

sought—that the undertaking given by the Prime Minister is still operative and that it applies to any security activity of the Government of Canada, will the Acting Prime Minister tell the House whether, before coming to the House of Commons with that assurance, he personally consulted with the director general of the security service, General Dare, with the head of the security planning and analysis branch group in the Solicitor General's department, Colonel Bourne, and did he receive from each of them the unequivocal and total assurance that neither group had any involvement whatsoever, or has had any involvement whatsoever, in the surveillance, electronic or otherwise, of any member of parliament? Has the Acting Prime Minister sought and received that specific assurance from those officers?

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, I said earlier that I talked with the Solicitor General this morning and that he sought those assurances from the RCMP. He gave his answer in the House of Commons a few minutes ago and I am thoroughly satisfied with the word of the Solicitor General.

NAME OF PERSON AUTHORIZING SURVEILLANCE OF CERTAIN GROUPS IN COMMUNITY

Mr. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, we had on Friday the Solicitor General spell out for the House of Commons the March, 1975 mandate that is supposed to guide the activities of the security service of the government. Yet it has become evident that the government has been engaged in surveillance of individuals and groups who at best are involved in political dissent and not involved in subversion. This includes political parties, the media, labour unions and, for all we know, individual private Canadian citizens. What I want to know of the Acting Prime Minister or Solicitor General is who authorized the surveillance of political parties, the media and perhaps ordinary citizens of this country.

● (1427)

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, that is a rather unacceptable question. Yesterday the Solicitor General replied to all questions. He made himself available to the public on Friday. He gave all the facts to the House of Commons as to who authorized the taking of the computer tapes in Montreal. Insinuations like that are not worthy of a responsible leader of the opposition.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

PARTI QUÉBÉCOIS BREAK-IN—ACTION TO REFER TO SOLICITOR GENERAL OF QUEBEC

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Solicitor General. Last Friday the Solicitor General reported to the House that he had informed the authorities in Quebec of an illegal act involving

the break-in of the Parti Québécois headquarters in Quebec four years ago.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. McGrath: Those are his words. They are on the record. What we are dealing with here is the commission of two crimes. The first one has been referred to the attorney general of Quebec and quite properly so. What action has the Solicitor General taken to investigate what is a clear prima facie case of obstruction of justice under the Criminal Code by persons within his department or in his office? Clearly this would involve his predecessor, the present Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, in a conspiracy or maladministration. Either way he stands indicted by the people of this country.

Hon. Francis Fox (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member cares to read my statement, he will see that at no point did I ever refer to a break-in at the Parti Québécois headquarters. That is a statement that has been repeated a number of times by the leader of the New Democratic Party in spite of my repeated statements to the effect that that is not the case. It was a break-in in another building in Montreal which housed the computer tapes.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Fox: Further to that, the hon. member asked a question concerning possible obstruction of justice. During the course of my tenure as Solicitor General, I have had the opportunity of reviewing the files concerning possible illegalities. In no case was there any evidence of obstruction by any one of my predecessors. On the contrary, all indications in the file are to the effect that as soon as my predecessor, the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, became aware of an illegal activity, he immediately advised the provincial authorities so that appropriate action could be taken.

PARTI QUÉBÉCOIS BREAK-IN—POSSIBILITY OF ACTION AGAINST DIRECTOR GENERAL OF SECURITY

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the statement made yesterday by the Solicitor General to my colleague, the hon. member for Egmont, to the effect that no one within the security service at the time, including the Director General of Security Service, considered this to be an illegal action, clearly an illegal act was committed and has been referred to the attorney general of Quebec. There are at least four sections of the Criminal Code that have been violated, including theft, break and entry, obstruction of justice and conspiracy. In the shameful absence of the chief law enforcement officer of this country, the Attorney General of Canada who has the responsibility here, I will direct my question to the Solicitor General. In view of the fact that he is obviously in a conflict of interest vis-à-vis his predecessor, the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, with regard to any attempt to commit a conspiracy under the Criminal Code, what action does the Solicitor General intend to take against the Director General of Security at the time who obviously