

*Security Intelligence Service*

What does "ultimately lead to the destruction or overthrow by violence of" mean? How far ultimately down the road must we go? The Bill does not tell us that. The narrow definition which is contained in (e) of the amendment put forward by the Hon. Member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Lachine East indicates that the covert unlawful acts must be directed to the overthrow of the existing constitutionally established system of Government in Canada. They will not ultimately lead to the destruction, but to covert acts which will, in fact, lead directly to the overthrow of the constitutionally-elected Government.

• (1640)

The wording which the Minister is imposing on the House is wording that can only lead this agency to have such police state powers that it must be unacceptable to every Member of the House with democratic beliefs. I am surprised that the Minister should even have thought of this particular kind of provision. Surely, with his background he should have been more concerned than others about the kind of police state possibilities that exist in the security service. When the Bill deals with an activity which might ultimately lead to the destruction or overthrow of a government by violence, there is no limit to the activities which might ultimately lead to do something. How far down the road do we have to be "ultimately lead"? That is the kind of wording which is in the Bill proposed by the Minister and the Government. The fact is that this wording gives the security service far broader powers than were ever contemplated by most Members of the House.

If we are to pass this Bill, we should get rid of these provisions and accept the amendment which was proposed by the Hon. Member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Lachine East. That amendment makes some sense. It ties down, with a little bit of precision, the powers of the security service. It ties down, with a little sensible precision, threats to the security of Canada.

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg-Birds Hill):** Mr. Speaker, in speaking to this crucial clause of Bill C-9, which involves the question of definitions of subversion as opposed to dissent, I would like to begin by saying that my attitude for some years now has been one which favoured the separating of security work from the work of the RCMP. I would like to begin by saying why I believe that.

As a result of my own personal experience, I have gained a great deal of respect for police work. I was born into a world in which my maternal grandfather was the chief of police in my home town of Transcona. His son, my uncle, followed him into police work and was in the RCMP for some 25 years. I have always had a great deal of respect for the work done by the police and for police people in general. Also, I came to know a great many of them through my involvement in the militia. And so it began to disturb me, when I became involved in questions of political import, that the people for whom I had the greatest respect, in this case RCMP people, were also being asked to perform work which I considered quite unsavoury. They were being asked not to enforce the law, but to do

things which from time to time constituted harassment and unnecessary intrusion into the lives of law-abiding citizens.

I came to the view that this kind of work ought to be separated from police work in general. When I am stopped on the highway, for whatever reason, I want to see a person who is enforcing the law, not someone who is associated with all these other matters. I felt that the RCMP was coming into disrepute as a result of its security work. I would like to see that work separated, because I would like to see a police force which we could respect in this country, and I expect that that kind of work will go on, no matter what kind of amendments we make to this Bill, because it is the nature of governments to do so. That is why I still favour in principle the separating of those two functions.

In spite of my cynicism about the future, the House had an opportunity, when bringing this new service into being, to correct some of the mistakes of the past and to admit that there has not been a great deal of sophistication or, for that matter, sound political judgment in the matter of who was simply engaged in legitimate forms of dissent and who was truly a threat to the security of Canada.

We had an opportunity throughout this debate—and it is an opportunity which I genuinely feel has been missed—to focus on what is meant by security, to focus on what are threats to security, to narrow them down and to give our security service a mandate and a focus which respects the full breadth of what it means to be a democracy. We have not done that. Instead, the definitions in Clause 2 provide the legal framework for the leeway which has always been there in an illegal way in the past. We could have taken this opportunity to define what security means, thereby ensuring that all the people who have been unnecessarily watched, unnecessarily harassed and unnecessarily paid attention to in the past will never again be in that situation. That is what we could have done. Instead, we have a situation in which the previous leeway is being institutionalized. Ironically, we are providing the legal framework in 1984 for the kind of vision about which George Orwell so rightly was concerned some 40 years ago.

People may say, "Well, don't be ridiculous. We don't plan these sorts of things". However, we are not legislating only for this Government or even for the next government. We are laying the framework for what will constitute threats to the security of Canada for a long time to come. In that respect, I share the view of the Canadian Council of Churches that Bill C-9 is too broad in scope and vague in definition to be acceptable in its present form. Bill C-9 would permit intrusive surveillance in the form of the electronic bugging of conversations, surreptitious entry of offices and homes, invasion of confidential records, mail openings, and infiltrations of social organizations, including churches, agencies, members and employees. It would also make possible the surveillance or interference of many lawful activities. I share the Council's view that that kind of broad permission is inconsistent with the vision of the kind of Canada that all of us ought to be seeking and in which we want to live.