

cer of "C" Division. One of the recommendations made was that certain files, which had no value and were no longer active files, be destroyed. That is the policy of all government departments—to destroy material which is no longer relevant.

● (1420)

REQUEST FOR DETAILS OF FILES DESTROYED

Mr. Elmer M. MacKay (Central Nova): Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to the minister for his comprehensive answer. By way of supplementary, I should like to ask him whether any of these documents that were incinerated, or all of them for that matter, were the subject of proper orders? Is there a manifest or a record available of what they contained? Has there been any microfilming done? Have any of these things been preserved? What was the currency of this material? Did it involve any material which has been the subject of investigation since 1971 or 1972? Was there any 1974 material, for example?

Hon. Francis Fox (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, the files were incinerated in accordance with the normal policy of the force. This type of destruction of irrelevant material is applied right across the country in the various regions where the force operates. As I indicated before, it was done in the same manner as within government departments. These files dated back to the year 1966. However, I am informed that any information which was pertinent was transferred to the national criminal investigations unit of the RCMP. No information of current value was destroyed.

Since the hon. member raised the question yesterday, I should add that no material was destroyed, which was in the possession of the security service, and no material pertaining to any inquiry presently under way in the province of Quebec was destroyed during the course of that incineration.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

BREAK-IN AT L'AGENCE DE PRESSE LIBRE—DATE MINISTER OF SUPPLY AND SERVICES GAVE INFORMATION TO SOLICITOR GENERAL

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Supply and Services which pertains to a statement made by the Solicitor General in the House on Friday, based in part on information given to him by the Minister of Supply and Services. The question I have for the minister is: could he tell the House at what time he provided information to the present Solicitor General concerning the meeting which took place between himself, former Commissioner Higgitt and certain other officials on November 6? When did the present Minister of Supply and Services provide that information to the present Solicitor General; and second, does he recall, according to the report made to the House by the present minister, that he at any time during the past year said something which flatly contradicts information provided by the minister in his statement to the House on Friday?

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Hon. Jean-Pierre Goyer (Minister of Supply and Services): Mr. Speaker, as I gave notice to the Chair, I intend to rise on a question of privilege at the end of the question period and at that time I shall make the statement I prepared if the Chair accepts my question of privilege. I also want, again if the Chair agrees and if the House gives its unanimous consent, to answer all questions which will be put to me concerning my statement.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. For the sake of clarity, what the minister has told the House is what he already told the Chair, that is, he has the intention of seeking the floor on a question of privilege. If it meets with the wish of the House, he would be prepared to answer questions relating to the statement he makes on the question of privilege. Of course I cannot prejudge the matter until we come to that point. I thought the minister wanted to put that on the record; but it does not alter the basic rule which governs and restricts the question period in respect to responsibilities of ministers.

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the announcement made by the minister. I will withhold any questions I have until he makes his statement on privilege.

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[Translation]

FINANCE

PROTESTS OF LIFE INSURANCE AGENTS CONCERNING BUDGETARY PROVISIONS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. C. A. Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. Considering that the majority of life insurance agents vigorously object to the new budget measures of last March 31 concerning the taxation of the death benefits of life insurance policies, and considering also the impact that legislation will have on life insurance, could the minister tell the House whether he intends to take into consideration the representations of life insurance agents and, if so, how?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I do not quite accept the preamble of the hon. member's question, but I must point out that we have proposed changes in the taxation of life insurance policies in the bill we introduced a week ago, which I believe will lessen the impact of such taxation on low income earners.

Mr. Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister. Another point on which I want to draw his attention is the following: considering that the budgetary propositions of last March 31 seem very discriminatory towards medium income earners, and considering that people buying life insurance policies do so to provide their families with a protection, could the minister tell the House whether he is considering withdrawing the propositions concerning those groups which he himself announced when he tabled his budget?