

*Oral Questions***ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE****AUTHORIZED WIRETAPS AND NUMBER OF CONVICTIONS OBTAINED**

**Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Solicitor General. I put the same question last year on the last wiretapping report of the Solicitor General of Canada.

Last year—that is, in 1978—there were 3,427 authorized wiretaps; that is, wiretaps authorized by judges. Of those, only 897 persons were arrested and there were four convictions. We hear a lot these days about the charter of rights and the constitution. Proportionately the same figures applied last year. Will the minister now reconsider the Liberal government's position and amend the Code because of what I would call abuse of the process of law?

**Hon. J.-J. Blais (Solicitor General):** If the hon. gentleman would look at the report, he would see that the number of people arrested in terms of the 1975 authorizations increased as the years went by. In terms of the 1975 authorizations, 407 people were named in the authorizations, and the hon. member will see that in 1978, with reference to 1975, 1,557 people were subjected to arrest. In terms of criminal proceedings, the hon. member will see that there were 968 convictions, in total, with reference to 1975.

As I am sure the hon. member understands very well, the reason for that is that as we obtain authorizations we conduct the investigations and subsequently arrests are made, following which it takes some time before the cases proceed through the individual tribunals. We had to wait right up until 1978 to get the total figures for 1975.

**Mr. Woolliams:** Mr. Speaker, so that we can get away from the minister's verbosity with reference to the matter, let me point out that we had the same answer last year. Last year, there were only 13 convictions and a similar number of arrests, as the minister pointed out. Under this act, people are being arrested and their civil rights usurped. As I said, there were four convictions out of 3,427 wiretaps, and the figures were similar for last year.

The minister keeps talking about the catch-up. I wonder when we are going to catch up. We are putting people in jail, but as a result of this evidence we are getting no convictions; that is my point.

**Mr. Blais:** Mr. Speaker, I would be very pleased if the hon. gentleman would review the report again.

**Mr. Woolliams:** I have read it.

**Mr. Blais:** He would see that in 1975 we had 562 authorizations, and as of today there are 968 convictions. In 1976, we had 613 authorizations, and as of today we have achieved 790 convictions. In 1977, we had 615 authorizations, and as of today we have 495 convictions. Of course, as we look at the 1977 and 1976 figures, there are still cases before the courts and there have been no convictions on those cases. But when

[Mr. Roberts.]

we look at the total number of authorizations we see that the total number of convictions exceeds the authorizations.

I would also like to point out to the hon. gentleman that in terms of wiretap installations, there has been a decrease in the number from 1977 to 1978. In 1977, there were 1,429 installations, and in 1978 there were 1,386.

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**PRIVILEGE****MR. MCKENZIE—AIR SAFETY REGULATIONS—STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF TRANSPORT**

**Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg South Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I have given you notice of my question of privilege and now I should like to explain why I am presenting it 20 days late. I have obtained evidence this past weekend and yesterday giving grounds for my question of privilege.

On February 8, the hon. member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski) questioned the minister on the tabling of a document on air safety regulations. He asked:

Can we expect this report to be made public—?

The Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang) stated:

Our tradition in a very open department is to . . . place reports of this sort in our library, where they are indexed and available to the public, even if we do not feel they are necessarily of the sort that deserve to be printed. I say "a very open department", noting the "the raspberries" from the other side, because they may not know that we have thousands and thousands of documents available in the library.

I am interested in a particular air crash which took place last March in Saskatoon, so I contacted the minister's department and his officials provided me with a one page report on this accident which took place in Saskatoon in March of 1978. I made further inquiries on my own and I found out that there are 20 pages missing from this report. That means the minister does not operate an open department and members of parliament cannot contact his department and his library. What he said is not true.

I have obtained a transcript of the coroner's inquest into this accident. The inquest was started in June of 1978. It had to be postponed for three months. Then it continued in September of 1978. The minister would not provide the proper documentation with regard to this crash. This insistent coroner was finally able to get from the minister an additional 20 pages so he could continue with his inquest into these tragic deaths. I would like to quote briefly from the transcript of the coroner's inquest as follows:

Gentlemen of the jury, you will remember that at our last meeting we adjourned the inquest because we lacked certain evidence which was in the form of a report which has been forwarded by the investigator who investigated this accident on behalf of the Department of Transport, and during the subsequent weeks we have been busy with negotiations with the department in an attempt to obtain this report. We only recently received it and now we are going to continue with this inquest.

Throughout the second section of this inquiry into the accident, the coroner makes some of the most damaging statements against the Minister of Transport and his depart-