

With these thoughts in mind I am convinced that the role of the security service should be one of defence. Therefore I suggest that the term "defence" as contained in section 91(7) of the BNA Act be defined to include the term "security intelligence" and the latter term be defined tentatively along these lines, much in keeping with the Official Secrets Act:

Security intelligence is that information relating to the activities of persons, organizations and foreign powers which may be prejudicial to the safety or interests of the state.

Assuming we can have these two terms defined by law, the stage is then set for parliament to enact a statute relating to the security service, thus establishing the type of service it requires and its governing provisions.

An organization involved in such sensitive and important work should have a clear charter issued by parliament. The charter, which should not be so restrictive as to render the security service impotent, must be in the statute. The function of that service should be the acquisition of security intelligence as defined, which in turn is a role of defence. Thus, not only do we achieve constitutional authority not envisaged by the authors of the BNA Act, but also parliamentary control by way of statute and the elimination of the existing jurisdictional problem, which is perhaps the most important of all. Finally, continuity is established.

The security service must be raised in status comparable to its function and made sufficiently attractive to induce the professionals required, something which a military or para-military type of organization finds difficult to offer.

The British learned long ago that when they gave the responsibility for security intelligence to the police, the police in turn engaged specialists. A classic or conventional police service could not cope with the problem.

Freedom of movement and flexibility of mind are two fundamental terms in the intelligence world. Military and para-military organizations find it difficult to achieve the flexibility of mind required of a security service for the very reason that the whole concept is the rule by rank.

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The military rank structure, even at officer level in the military orbit, militates against the operational levels functions and initiatives required of a security service. While it is always possible to operate at a lower level in a military format, it is next to impossible to do so at a higher level than status permits. Excepting support staff, this should warrant attention.

The size of the security service largely depends upon its targets, but a service that is not held in check by expert senior administrators can potentially load itself to the point of saturation, saturating both itself and its targets.

It is very tempting for some to avoid, at all costs, the taking of a calculated risk, but such a risk must be taken. It is obviously far better to have a small competent service than one which is unable to determine what is important and that which is not important and divide the two. The laws of Parkinson must be kept in mind.

Security

There is one area which, quite frankly, baffles me. The Solicitor General has a group known as the Security Planning and Analysis Branch, SPAB, which has undergone a metamorphosis of name changes since its conception a few years ago. If its title reflects its function, it can only imply the present government lacks confidence in the capability of our national police force.

In no other federal organization can be found such an invoked barrier between a department and its minister. One has to ask, in assessing Colonel Bourne's organization, what are its standards of qualifications? How are they set, and by whom? What are its objectives, its terms of reference, and have these objectives been met? Unless positive answers are forthcoming, and its role justified, there seems no alternative than to get rid of it. Certainly since it has been established I know of no particular service it has achieved with distinction. A series of solicitors general and other ministers of the Crown do not appear to have been particularly well briefed or served by this organization.

It is quite interesting to note, by checking as far as I have been able, the type of people who have been seconded. To be specific, there was a very highly qualified, in the technical sense, employee of Bell Canada. What would his function be? There are other specialists whose role is unclear to me. Mr. Speaker, the very existence of SPAB, under its present circumstances, to my mind is nothing less than an affront to the RCMP and, to my mind, it should be eliminated. I suspect that many—

Mr. Blaker: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I most sincerely regret interrupting the hon. member whose comments I generally find worth attention. May I repeat to him, however, what the Solicitor General (Mr. Fox) said this afternoon, and what I believe the hon. member himself has said on previous occasions, that the very information he is asking for has been made available to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs by briefings of that section of the Secretariat to the Solicitor General. Those briefings will again be available in forthcoming weeks when the estimates of the Department of the Solicitor General will be before that committee. It seems to me inappropriate to persist in arguing that they are not available when they have been offered no later than this afternoon by the Solicitor General.

Mr. MacKay: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the intervention by my friend. All I can say in response is that while we have been assured on different occasions that information is available about this and other groups, it has been apparent in recent months that not even the ministers concerned with these people have been fully aware of the extent of what they are doing and have done. I think the hon. member would concede that.

I think it is quite fair for me to comment that this particular group, in my opinion—and all members are entitled to their opinion in this House—has not particularly fulfilled any notable or any effective function. Is it a channelling group? Is it an organizational group? We have been told it is, yet