charge. If the Progressive Conservatives refrain from doing so we shall draw our own conclusions.

Point of Order—Mr. McGrath

[English]

Madam Speaker: That is really the way to deal with this matter. I want to reply to the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath), who has offered a precedent in order to enlighten the Chair as to the manner in which this matter should be dealt with. I believe the hon. member referred to the precedent of the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River (Mr. Reid). As the minister just said, the precedent was not exactly the kind of situation which was described today. The hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River himself brought up as a question of privilege an interpretation of some of his actions which had been described in a newspaper. I believe it was dealt with in a committee, the hon. member wanting to have his reputation cleared.

The hon. member asked me what recourse he has if he cannot deal with this matter through a question of privilege. I think he knows the recourse he has. If he feels that there has been a breach of budget secrecy and that he can substantiate this breach with the proper facts, he knows that he can put a substantive motion to the House with a 48-hour notice. That is the proper procedure in order to deal with such a matter.

Mr. McGrath: Madam Speaker, are you saying that the motion I have put forward, which I now have in writing, is out of order? If so, I want to say with great respect that I reserve the right to check the precedents in detail on this matter and to raise it again at the first opportunity.

Mr. Pinard: You are free to do what you want, but there has been a ruling.

Madam Speaker: The hon. member may do that. I cannot receive the hon. member's motion because I did not find a prima facie case of privilege. I refer the hon. member to two precedents in Great Britain, one in 1947 with Mr. Dalton and one in 1936 with Mr. Thomas. These two precedents show quite clearly that the matter was dealt with in another manner and not under privilege. The Speaker did not give priority to this discussion by finding privilege. The discussion may take place, but not under the heading of privilege, where priority is given to a certain matter because the Speaker, for reasons which have been given to her by hon. members, finds that there is a prima facie case.

The hon. member may reserve his right to come back on this question or to look at the precedents to enlighten himself as well as the Chair. But for the time being, on the basis of what I have heard today, I am afraid I cannot hear this matter discussed under the heading of privilege.

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Madam Speaker, there is one further recourse which perhaps missed your attention. It is closely allied with the course followed by the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River (Mr. Reid). After today's questions and answers appear in tomorrow's written media, that will give the opportunity to the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Cosgrove), the minister responsible for housing, to follow the same honourable course tomorrow which the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River followed on that occasion.