

Oral Questions

Mr. Jarvis: Now that the Prime Minister has had an opportunity to check on this unhappy affair, can he say if anyone in government was given notice of the subscription lists taken from the APLQ in 1972 and the membership list and financial information of the Parti Québécois in 1973? Has the Prime Minister checked and determined that no one in government was given a copy of all that information?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I have checked that the Solicitors General at the time did not have knowledge of this break-in which obtained lists of members of the PQ. I had no knowledge. I presume if the police were going to pass the knowledge on to anyone, it would be the Solicitor General or myself and they did not. I cannot vouch for the fact that some lists may not be leaked, for all I know to some members of the opposition. Things do leak from the RCMP. We saw just a year ago that a letter from General Dare to Mr. Bourne was leaked to the *Toronto Sun*. I cannot say that nothing leaked. I do say that this government has no knowledge of the content of those lists nor, as far as I know, any member on this side of the House.

INQUIRY IF PRIME MINISTER HAD LIST OF PARTI QUÉBÉCOIS MEMBERS

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. He is quoted in last Saturday's *Globe and Mail* as being amazed when he learned of the surveillance of a democratically constituted party in Canada. His words were "Gee, we have got to stop this." Given his alleged state of amazement that such serious and wrong activity was taking place in terms of monitoring political parties in Canada, and given the fact that he said "maybe they" with reference to the RCMP "did tell me" about having a membership list of the PQ, considering at one point in his answer today he said yes he did have a list but then corrected himself and said no he did not have a list, if he was amazed when told about this in 1974 or 1975, he could not remember the year either—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Broadbent: —can he now tell us definitively if he did have a list of the membership of the PQ and why in heaven's name he did not pursue the question to see if it had been obtained legally or not.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I believe the leader of the New Democratic Party is distorting my words. I never said in the House or even in my press conference that I might or might not have had a list. I said they, the RCMP, might or might not have told me they had a list. That is something entirely different.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: I do know I was informed by the RCMP that they were exercising surveillance of the Parti Québécois. That was perhaps in 1974 or 1975 because we issued the guidelines

[Mr. Trudeau.]

in March 1975. These guidelines were meant to tell the police that they should only exercise certain types of surveillance, those spelled out by the Solicitor General in his speech in the House on Friday. Therefore it might have taken place in 1974 or early 1975. I could check the year by looking at some diaries, but it is not that relevant. The relevant thing is when we found out they were exercising surveillance of a democratically constituted political party, we told them to stop and issued the guidelines.

• (1427)

The hon. member wants to know whether or not I was told then that they had a list. I honestly do not remember them having told me they had a list. But I would agree that it is reasonable to presume that if you have police and they are reasonably smart, which they are, and they are exercising surveillance of a party, whether it is one of the parties over there or our party, one of the things they would do would be to get a list. You can buy a list. You can get a list very easily. There is no reason to suppose, as the Leader of the Opposition was supposing, that in order to get this particular piece of information they had to do anything illegal.

The police are getting information all the time. I am sure they are getting it from the members opposite but it is not always cooperative. The police are getting information, perhaps, on the activities of agents in this country which are detrimental to our security. The police are getting information on people who might be engaged in acts of terrorism, and so on. There is no reason to suppose that in order to get this information they have to break the law. And I did not presuppose that they broke the law in order to get those lists, assuming they told me at the time that they had them.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

LEGALITY OF MANNER IN WHICH PARTI QUÉBÉCOIS MEMBERSHIP LISTS OBTAINED

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): The Prime Minister's little speech will only persuade those who sit behind him. Considering the right hon. gentleman's serious moral and political responsibility—I say "political" in the context of the times when there was a rising separatist movement in the Province of Quebec and when the Prime Minister discovered that the federal police force were monitoring a political party, the Parti Québécois—did he not consider it his basic responsibility at least to find out whether they were doing it legally? If not, how can he claim to sit in his present seat with any confidence and assurance?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I told the Leader of the Opposition that from time to time, perhaps once a year in the earlier stages but much more frequently in the later stages, we had information from the