

Oral Questions

government obviously knew about, and which was the subject of questioning on this side of the House. At that time the Prime Minister and other members of the government indicated that it was one of the reasons for the apprehended insurrection. Is that the same dynamite which the government apparently has just rediscovered now?

Hon. Ron Basford (Acting Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, I would want to review the earlier debate to which the hon. member is referring, but I do not believe that is the case.

REQUEST FOR REPORT ON ALLEGED INFILTRATION OF PARTI
QUÉBÉCOIS

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): When the hon. minister is doing that, would he also look up the question of what happened to the request from the opposition benches as to the alleged infiltration of the Parti Québécois by law enforcement agencies and intelligence units of the RCMP some years ago? What happened to the request from this side of the House for that type of investigation? Did that stay on the file? Is the government still aware of that particular request?

Hon. Ron Basford (Acting Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, I believe that was dealt with by the Prime Minister last week.

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● (1442)

[Translation]

SOCIAL SECURITY

POSSIBLE REDUCTION OF FAMILY ALLOWANCES—REQUEST FOR
CLARIFICATION OF STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT OF TREASURY
BOARD

Mr. Eudore Allard (Rimouski): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the President of the Treasury Board. Can he enlarge on the statement he made in September 1977 to the effect that he was going to decrease family allowances in order to finance the public debt?

[English]

Hon. Robert K. Andras (President of the Treasury Board): I made no such statement, Mr. Speaker, so I really cannot answer the hon. gentleman's question.

[Translation]

Mr. Allard: In September, the minister is reported as having said that he was going to decrease family allowances in order to finance the public debt. That is quite clear. It seems to me the minister could add a few details in that regard.

[English]

Mr. Andras: I am sorry, I did not make such a statement.

An hon. Member: You are sorry?

[Mr. Baldwin.]

[Translation]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

INQUIRY WHETHER INCIDENT INVOLVING FRANCE AND
QUEBEC WILL IMPROVE CANADA'S RELATIONS WITH FRANCE

Mr. Gaston Isabelle (Hull): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Acting Prime Minister. In the light of the most recent developments concerning France and a part of Canada, can the minister tell the House whether economic relations between France and all of Canada will be improved?

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, relations between Canada and France are excellent, particularly in the field of economics. We know France has made considerable investments in Canada. I refer here to the Michelin company in Nova Scotia, uranium in Saskatchewan and oil in Alberta.

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[English]

COMBINES

INQUIRY WHETHER DIRECTOR APPROVED CABINET DECISION
PERMITTING TELESAT MERGER

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and it has to do with the unprecedented decision of the cabinet to overrule the CRTC decision on Telesat Canada. My question is based on a submission by counsel acting on behalf of the director of Combines Investigation when he appeared before CRTC and said:

... the Agreement in its proposed form is clearly anti-competitive, and ... this anti-competitive nature renders the Agreement contrary to the public interest ...

Since the minister and his colleagues are not above the law certainly in this case, I would like to ask him whether in fact the director of the Combines Investigation Branch has approved the decision of the government in overruling CRTC with respect to Telesat Canada.

Hon. Warren Allmand (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): We have not had an opportunity yet to have a reaction from the Director of Investigation under the Combines Act but we did make the representations of the director well known to the cabinet during the discussions.

Mr. McGrath: Is it the position of the minister then that they would make a decision of this nature, unprecedented in its scope, overruling CRTC which had extensive hearings on this subject, without first consulting the law officers of the Crown? Surely one of the principal law officers of the Crown in this case would be the director of the Combines Investigation Branch. I ask the minister now if it is the position of the government that their decision to overrule CRTC is consistent with the decision taken by the director of the Combines Investigation Branch before CRTC?

Mr. Allmand: Mr. Speaker, as was pointed out earlier, the cabinet had the right to overrule the CRTC decision in law