

Privilege

Ms. Copps: What time did he find out about it?

Mr. Mazankowski: —and what steps he took in order to preserve the integrity of the Budget and to preserve the economic welfare of the country. The Opposition is playing with fire in this particular case.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mazankowski: Yes, Mr. Speaker, they are playing with fire.

Mr. Tobin: You wouldn't know the truth if it jumped up and bit you on the nose. You haven't spoken the truth today.

Mr. Mazankowski: You are playing with the lives of Canadians.

Ms. Copps: How come the Prime Minister hasn't said anything? He's going to cut him loose. He's not defending his Minister.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Minister.

Mr. Mazankowski: The Members opposite are playing with the welfare of Canadians. They are playing with the integrity of the Canadian economy. They have a choice. They can go on with their political gamesmanship and their political chicanery, or they can choose Canada and stand up for Canada, and now is their opportunity.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, today we are witnessing something that is unbelievable. Here is a Government that pulls the biggest parliamentary blunder in parliamentary history and then blames the Opposition for what it has done.

Mr. Riis: It is unbelievable. The Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Mazankowski) talks about the sabotage that occurred. What we have seen today is the sabotage of the parliamentary process and parliamentary traditions as the Government has turned this place into some combination of *Sesame Street* and *Saturday Night Live*.

It is unmitigated gall on the part of government Members to stand up and make suggestions in terms of serving Parliament and parliamentary traditions, and acting in a co-operative way. This was the Government that stormed the Chair of the Speaker. This was the Government that stopped the House of Commons from working for 16 days. This was the Party that not only muzzled Parliament but now has set aside 700 years of parliamentary tradition and has introduced a Budget at a press conference. That is the type of situation we are seeing, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Riis: Let me return to some of the comments made by the House Leader of the Government. He began his remarks by suggesting that he called the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Turner) and the Leader of the New Democratic Party and explained to them that a leak had occurred.

An Hon. Member: A theft.

Mr. Riis: No, he said that a leak had occurred. He read from his notes and he communicated that a leak had occurred.

It is interesting that he had also stated that there was no way that we could refer this to a committee for investigation because the RCMP is already looking into it. I want to remind the Minister that he was one of the most articulate spokespersons when the RCMP was looking into the Mackasey and the Masse affair. He wanted to call for parliamentary investigation at the same time. He cannot have it both ways, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Riis: We are well aware that the Government, some time during the day yesterday, at least by 2.30 yesterday afternoon, or perhaps a day earlier, or perhaps an hour earlier—

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): False.

Mr. Lapierre: How do you know, Joe? Are you the new policeman on that side?

Mr. Riis: —but by 2.30 in the afternoon information of the Budget had leaked out and security had been broken.

At 5.30 p.m. when Parliament was sitting, Global television from Ottawa phoned the office of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) and informed his officials of the details of the Budget. They were not some vague references to the Budget, but the details of the Budget. They articulated point after point what was in the Budget. That means that at that time the Minister of Finance knew precisely that the Budget had been leaked some time previously.

We know at least that one document went public. I recall that the Minister of Justice said that they only believed it when they saw the picture on television. However, by 5.30 at least they knew that the details had been leaked out to at least one journalist. How much