

● (1417)

**Mr. Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, the practice of reporting security operations is one which existed under my cabinet, as it existed under previous cabinets. There were periodic reports to cabinet of security risks. As infrequently as once a year, I believe we had a committee of cabinet listen to the RCMP in order that they may tell us what security risks were incurred by Canada, what they were doing about them, what dangerous groups were being investigated and so on. Of course, there were particular cases where information was given to me individually as the Prime Minister. Perhaps they would have to do with the police thinking that somebody should be declared a *persona non grata* in the country. In cases like this, they would discuss it with the Secretary of State for External Affairs or myself. Therefore, there were individual cases of security risks coming to the attention of the police; but generally there was an annual report, and sometimes more frequently.

ACTION TO ENSURE NO ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES BY SECURITY SERVICE

**Mr. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, in order to understand what went on during that period—

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

**Mr. Clark:** —is the Prime Minister telling this House that apart from an annual meeting, and perhaps occasional briefings which I gather were initiated by the security service, he as Prime Minister took no provision to assure or satisfy himself, as the responsible minister, that the security services were not involved in any illegal activity? Is that the position of the Prime Minister?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, and that was also my position with regard to any other agency of government. I took no particular precaution to tell them they should not break the law.

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

**Mr. Clark:** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has admitted in this House that he became aware the security services were engaged in surveillance of a legitimate political party. At that time did he not ask who authorized that surveillance? At that time did the question not cross his mind as to whether the control he was keeping, as the responsible minister, over security services which were, by his own admission, then undertaking the surveillance of activities of political parties that might have been involved in illegal activities, that it was prudent for him to establish some means to ensure that the law was not being broken and that initiatives such as the surveillance of political parties or ordinary citizens were not being taken?

**Mr. Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, when I heard that a political party was under surveillance, we issued guidelines indicating that that should not be done. The hon. Leader of the Opposition asked me if at that time I did not suspect that in order to

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undertake the surveillance of a political party the police would have to break the law. I do not think that follows at all. Certainly, it did not cross my mind. I imagine we could get a list of the members of the Conservative party just by giving some money to some member of the secretariat who would give us a list. There is nothing illegal about that.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** Surveillance is a different thing.

**Mr. Trudeau:** I just found it offensive that the RCMP had lists and was undertaking the surveillance of a political party.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** That is right.

**Mr. Trudeau:** I do not know if I knew at the time they had lists. They told me they were undertaking the surveillance of a party. I would imagine surveillance implied knowing somebody was a member of that party. I told them they should not continue to do that. There was no more reason to suspect that they were breaking the law by conducting a surveillance of that party, than to suspect they were breaking the law by conducting a surveillance of any spy or terrorist who was coming into Canada.

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

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

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** Civil libertarian!

● (1422)

DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION GAINED BY SECURITY SERVICE

**Mr. Bill Jarvis (Perth-Wilmot):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. What policy instructions did federal security services have prior to 1975 with regard to the dissemination of information gathered legally or illegally from surveillance of political parties? As a matter of policy, was the information gathered given to the Prime Minister or the cabinet committee on security and intelligence chaired by the Prime Minister?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, since the time I became Prime Minister in 1968, I know of no surveillance exercise of any political party as such, only the one I referred to in the case of the Parti Quebecois and I had it stopped as soon as I learned about it.

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

**Mr. Trudeau:** I am quite sure that the policy of the RCMP until that time had been to exercise surveillance on those who might be considered a security risk, whether they belonged to one party or another or to no party at all. However, the idea of surveillance of a party which was legal under the law was something absolutely unknown to me, and I presume previous Prime Ministers, until we realized there had been surveillance of the PQ for a short period of time. I repeat, as soon as we found that out, we asked that it be stopped.