

*Oral Questions*

## DISCUSSIONS WITH PUBLISHERS PRIOR TO DECISION TO INCREASE RATES

**Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont):** Mr. Speaker, my question would normally be for the Secretary of State, but he is not here today. Perhaps it should be directed to either the Postmaster General or to the minister responsible for matters concerning the Secretary of State. In view of the comment made a moment ago by the hon. member for Brandon-Souris as to possible legal action to declare invalid the proposed rate increases, and the very great concern expressed by the Canadian Periodical Publishers Association with respect to the deleterious impact of these further increases—there was the 25 per cent increase of last year, and now a 25 per cent increase as of April 1—can the minister indicate if any consultations took place with this important body, or with periodical publishers generally on whether they would be able to withstand this further increase? Since there was an order in council, there was no public discussion. If there was consultation, what was the result?

[Translation]

**Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Postmaster General):** Mr. Speaker, I specifically asked the question which has just been put to me by the deputy minister of the Post Office Department, Mr. Corkery, who told me that he had meetings with the Canadian Periodical Publishers Association and that apparently everything was to be done in accordance with our decision. I do not understand why that increase is now being challenged.

[English]

**Mr. MacDonald (Egmont):** Mr. Speaker, I hope the minister will consult again with his deputy minister. I hope he will also consult his colleague, the Secretary of State. I think the Secretary of State will indicate that serious problems are being created for the periodicals industry in this country. In view of the fact that the periodical publishers have stated clearly that they had no advance warning, in spite of the fact that at the time of the last increase they were promised sufficient warning, in terms of any contemplated increases, can the minister indicate why there is this contradiction? It appears that as far as the publishers are concerned, there has been no effective forewarning or consultation.

[Translation]

**Mr. Lamontagne:** Mr. Speaker, I think there must be some confusion somewhere, not only on the government side but also in the opposition because we have delayed the application of the increase for at least six months. When we met the representatives of the publishers association we told them that we were giving them a six-month delay so that they could make the necessary arrangements to cope with the increase.

[English]

**Mr. MacDonald (Egmont):** Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that there was previously a six-month delay because of the very real problems created for the publishing industry, would the minister agree to display that same spirit of assistance with

[Mr. Clark.]

a view to the April 1 increase, so there can be effective consultation with the industry and disastrous measures will not be taken which would, in effect, end the circulation of a number of important Canadian publications?

**Mr. Lamontagne:** Mr. Speaker, according to the information I have from my department, consultations have already taken place. I do not think there is any necessity for further consultation on that matter.

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## NATIONAL SECURITY

## GOVERNMENT POLICY RESPECTING SOVIET SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES IN CANADA

**Mr. Otto Jelinek (High Park-Humber Valley):** Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the majority of the cabinet, and in view of the reluctance of the Solicitor General to answer any questions, I would like to put my question to the Acting Prime Minister. It relates to my motion which exposed 14 additional members of the Soviet embassy who are, in fact, involved in KGB and GRU espionage activities in Canada, activities which may be very harmful to our national security.

I would, therefore, ask the Acting Prime Minister if he would explain to this House his government's policy with respect to known KGB or GRU operatives in Canada who continue to pose, under false pretences, as representatives of the Soviet Union's embassy staff.

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and President of Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, I believe the policy is fairly well understood. Action in the case of persons engaged in questionable or unacceptable practices is usually taken on the advice of the RCM Police. In some cases where such activity is suspected but evidence is not conclusive, no more action than a warning may be justified. Where the activities are clearly a threat to national security or are in violation of the Criminal Code, the evidence is based upon advice received from the RCMP. I believe each case has to be examined on its merits. The hon. member ought to be reassured by the action taken recently when 11 Soviet nationals were asked to leave the country.

## SCREENING OF SOVIET OFFICIALS IN CANADA

**Mr. Otto Jelinek (High Park-Humber Valley):** Mr. Speaker, I keep saying that that action was just the tip of the iceberg. My supplementary question is also directed to the Acting Prime Minister. Can he tell us whether new screening procedures have been initiated in respect of Soviet embassy staff replacements, and why does the government insist on continuing to issue hundreds of special travel permits to these deceitful individuals—they are deceitful, because they are posing as diplomats—which obviously frustrates the activities of our national security forces.