

Oral Questions

First, do the security service files now being requested by the Keable commission contain information about illegal activities of foreign governments in this country? Second, do these files contain information about Russian, Cuban and French recruiting or subversive activities? Third, can we be assured that information of this type will not, under the circumstances, be given to a commission or public body if the security service has reason to suspect that these groups may be unreliable? I would further ask that this not be done until each person who could possibly obtain access to sensitive material has undergone a complete security check and has been unconditionally cleared for access to top secret information.

● (1432)

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Justice): I have not signed any of the affidavits given to the Keable commission as to the material that went to them, or the material that is being withheld under section 41(2) of the Federal Court Act. Therefore, I would ask the hon. member to allow me to take notice of his question so that the present Solicitor General or the previous solicitors general who signed those affidavits can answer.

I am delighted, if I may say so, Mr. Speaker, with the tone of the question. It indicates quite clearly the hon. member's view that certain material of a national security nature should be withheld from the Keable commission. That has been the position of the government for many months.

POLICY OF DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND IMMIGRATION
ON ENTRY INTO CANADA OF KNOWN SUBVERSIVE AGENTS

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, I am always happy that the minister thinks my questions are responsible. We have never suggested for one moment that this type of information should go to the commission. We have suggested that the information sent should demonstrate ministerial responsibility, which has been irresponsible.

I would ask the Minister of Employment and Immigration to answer this question which is supplementary to the one asked by the hon. member for High Park-Humber Valley. Is it now definitely the policy of the Department of Employment and Immigration that from now on any known KGB agents will, either directly or indirectly, be refused admittance to this country? I refer to agents such as those in the recent spy ring, which one could almost classify as creating a complex in this country.

An hon. Member: The CIA.

Mr. Woolliams: Don't worry about that. We know where you stand.

Hon. Bud Cullen (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, the accreditation of those who work at particular embassies is, of course, within the purview of my colleague, the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In so far as others who hope to emigrate to this country are concerned, they are given very careful scrutiny before being granted

[Mr. Woolliams.]

admission, particularly on the grounds of security. This was true under the former act, as it is under the new act.

Mr. Woolliams: Mr. Speaker, I am at a loss to understand why the minister cannot say "yes" or "no", instead of the verbiage which he uses. Is the answer "yes", or is it "no"—that his department is taking the position from now on—

An hon. Member: Verbiage.

Mr. Woolliams: I see that the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce is here. I thought he would be advising the Prime Minister, at the conference, as he has become so important to western Canada.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Woolliams: I will allow the minister from Crowfoot to keep on crowing, because he will crow himself out of his constituency.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Woolliams: Now may I put this question to the minister, Mr. Speaker? Is it now the policy, after there have been security checks, to say "no" to any KGB agents trying to enter this country? Is the answer "yes", or "no"?

An hon. Member: Both.

Mr. Cullen: Mr. Speaker, we will add up the verbiage of the question and the verbiage of the answer, and see who comes out ahead on that particular issue. I tried to indicate to the hon. member that if an individual seeks accreditation to a particular embassy, that is within the purview or jurisdiction of my colleague, the Secretary of State for External Affairs. If someone makes application for landed immigrant status, and we determine he is an agent, obviously he will not be allowed to enter Canada. He will, also, not be allowed to be accredited to an embassy, if we have that information in advance.

GOVERNMENT ACTION TO PREVENT ARMS BEING SMUGGLED
INTO CANADA—SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES

Mr. Tom Cossitt (Leeds): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Solicitor General, my question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister, since it concerns government policy. In view of the statement made on national television last night by Robert Bourne, head of the security planning and analysis branch of the Department of the Solicitor General, to the effect that a terrorist act will inevitably occur in Quebec, I ask the minister: Does this represent the conclusion of the government based on information which it possesses? Specifically, what steps is the government taking to meet this situation and to deal with arms smuggled into Canada?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and President of Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I have not had the opportunity of listening to or reading what Mr. Bourne stated. But I can tell the hon. member it is not the policy of the Government of Canada; we have not concluded that there will