

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. Members:** No.

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

### ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING SECURITY SERVICE  
OPERATES WITHIN LAW—ACTION TO ENSURE ADHERENCE TO  
LAW

**Mr. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister who demonstrated his capacity yesterday as an artful dodger.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Clark:** As the House knows, the fundamental question at issue here is ministerial responsibility.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

● (1417)

**Mr. Clark:** I want the Prime Minister to tell the House of Commons now who in his government accepts responsibility for ensuring that security services operate within the law and follow the mandate given to them by the government. In other words, who in cabinet polices the security service?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** The Solicitor General and myself as Prime Minister.

**Mr. Clark:** What specific or active actions other than simply passively listening to briefings did the Prime Minister and the solicitors general of the day take prior to the issuing of the mandate prior to March, 1975 and what active procedures are now taken by the Prime Minister and the Solicitor General to ensure that the security service operates within the law and to ensure that the mandate that was spelled out in March, 1975 is honoured and respected in practice by the security service? Will the Prime Minister spell out the actions he takes to ensure that the law and the mandate are respected?

**Mr. Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, the Solicitor General in his answers to the House, and in his statement on Friday, indicated several actions which have been taken. Most of them originated with the first discovery by government that an illegal and what we thought at that time isolated act had been taken by the RCMP. Since all kinds of indications have been given to the RCMP, active searches of their files on specific incidents, whether spurious, imagined or real put forth by the opposition or other people have been followed up. Of course, each time an action was discovered which might have an aspect of illegality, reference was made to the McDonald Royal Commission of Inquiry which was set up last July I believe and to the attorney general of the province in which the

### Oral Questions

suspected action had been taken with a view to that attorney general deciding under our laws whether a prosecution was warranted or not.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR SURVEILLANCE OF PARTI  
QUÉBÉCOIS

**Mr. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I assume in carrying out this responsibility, which he has now admitted is his and that of the Solicitor General, when the Prime Minister learns of something that he thinks is improper he makes an inquiry to determine how that wrong act got started. Specifically, since the Prime Minister has gone to such great pains claiming credit for stopping the security surveillance of the Parti Québécois, will he now tell the House of Commons who started that surveillance of the Parti Québécois? Under whose authority was the major policy decision taken to put a legal political party under what the Prime Minister calls systematic surveillance?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, the order was given by us not to pursue systematic surveillance. That order was given as a result of a discussion in cabinet committee and a report to the cabinet committee by the security service that they were trying to follow the mandate that we had earlier given to them following the October, 1970 crisis. They were trying to find out more about sources of violence within the ranks of the separatists. It came to light at one point, as I said, at the end of 1974 or early 1975 that in order to discharge this perfectly legitimate mandate, and I am sure even the Leader of the Opposition agrees with that, they had systematically begun a surveillance of a democratic party. It was a matter not without importance and consideration. We discussed it in the cabinet committee on security.

After due reflection, we found that this action was improper and asked them not to pursue it. This is indeed what happened. With regard to the extent to which it had been pursued previous to that direction being given and the results that had been obtained, that is the security or otherwise information they had gotten on this particular party, as I told an hon. member opposite yesterday, I did not find it legitimate for me as leader of another political party to ask what they had found out or to give me their files. I said whatever you have, we do not want to see it or hear about it and we do not want you to continue.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

● (1422)

**Mr. Clark:** We now have a partial answer as to who started it. The partial answer is, "They started it." We want to know who are "they". Who took the decision to start the systematic surveillance of the Parti Québécois and under what direction from the cabinet? Under what general policy did those persons think they were acting when they took that initiative?