

Oral Questions

Madam Speaker: Order, please. If I may have the indulgence of the House, perhaps we could wait a while so that I can find out what is the cause of the problem.

An Hon. Member: We are in the dark anyway.

Mr. McKnight: Stick around, Pierre, and you will see the light.

Madam Speaker: I am just finding out whether the lights can be activated right away. Otherwise we shall probably have to suspend the sitting for a while.

[At 2.40 p.m. the lighting resumed in the Chamber.]

AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION

Mr. Chris Speyer (Cambridge): Madam Speaker, it is impossible for anyone to believe that some type of deal, that some type of immunity, would not be granted for this spy to tell everything concerning the information he had. In light of catching Hambleton red-handed in November, 1979, with the most sophisticated type of Soviet-made espionage equipment, and in light of the fact that we knew he had been a spy for 30 years, did the Minister or the Security Service know that documents which were important to NATO were being passed to the Soviet Union or whether we were aware prior to the prosecution in Great Britain that the highest grade of intelligence, namely "Cosmic" classified documents, were passed to the prosecution? What information did we not have that the British had in order to enable them to prosecute Hambleton?

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Minister of Justice): Madam Speaker, this question appears to be directed at the information which was in the hands of the Attorney General at the time the decision was made on April 25, 1980, not to prosecute. Perhaps I might draw to the attention of the House that the first count in the trial just completed in London, on which Mr. Hambleton was convicted, was one of communicating to a Russian agent top secret, secret, and confidential material belonging to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. I can inform the House that at the time the decision was made by the Attorney General there was no information of this kind concerning Mr. Hambleton's passing information of this type.

● (1440)

Mr. Speyer: What about the second count?

ACTIVITIES IN CANADA AFTER 1961

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Minister of Justice. The first count concerned offences which were committed between 1956 and 1961. I am sure that the Minister has informed himself as to the elements of the second count which was withdrawn.

Can the Minister say whether his Department is considering recommending the laying of charges with respect to offences committed subsequent to 1961, and especially within Canada?

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Minister of Justice): Madam Speaker, in case my previous words were not sufficiently clear, I can confirm that there was no evidence before us of transmission of NATO secrets at any time.

With respect to other evidence which may have been revealed at the trial in London, one of our senior Justice prosecutorial officials has been at the trial and I am looking forward to consulting with him on his return as to whether the interest of Canada is further involved in any way in this matter.

POSSIBLE LAYING OF CHARGES

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Madam Speaker, with respect to the possibility of offences having been committed subsequent to 1961, will the Minister be discussing with his representative, upon his return from Great Britain, the possibility that those offences were committed, quite apart from supplying NATO secrets, but offences of any kind, against the Official Secrets Act? If found to exist, will his Department be considering the laying of charges against Mr. Hambleton?

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Minister of Justice): Madam Speaker, I would not want to prejudge the result of our inquiries, so I think that it is best to say that we do not know the evidence at this point which was presented in the United Kingdom. In fact some of it was presented in secret and may not be available to us. I certainly will consult with my official on his return to attempt to ascertain whether the interest of Canada is further involved.

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AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

IMPORTATION OF VEHICLES MANUFACTURED IN JAPAN

Mr. Derek Blackburn (Brant): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. In view of the fact that Statistics Canada reported today that both exports and imports in the automotive industry are at an all-time low, in view of the fact that an Ontario report states that the automobile industry is in dire straits and that the auto pact is no longer effective and may, indeed, be obsolete, and in view of the fact that Japan now has 27 per cent of the automobile sales market in Canada, which makes us the third largest consuming nation of Japanese cars, what will the Minister do to force the Japanese to come to a quota, to cut back on imports, or to ensure that Japanese cars are sourced in Canada because of the thousands of Canadian workers who are unemployed and the many thousands who will never go back to work?

Hon. Gerald Regan (Minister of State (International Trade)): Madam Speaker, of course the Hon. Member touches on a very difficult subject. It is the question of the incursion of Japanese motor cars into what had been considered the traditional Canadian market. I believe the Hon. Member will