

limitations as to the extent to which these questions can be answered. I think the evidence has clearly served us well. There are charges that are now being laid.

He would be the first person, Mr. Speaker, to condemn us if there was any semblance of political interference in the investigation by the RCMP.

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

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

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Prime Minister has said that there are limitations as to what can be answered. We do not see any limitations to answering and giving us the truth. That is what we like to have here in the House of Commons.

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

SITUATIONS OF MINISTER AND PRESS  
REPORTER—ALLEGED CONTRADICTION

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, the reporter who revealed the existence of the budget leak faces a criminal charge. The Minister of Finance who failed to maintain budget secrecy and who hid the existence of a second budget leak from Parliament continues to hold office. Indeed, he is attending an international conference in Europe.

We have a situation in which a reporter faces a criminal charge for exercising his freedom of expression under our Constitution, and the Minister of Finance is hailed as a hero by the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister. How does the Government justify this extraordinary contradiction? When is he going to come clean with the people of Canada?

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

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, I want to be absolutely clear as to where the Leader of the Opposition is really coming from when he poses his question.

**Ms. Copps:** The truth.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Mazankowski:** Is the Leader of the Opposition blaming the Minister of Finance for actions that were taken by people who have been charged subsequently for theft, the theft and possession of this article?

**Mr. Gauthier:** Try to answer the questions instead of asking them.

**Mr. Mazankowski:** If that is what the Leader of the Opposition is saying, I do not know how the Minister of Finance could be accountable for those actions. He should know better than that.

RCMP PRESS RELEASE

**Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Solicitor General. It is about a press release issued at seven o'clock last night on the letterhead of the Commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

According to this press release five persons have been formally charged, and they are named. I checked myself and as of 1.55 p.m., according to the number given on this press release, the RCMP are still at the court house issuing these charges. There is no more information about them until they are formally charged.

I want to ask the Solicitor General why this press release was issued last night hours and hours before any charges have been formally laid.

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

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

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Pierre Blais (Solicitor General of Canada and Minister of State (Agriculture)):** Mr. Speaker, I am informed by the Commissioner of the RCMP that following their investigation and upon advice from the Attorney General's Department of the Province of Ontario, the RCMP decided to lay charges against five individuals, and the case is now before the courts. I have no further comment at this time. Like the Hon. Member, I was informed of this last night.

• (1430)

[*English*]

TIMING OF PRESS RELEASE

**Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre):** I would like to ask the same Minister, as a supplementary question, whether