

*Oral Questions*

in my opinion. There is nothing in its present terms of reference which prevents it from doing so.

[English]

**Mr. Broadbent:** Does the Acting Prime Minister realize that, from our point of view, this completely undermines the earlier answer? If they do not include a specific amendment to the terms of reference covering political accountability, we will be bogged down day after day as the two inquiries are looking into the matter. The journalists are doing their job bringing these matters to the attention of the public. We on this side have an obligation to raise it in the House. Therefore, the important question of problems in the Canadian economy will be ignored. We will be tied up with the wrong kind of issue at the wrong time.

**Mr. Chrétien:** Mr. Speaker, I do not agree with the interpretation of the hon. member. I have before me the terms of reference of the commission. Under (C) it states that the commission is authorized to look into matters regarding the policies and procedures governing the activities of the RCMP. In my opinion, that is enough for the commissions to report on an interim basis as quickly as possible on these problems. If the commission find that its powers are too limited, it can always get in touch with the government. So far, however, we feel there is enough power for this commission to bring about the result that all of us want to have in this matter.

NAME OF PERSON WHO STOPPED OPERATION CATHEDRAL—  
DATE MINISTER LEARNED OF MAIL INTERCEPTION

**Mr. Allan Lawrence (Northumberland-Durham):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Solicitor General. Yesterday in the House the minister stated that the operation under the code name Cathedral involving mail interception had ended by June 1976 which, coincidentally, is about the same time the APLQ matter was exposed to the full light of day. Will the Solicitor General advise on whose authority it was that these illegal mail interceptions were discontinued?

[Translation]

**Hon. Francis Fox (Solicitor General):** Mr. Speaker, in the answer I gave yesterday, I was referring of course to the opening of mail which actually came to an end in June 1976 following instructions issued to the security service by the assistant director general of operations of the security service.

[English]

**Mr. Lawrence:** The deputy director of the security service obviously knew that those mail interceptions were going on, otherwise he would not have had the knowledge to order them discontinued. If he knew about them in June 1976, is the minister telling us now that he did not learn of those mail interceptions at that time? If not, was the non-activity of the deputy director in not informing him of this mail interception to be considered as an obstruction of justice?

[Mr. Chrétien.]

• (1442)

[Translation]

**Mr. Fox:** Mr. Speaker, I know that the opposition is always ready to pass judgment and bring in verdicts of guilt hastily. As for us, we feel that all those matters referred to the inquiry commission which was set up to give people the opportunity to explain why such or such an action was undertaken.

I would point out to the hon. member, as I said yesterday in the House, that those activities go back several years in the records of the RCMP, and an attempt is now being made to condemn publicly the person who, at a certain time, decided to put an end to that.

[English]

NAME OF PERSON ABOVE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF SECURITY WHO  
KNEW OF MAIL INTERCEPTION

**Mr. Allan Lawrence (Northumberland-Durham):** The minister knows, then, that the deputy director of the security services was aware in June, 1976 of the illegal interception of mail by the RCMP. Could he tell us who else, in rank above the deputy director, knew about this mail interception?

[Translation]

**Hon. Francis Fox (Solicitor General):** Mr. Speaker, regarding mail interception, we have not been able to determine yet whether any higher authority than the one I have mentioned was aware of these activities at the time.

It is also obvious, Mr. Speaker, following the rather brief study of this case which has been done during the last two days, there is no indication that these practices were known to any minister or any higher authority than the one I mentioned.

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## UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

ALLEGED REFUSAL OF CERTAIN FARMERS TO COLLECT  
CONTRIBUTIONS FROM SEASONAL WORKERS

**Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi):** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of National Revenue.

For some time now I have been receiving complaints to the effect that a number of farmers in southern Ontario refuse to deduct unemployment insurance contributions and income tax from the wages of Canadian farm workers. Could the minister tell the House whether he has been aware of this situation and whether he intends to take the necessary steps to protect these seasonal farm workers?

**Hon. Joseph-Philippe Guay (Minister of National Revenue):** No, Mr. Speaker, it is the first time this situation is brought to my attention but if the hon. member for Abitibi would give me concrete facts about these complaints, I would undertake to investigate this matter with my officials and I will give him an answer as soon as possible.