

MR. MARCEL RACETTE

**Question No. 17—Mr. Cossitt:**

1. Is or was Mr. Marcel Racette an employee of the National Research Council and, if so (a) in what capacity (b) was he associated in any way with the office of the former Solicitor General, the hon. member for Nipissing (c) did he at any time assist either the hon. member for Nipissing, former Solicitor General, or any of his office staff, specifically a lawyer, in any way, including with translation?

2. At any time after May 22, 1979, did Mr. Racette visit any offices of the former Solicitor General and, if so, for what purpose?

3. To the knowledge of the government, were any documents in the custody of the former Solicitor General or any member of his staff shredded after May 22, 1979 and, if so, was Mr. Racette present at the time and what part, if any, did he play in such activities?

4. To the knowledge of the government, did Mr. Racette state to certain employees of the National Research Council that he assisted in the shredding of documents in the custody of the former Solicitor General, the hon. member for Nipissing, after May 22, 1979?

**Mr. D. M. Collenette (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council):** I am informed by the National Research Council and the Solicitor General as follows: 1. Yes.

(a) Translator (translation of technical documents).

(b) No, but his friend, Louis Gerard Alberti, was a special assistant to the former Solicitor General.

(c) Yes. Assisted, from time to time, Mr. Alberti with some translation terms, usually by telephone.

2. Yes, to help Mr. Alberti move out of his office.

3. No.

4. No.

RCMP—"FEATHERBED FILE"

**Question No. 21—Mr. Cossitt:**

What is the exact origin of the name "Featherbed" including all the reasons why the file was designated by this name by the security services of the RCMP?

**Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General):** The exact origin of the name "Featherbed" is unknown. Files are codeworded to maintain confidentiality of the investigation so that only persons working on the file with a proven need-to-know have access. The file could just as easily been called Christmas Tree as the name has no significance to the subject matter.

NATIONAL SECURITY—NATURE OF "FEATHERBED FILE"

**Question No. 24—Mr. Cossitt:**

1. With reference to the answer given to a question by the hon. member for Leeds-Grenville on Friday, November 23, 1979, at page 1638 of *Hansard*, which stated in part that the Featherbed File "has been dormant for a number of years", has the file been dormant since 1974-75 and, if not, since what year has it been dormant?

2. On what grounds could such a file and the information which it contains be considered dormant after four or five years?

3. What are all the reasons that the government considers it dormant when it is of such recent vintage?

**Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General):** 1. The "Featherbed File" has been dormant since 1975.

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2. When the RCMP are satisfied that an investigation has been pursued as completely and comprehensively as possible, the file is placed in a dormant or non-active classification. Should new information come to light concerning any investigation, they have no difficulty in reopening the appropriate file.

3. The government considers the "Featherbed File" dormant because all necessary investigative action has been taken.

"FEATHERBED FILE"

**Question No. 26—Mr. Cossitt:**

1. Does the "Featherbed File" contain between 240 and 275 names and, if not, how many names does it contain?

2. Are some of them names of academics, members of the media, federal and provincial government public servants and certain professional people?

3. How many of the names were/are connected with the Department of External Affairs and how many were connected with the Prime Minister's office?

**Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General):** 1. The policy of the RCMP is to maintain the confidentiality of names and organizations it maintains in its files. For this reason it is not considered advisable to disclose the precise number of names mentioned in the "Featherbed File".

2. It is the policy of the RCMP to maintain the confidentiality of names of people in their files. This policy extends to releasing any clearcut detail which would assist others to breach this policy.

3. The policy of the RCMP is to maintain the confidentiality of names, organizations, and areas of the public service their investigations encompass. No need is seen to abrogate this policy.

**Question No. 104—Mr. Cossitt:**

With reference to the reply by the Prime Minister given to a question by the hon. member for Leeds-Grenville on November 15, 1977, at page 873 of *Hansard*, which stated in part, that he had never heard of the "Featherbed File", are any records in existence showing how the hon. member for Blainville-Deux-Montagnes, the former Solicitor General, was able to state in the House in reply to the hon. member for Leeds-Grenville at page 927 of *Hansard*, that there was a Featherbed File and was able to give some details about it one day after the Prime Minister denied any knowledge of such a file?

**Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General):** In so far as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police are concerned, records indicate that an aide memoire was prepared on November 16, 1977, and the deputy director general (Operations), RCMP security service, briefed the Solicitor General that day.

OWNED OR RENTED BUILDING SPACE

**Question No. 237—Mr. Herbert:**

How many square feet of building space was (a) owned (b) rented by all departments as at March 31, 1979, and what amount of the space was not occupied?

**Hon. Paul J. Cosgrove (Minister of Public Works):** In so far as the National Capital Commission is concerned: