

to the question of national security. I did it in that way in order to be helpful to the hon. member for Leeds. I am not in any way going to be commenting on the question put to me by the hon. gentleman.

ISSUANCE OF TRAVEL PERMITS TO SOVIET INTELLIGENCE AGENTS IN CANADA

Mr. Bill Jarvis (Perth-Wilmot): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Solicitor General about travel permits issued to Soviet intelligence agents. This question has absolutely nothing to do with national security in the context in which the minister just put it. Does it remain the policy of this government to continue to issue travel permits to Soviet nationals whom the Solicitor General, on the basis of information received from his security forces, has reasonable and probable grounds to believe are members of the KGB or some other foreign intelligence unit? Is that the continuing policy of this government?

Hon. J.-J. Blais (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, if I recall correctly, that question was asked of the Secretary of State for External Affairs and a full reply was made at the time.

ACTION OF GOVERNMENT TO EXPEL SOVIET SUBVERSIVE AGENTS IN CANADA

Mr. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Solicitor General. By his own statement, there are 15 nationals of the Soviet Union here in Canada acting against the interests of national security in a subversive fashion. Is he taking any action, or is his government, to expel those 15 subversives who are still conducting such activities, by the minister's own statement?

Hon. J.-J. Blais (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member refers to information that was made public by the hon. member for Leeds.

An hon. Member: No, that was your information.

Mr. Blais: The hon. gentleman from Leeds did not indicate when that information was compiled or whether, indeed, that situation has since changed. That, surely, is not a question the hon. member wants me to comment on.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, I am referring to the minister's own statement, not in respect of any event that occurred yesterday involving the hon. member for Leeds. It was his statement that there are still 15 such agents in Canada, after the expulsion of 13. By simple arithmetic, if we deduct 13 from the 28 whom the minister said were here, that leaves 15. It is those 15 I am asking about. What action is the government going to take in respect of their expulsion, if they are engaged, as he says, in subversive activities?

Mr. Blais: I cannot recall ever having made that statement, Mr. Speaker.

Oral Questions

WARREN HART—INQUIRY AS TO RECRUITMENT FOR INTELLIGENCE WORK IN CANADA

Mr. Elmer M. MacKay (Central Nova): Mr. Speaker, this is a matter that is supplementary, in that it involves the security of other countries. When will the Solicitor General know the complete story of who arranged the recruitment of FBI operative, Warren Hart, whose bureau number was S4—in case there is any doubt as to what his connection was—and who arranged for him to come to Canada, keeping in mind that his file was red-flagged and inquiries and information went directly to the PMO?

Hon. J.-J. Blais (Solicitor General): Soon, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. MacKay: Who authorized this man, Mr. Speaker—and I direct this question to the same minister—to make forays into the Caribbean, not only to infiltrate but to train revolutionaries, a seeming contravention of this country's stated policy of non-offensive intelligence operations? Was the House misled or is it our policy to conduct offensive intelligence operations in areas where we have a legitimate sphere of influence?

Mr. Blais: Mr. Speaker, I have indicated to the House before that there is no policy of offensive intelligence-gathering. I maintain that position. I told the hon. gentleman that the information I had received to date would indicate that this policy has not been infringed. I am getting additional information, and I have indicated to the hon. gentleman that I will provide him with that information when it is available.

Mr. MacKay: Mr. Speaker, I say to the minister that sending a trained agent to another sovereign state to train revolutionaries sounds rather offensive to me. Does the minister not agree with that?

Mr. Blais: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman makes an allegation that we are dealing with a trained agent. The hon. gentleman fully knows that the role of Mr. Hart was always that of a source and never that of a trained agent.

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TRANSPORT

FUTURE OF SHIP CANAL AT SAULT STE. MARIE

Mr. Cyril Symes (Sault Ste. Marie): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. I have given him notice of it. Can he explain the delay in cabinet reaching a decision on the future of the Canadian ship canal at Sault Ste. Marie? Is it because new evidence has been drawn to the attention of the minister, namely, that a significant increase in western coal shipments through the locks contradicts the minister's assumption that there will be no capacity problems until after 1995 and, therefore, a cost-benefit analysis on improving the existing lock should be undertaken?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. member that a decision with regard to the