

*Privilege*

tion? If he did not, did the Prime Minister, who has responsibility for all the Ministers of the Crown, do the right thing and get the Minister of Finance on the phone and say, "Look, Michael, this may or may not have been your direct responsibility but you are accountable to Parliament, to the people of Canada, and I, as the Prime Minister, ask for your resignation"?

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

**Mr. Broadbent:** What is at stake here is not simply the credibility of the Minister of Finance, which is now completely shot, but also the credibility of this Government and the Prime Minister who had presented before them a situation on which the Prime Minister ought to have acted and did not. The people of Canada will have noted that as well.

We say that instead of proceeding later today, as the Government would hope, with a Budget debate at five o'clock with this Minister of Finance, we say this Minister of Finance should no longer be Minister of Finance. We say that the Prime Minister should name forthwith a new Minister of Finance and he should withdraw this alleged Budget, set a new Budget date down the road and do the proper thing for the people of Canada.

In that connection, Mr. Speaker, if you judge in responding to these points of privilege raised by the Leader of the Opposition and myself in response to the Minister of Finance, I want to suggest the wording of a motion to which I would like to see the Government respond affirmatively before you make a ruling. I use the words used by the then Opposition House Leader in 1983 in a similar—

**Mr. Clark (Yellowhead):** Not similar.

**Mr. Broadbent:**—circumstance involving a Minister of Finance, and I say to the Minister of Justice—

**Mr. Beatty:** It was dissimilar.

**Mr. Broadbent:**—who spoke at that time in defence of the motion moved by his Party then in opposition that if the logic and reason of these words made sense then, if they reflected honestly the correct parliamentary traditions, not only of Canada but around the world, then they make sense in 1989.

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

• (1200)

**Mr. Broadbent:** Mr. Speaker, if you rule that there is a prima facie case, I would be prepared at the right time to move the following:

That a special committee be appointed to inquire into all the circumstances relating to or associated with the disclosure of Budget information on April 26, and that the committee consist of 11 Members of the House, and that the committee have power to send for persons, papers and records.

I hope that a Government that has demonstrated no commitment to integrity in the past 24 hours on this important issue will do the right thing, that this Government will rise and support this motion.

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

**Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to participate in this debate on the point made by the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Turner). I appreciate the remarks that the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Broadbent) just made *vis-à-vis* that tremendous speech that I made in 1983. I do not remember winning the argument. There are some very good reasons why I did not win the argument.

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

**Mr. Lewis:** I would like to point out if I may to our hon. friend that in 1983 there was no RCMP investigation, such as is under way at the present time. That is the difference.

It is important that we lay the facts on the record and we do it in a manner in which the House will understand and the Canadian public will understand because it is important that the people know how this Government acted and how responsibly we acted under the circumstances.

**An Hon. Member:** It was a cover-up.

**Mr. Lewis:** There is no question that there was a television program in which a reporter in the first instance referred to an uncorroborated suggestion that there had been a leak of Budget material. You will note that that particular reporter—I know that it is a little beyond your jurisdiction but let me say this, if the tapes were reviewed, I think you would find that that particular reporter, in a responsible manner, did not run the story until he had it corroborated. That is right. He did not run the story until he had it corroborated. We were aware of that story on the wire. We were aware of that story on