

Oral Questions

who may be a threat to Canada's security. Surely it is not the position of the hon. gentleman that that surveillance ought not to take place.

Mr. Dick: Answer the question for a change.

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, I would have thought that the best way, if I may suggest this to the Solicitor General, to be fair to the RCMP and to discharge his obligations to this House would be to give a straight answer to the question. I think it was the Prime Minister who told us some months ago that in 1975 the government asked the RCMP to stop exercising surveillance on legitimate democratic political parties.

Can the Solicitor General tell me whether those instructions from the government referred to by the Prime Minister—instructions such as those also referred to in the *Globe and Mail*—are no longer in effect? I think the House is entitled to an answer to this kind of question, and any reference to the McDonald Commission is quite beside the point.

Mr. Blais: Mr. Speaker, that was the first specific question the hon. gentleman has asked.

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Blais: The directives which were issued by the Prime Minister of Canada relating to the surveillance of any legitimate political organization are being complied with in full by the RCMP.

ALLEGED DESTRUCTION OF RCMP SURVEILLANCE REPORTS

Mr. Stuart Leggatt (New Westminster): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the Solicitor General back to the question of the 24 documents which are reported to be missing. I am trying to get the Solicitor General's answer clear in my mind. Is it correct that those reports were not only destroyed but any exact duplicates were also destroyed, and all we have now is some summary of those reports? Are those reports available to the McDonald commission in full and in total as full exhibits, so that the commission can inquire into them?

Hon. J.-J. Blais (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, the reply I have already made relating to those 24 reports was that they cannot presently be located, that they refer to existing files relating to installations, that all the files are complete and that the sequence of those files is ascertainable and complete. Therefore, there are no files—which is really the subject matter of any investigation by the McDonald inquiry—which could be missing.

In terms of whether the 24 documents to which the hon. gentleman is referring were destroyed, I can say to the hon. gentleman that those documents are not there, they have not been found and they are presumed destroyed. I suggest to the hon. gentleman that the destruction took place in accordance—

● (1427)

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

[Mr. Blais.]

Mr. Blais: Those documents could have been destroyed in accordance with the procedures that have been followed and approved internally by the RCMP.

Mr. Leggatt: The Solicitor General still has not advised the House as to the date of the destruction of those particular documents, which I am assuming now—that was his evidence before the House—are not available as documents to be inquired into. My question is: Will he now confirm the date of the destruction of those documents, will he also confirm that they were destroyed subsequent to the revelations of the break-in at the APLQ, and can he also advise us whether they were destroyed under the instructions of any of the solicitors general?

Mr. Blais: First of all, the hon. gentleman presumes that the documents have been destroyed. I suggested to the hon. gentleman—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Blais:—there is no specific record that the documents have been destroyed. If I inadvertently misled the hon. gentleman, I apologize. Indeed, the documents are not there.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Blais: Evidence was laid before the McDonald inquiry to the effect that the reports referring to the electronic installations were destroyed—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Blais:—or at least not available, and there is a presumption—

An hon. Member: You've got to be kidding.

Mr. Blais: There is a presumption that the documents may have been destroyed because it is the internal administrative policy of the RCMP relating to that sort of report, which is a monthly report, that it may be destroyed three years following the date of the issuance of the report.

However, the documents to which the reports refer, namely, the installations themselves, are still available. I will reiterate for the hon. gentleman, who has not been mindful of that fact in his question, that the documents relating to the installations are available and have been made available to the McDonald inquiry.

Mr. Leggatt: I have a final supplementary question for the Solicitor General.

An hon. Member: That buffoon.

Mr. Leggatt: The Solicitor General has some experience with the courts of this country and he knows that evidence is evidence and documents are documents, and that summaries of documents are a very different thing. My question is this: In terms of the alleged mislaying or destruction, somehow the documents are missing—we have had confirmation of that