

[Translation]

MISCELLANEOUS PRIVATE BILLS

REFERENCE OF CERTAIN PETITIONS AND REPORTS THEREON TO STANDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Victor Forget (Saint-Michel) moved, seconded by Mr. H.-Pit Lessard (LaSalle):

That the petitions of Central Del Rio Oils Limited and Mic Mac Oils (1963) Ltd., tabled after the period stipulated by Standing Order 90, be referred to the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Private Bills and Standing Orders, with the third report of the clerk of petitions presented to the House on Friday, April 2, 1971, in order that the committee might be able to make the recommendations it deems advisable.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the please of the House to adopt this motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

[English]

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

HOUSE OF COMMONS

ASSURANCE THAT MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT NOT KEPT UNDER SURVEILLANCE BY ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Solicitor General whether he can give a simple guarantee to the House that there is presently no police or other government surveillance by electronic telephone devices or otherwise made or recorded in respect of Members of Parliament with regard to any aspect of the performance of their parliamentary duties?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean-Pierre Goyer (Solicitor General): Certainly not as members of parliament, Mr. Speaker.

[English]

Mr. Baldwin: Will the minister make a specific statement at this time that there will be no such surveillance made or carried on hereafter?

[Translation]

Mr. Goyer: Mr. Speaker, not in the performance of their duties as members of parliament.

[English]

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the minister. In view of his replies earlier this week regarding the actual procedure in use in terms of granting authorization for the gathering of dossiers and the use of wiretapping and other surveillance procedures, would the minister be prepared

Inquiries of the Ministry

to make a statement in order to clear up the considerable fears and uncertainties that have been created during the past few days?

[Translation]

Mr. Goyer: Mr. Speaker, it might not be clear in the hon. member's mind, but should he refer to questions and answers I think he will find some logic in what I said.

Mr. Pierre De Bané (Matane): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a very precise supplementary to the Solicitor General.

Are hon. members' telephone lines on the Hill watched?

Mr. Goyer: Mr. Speaker, I think one can draw appropriate conclusions from the answers I have already given.

[English]

USE OF ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE DEVICES BY NATIONAL DEFENCE EMPLOYEES

Mr. Thomas M. Bell (Saint John-Lancaster): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question which I would direct to the Minister of National Defence. Can the minister say whether in fact employees of his department are involved in any wiretapping that there may be and the use of any electronic devices of this nature? If so, is he involved in any decisions on whether or not wiretapping should take place?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I can respond quite categorically to the second question by saying that I am not involved. While the Canadian Armed Forces are very versatile, I do not think that the capacity to wiretap is one of the qualities that they have.

Mr. Bell: Will the minister say categorically that no employees of his department are involved in any of this wiretapping?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, again I say quite categorically that I have not been involved in it.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): If hon. members will please contain themselves, I know of no capacity of this kind, nor in fact whether there has ever been one in the department. However, I shall be glad to inquire.

Mr. Peters: Mr. Speaker, I wish to raise a point of order in regard to the answer given by the Solicitor General to the previous question whether or not telephones on Parliament Hill were or were not tapped. This matter is within your jurisdiction, Mr. Speaker. In my opinion the Solicitor General should not be permitted to say that this is none of our business and that we can check some of his replies. I take no objection to the question about the dossiers. I have had one for 20 years. If the RCMP want to know where I am going, they can phone me up and I will tell them.