

## HOUSE OF COMMONS

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Tuesday, May 11, 1965

The House met at 2.30 p.m.

### SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES

#### STATEMENT ON INVOLVEMENT OF CANADIANS IN RUSSIAN ESPIONAGE ACTS

**Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, in response to a number of questions asked in the House yesterday concerning the expulsion of two members of the Soviet Embassy staff, I indicated that I would provide all the information that could appropriately be made public. I am glad to be able to do that today.

The information on which action was taken in this matter came to the security authorities not only from one of the Canadians approached, but also from other sources which I am sure the House will understand must be protected if our counter-espionage efforts are to continue to be successful, as they were in this instance. On security grounds it is not, therefore, in the public interest to give all the detailed information requested in the House yesterday. This is all the more true in this case since, while the security threat in this instance has been removed, the investigation is continuing. Nevertheless I shall, within the limits set by security considerations, give some additional information to that included in the press release issued on Saturday morning, May 8, which by its terms gave more information than is normally given in respect of matters of this kind.

Let me first explain, Mr. Speaker, the objectives of the Government's decision to expel the Soviet officials and to inform the Canadian public of that action. The objectives were three: one, to bring to an end the activity of certain members of the Soviet Embassy, the intent of which was clearly prejudicial to Canadian interest; two, to make clear to the Soviet Government that actions of this sort by members of their so-called diplomatic staff would not be tolerated; and three, to impress upon Canadians the need for constant vigilance when faced with approaches by Soviet officials. This was a very important objective, indeed, that we had in mind.

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These objectives have been met. Canadian interests have not been damaged.

In regard to the two individual cases mentioned in the press release, one Canadian mentioned co-operated conscientiously from the beginning with our security authorities. Far from being motivated by "illicit gain and greed", this conscientious and patriotic Canadian reported to our security authorities the very first approach made to him; and this information is not usually made public. He thereafter worked under the direction of our security authorities in his further dealings with the Soviet official. This action is certainly to be praised, not censured, for it provided our security authorities with invaluable information about Soviet methods of intelligence operations in Canada and the targets against which they directed their intelligence efforts. Certainly there can be no question of prosecution for wrongdoing in this case; quite the contrary.

In the other case mentioned in the communiqué the circumstances unfortunately were different. The person involved in this case is a civil servant in a very junior position in a non-sensitive department. His place of work is not in Ottawa. The person is at present on sick leave and is in fact gravely ill. The assistance which he gave the Soviet authorities was not related to his work as a civil servant—and he was a junior civil servant. Our security authorities knew of his activities, but for good security reasons did not confront him with them until last week, when the man in question began to give the police some useful information.

Once the decision was made to take action against the foreign officials and to make that action public, consideration was initiated to determine whether charges should be laid in this case. Until that determination is made it is not possible to give further information on this aspect of that case.

Let me emphasize that in both cases our security authorities received assistance, as the press release indicated, from a number of other conscientious and patriotic Canadians.

Questions were asked about the amounts and disposition of the money involved. The money, Mr. Speaker, was paid out to the two Canadians mentioned in the release in rela-