

Statement by Prime Minister on Security

be secret and what public, is finally a matter of political decision and judgment. The effective supremacy of the civilian authority must never be compromised in this matter.

I welcome the spirit as expressed in the statement of the Prime Minister. I assure him and the house that we share the sense of importance that he attaches to all questions of national security and individual rights raised by the presentation of this report. I look forward to giving fuller and further consideration to the report, and to a more detailed consideration of it when we next have an opportunity to do so, presumably in the fall.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to express my thanks to the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) for his courtesy in making a copy of his statement and a copy of the abridged report of the Royal Commission on Security available to me. I have not had a chance to study it in great detail, because some interesting events have intervened which have taken my mind off the report.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): But I have had an opportunity to examine the recommendations contained in the report. I commend the government for deciding to make the report public, even in its abridged form. I think there would have been a good deal of misunderstanding and even some suspicion had the government not made the report public. I believe they made a wise decision in the action they have taken.

We all recognize that dealing with the matter of security is a very difficult one indeed because there are two basic principles which must be reconciled. The task of parliament, and certainly the task of the government, is to find a balance between these two principles. The first principle, of course, is that the government is charged with the responsibility of maintaining the security and integrity of the state against subversion, and any efforts on the part of those who seek to change our society by resorting to force. We all recognize that if the democratic process is to survive we must take steps to prevent any person or group of persons in our country, or any who are sent from outside the country, trying to bring about changes in our society by resorting to violence. But against that lies another fundamental principle, that we must guarantee the rights of the individual so that under the guise of security no person can receive

[Mr. Stanfield.]

unfair treatment, can be tried by Star Chamber methods or be labelled as a security risk without an adequate opportunity to defend himself or herself. They must know the charges against them and have the due process of law applied to their particular case.

Certainly no one in this parliament wants to see any individual adversely affected on the basis of idle gossip or malicious reports that are completely unfounded, and have all of this done under the mask of national security. Of course, it was because instances like this did arise that the government agreed to set up the commission. I think the report has dealt very adequately with the situation.

There are a number of recommendations in the report. I am certainly not going to deal with them all and shall mention only two of them. First of all I refer to the recommendation of the royal commission that there be a civilian, non-police agency because, as they point out, there is a wide difference between police and security duties. Without any reflection whatsoever on the very excellent service the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have performed, there is a great difference between law enforcement and the carrying out of the duties of a security service. There is a difference in the type of training required, the form of recruitment and the structure of a police force, on the one hand, and a security agency on the other.

● (2:40 p.m.)

I submit that it takes a certain degree of training and sophistication to recognize the difference between honest dissent and a desire to subvert our democratic form of society. Therefore, I think that the recommendation of the royal commission for the setting up of a civilian non-police agency has a great deal of merit, and I am extremely disappointed that the government has rejected this proposal out of hand. I hope that when discussions take place later the Prime Minister will give the reasons why this recommendation has been rejected. I would even venture to hope that the government might reconsider this decision because I think there is much to be said for having the kind of non-police agency which was recommended by the commission.

The second major recommendation is the setting up of a Security Review Board, and I cannot agree with the Prime Minister when he says that the present procedure has worked satisfactorily. I do not think it has