

*Privilege—Mr. W. Baker*

**An hon. Member:** Right on.

**Hon. Donald J. Johnston (President of the Treasury Board):** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I hope the transparency of the positions being put forward, and the kinds of games being played are obvious not only to the members of this House, but to the Canadian public.

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

**Mr. Johnston:** I think if there has been any breach of the privileges of the House, it has been by the hon. member for Nepean-Carleton (Mr. Baker) who gave information to the public and the House which has been the subject of embargo—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**An hon. Member:** It's already on there.

**Mr. Johnston:** I would be quite happy to send forward the embargo—

**An hon. Member:** Don't make a fool of yourself.

**Mr. Johnston:**—that declaration which appears on the wire, Madam Speaker. I find it shocking and irresponsible that we should be subjected to this kind of childish behaviour by people who should be interested in getting on with the business of this country—

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

**Mr. Johnston:** I have been sitting in this House since three o'clock to table the estimates they want to see. I had lunch with the hon. member from the other side who is the critic so that he would know what is in the estimates. We have followed the tradition that has been followed for a hundred years, as I understand it; and today, for the first time, I learned that members on the opposite side of the House are not prepared to accept their responsibilities as responsible critics and to accept the tabling of these estimates as planned for this afternoon at three o'clock.

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

**Hon. Ron Huntington (Capilano):** A point of order, Madam Speaker. I would certainly appreciate, through you, if the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Johnston) would withdraw his last comment concerning members on this side not wanting to pick up their responsibilities.

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

**Mr. Huntington:** I am going through you, Madam Speaker—

**Mr. Johnston:** Did you have lunch, or did you not?

**Mr. Huntington:** Through you, Madam Speaker, I want to say to all members of this House that I tried, along with another colleague, to get into the lock-up with the press this

morning in order to be fully informed in order to perform my function in this House. True, I was invited to a luncheon at the office of the President of the Treasury Board, and he gave me the press kit. It did not give me any answers or comparative statements to last year's estimates, which I need in order to handle myself responsibly here in reply and in a press scrum afterwards.

I would like the President of the Treasury Board to lighten those remarks or apologize for any inference that I do not want to perform my duties to this House and to my country in a completely responsible manner.

**Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** Apologize.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. members in this House are allowed to express opinions, all of their opinions, and I have nothing to do with those opinions.

The hon. President of the Treasury Board has expressed an opinion about something which we are presently discussing and that is his privilege; unless he uses unparliamentary language. Unparliamentary language is described in Beauchesne, and I heard nothing in the intervention of the hon. President of the Treasury Board that was unparliamentary.

The hon. member for Capilano (Mr. Huntington), might not have liked what he said, but it was not unparliamentary, so I cannot comply with his request to ask the hon. minister to withdraw his remarks.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Pinard:** Madam Speaker, I wish to speak briefly to this point of order since the hon. member has referred to Standing Orders to make his point. What the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Johnston) said was that there was no evidence that the Canadian Press wire story has been published. And this has not been denied yet. On the contrary, what the Canadian Press says is not to release the information before the estimates have been tabled. So in order for you to make a ruling the House must have evidence that indeed release has occurred before the estimates were tabled. This essential fact has not been substantiated and even if it were, I would refer you to the remarks I have just made.

[*English*]

**Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** On the same point of order, Madam Speaker, I have been handed what purports to be a press release, and it says, "Advance—for release by wire, possibly about 3.45 p.m.," estimated today.

**An hon. Member:** Eastern standard time.

**Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** Eastern standard time, and it is headed: "Highlights of the spending estimates for 1981-82 fiscal year tabled in the Commons Wednesday."

**An hon. Member:** What's the department?

**Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** That is what I have here and I am going to show it to you, Madam Speaker. As I under-