

Oral Questions

level, or at police headquarters in Ottawa, including the commanding officer of Division "C", were aware before the raid that the proposed operation was of an illegal nature. Needless to say, Mr. Speaker, as the then solicitor general pointed out, no authorization to proceed with an illegal investigation would have been granted. As for us, we believe that any police operations, whatever their purposes and whatever the reasons for them, should comply with the law. That is why, Mr. Speaker, in 1974 this government introduced in Parliament another bill on wiretapping which aimed precisely at obtaining additional control over police forces activities, on the criminal side where permission must now be secured to proceed with wiretapping, and also on the security service side where permission of the Solicitor General is now required under the law approved by Parliament.

● (1420)

[English]

Mr. Clark: A supplementary question. The question here is what the then Solicitor General knew before the raid that should have led him to ask questions of officers of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police that he did not ask. That is the question. Since the Minister of Supply and Services has affirmed in this House that he was briefed extensively on activities of groups relating to matters prior to the raid we want to know what he was briefed about. That speaks directly to the kind of questions a responsible minister would have asked of his officials. We want to know whether he was briefed prior to that raid and if it was suggested to him that there might have been terrorist activities including a possible hijacking or activities of that scope. Did he know of those things prior to the raid?

[Translation]

Mr. Fox: Mr. Speaker, I think that the relevant question is whether or not an illegal raid has taken place and who was aware of this raid. Mr. Speaker, the point the hon. Leader of the Opposition wants me to uphold and argue is that files concerning the security of the state should be disclosed to the public. I am not prepared to do that. The relevant question, Mr. Speaker, is to know whether or not the minister involved, the then solicitor general, had authorized in any way such an illegal raid, and I have already answered on this point, Mr. Speaker, throughout the statement I made in the House. As for the minister, he himself made a statement in the House, Mr. Speaker, and hon. members had the opportunity to question him during a long period, on Monday or Tuesday. If they did not take advantage of it, it was their right to do so.

Concerning the precise question of the Leader of the Opposition, as I said before, Mr. Speaker, it has been clearly established in the minister's statement as well as in his answers to the questions of opposition members in the House that he had never allowed any illegal raid; so, Mr. Speaker, the clear and strict rule of the government is never to allow any illegal practice by anybody.

[Mr. Fox.]

[English]

BREAK-IN AT PRAXIS CORPORATION AND BLACKLISTING OF PUBLIC SERVANTS—REASON FOR FAILURE TO IDENTIFY S. H. SCHULTZ

Mr. F. Oberle (Prince George-Peace River): Mr. Speaker, my question is one that does deserve an answer from the Solicitor General and it is directed to him. It refers to a question I asked yesterday regarding an official in the Solicitor General's office who allegedly may have been involved in the EPO affair of 1971. The Solicitor General answered that he could not identify a person by the name of S. H. Schultz who would have been in the Solicitor General's office at that time. I have here page 253 of the official government phone book and that name appears under the heading of the deputy minister's office—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Does the hon. member have a supplementary question to put to the Solicitor General?

Mr. Oberle: I should like to ask why it would have been so difficult for the minister to identify this person who was an executive assistant to the deputy minister in 1974? Why would it have been so difficult to identify this man, and why did he give me an evasive answer yesterday?

Hon. Francis Fox (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, I object strenuously to the type of language the hon. member is using. I had a letter delivered to his office this morning which gives full information on that question. But the hon. member wishes again to raise names in the House of Commons, to cast aspersions and make allegations against certain people. I never mentioned a name in this House, but said I was willing to investigate and see exactly if that individual was in the office of the Solicitor General. I have ascertained the information which the hon. member has asked of me. I had delivered to him today—perhaps it has not arrived yet, but I understand it was delivered to his office before the question period—information of that nature and, as I indicated in the letter I sent the hon. member, all this information has now been made available to the Attorney General of Ontario for his consideration and necessary action.

Mr. Oberle: Mr. Speaker, the minister admitted in the secret letter he sent me just before the question period—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Oberle:—that he indeed can read the telephone book and read this man's name in there. The question is, has he asked the senior official in his department as to his previous career and what his involvement was in 1971 with the EPO affair?

Mr. Fox: Mr. Speaker, personally, I think it is extraordinary that we should now put people on trial in the House of Commons on those allegations.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): We need an inquiry.