

In 1969 the Royal Commission on Security mildly criticized the RCMP's security and counter-espionage activities and firmly proposed a wholesale reorganization. In 1971 the Security and Intelligence Branch of the RCMP became a "strong, autonomous and well financed organization" which was still part of the force, but civilian oriented. John Starnes, a diplomat, from the Ministry of External Affairs, was its head.

The change was significant. Before, the security service recruited its members from the regular force and even then slowly; a man had to be five years a Mountie before he was considered. Under the new organization, agents are sometimes recruited directly from college campuses (though they must still serve their five years) or, like the chief, from civilian professions.

The Forces, having said a reluctant farewell to its Siberian huskies, was also less reluctantly getting rid of its long rows of grey filing cases. In 1970 Commissioner Higgitt announced the construction of a computer service which would cost \$5 million a year and which would be linked to Provincial police in Canada. It has swift relays with the FBI in the United States. It processes in seconds information on stolen cars and fugitives — which had formerly taken days. As the world was learning, however, technology alone could not provide answers to all of the problems of the seventies.

The RCMP was changing, but for most Cana-

The original Mounties wore "pill box" caps or white cork helmets, moustaches and an occasional beard; scarlet jackets and flesh-coloured breeches and white buckskin gauntlets.



dians it was important that it remain recognizably itself. When the Federal Government decided rather casually to replace the Royal initials — RCMP — on patrol cars and buildings with the more explicit word, "POLICE," there was a fierce reaction.

The Prime Minister said that "The dislike of the new signs by Canadians — western Canadians in particular — has been communicated to us clearly and we have listened." RCMP went back in place.

Ex-Corporal Ramsay's critique of the Force in *Maclean's* reflected once more the swift pace and hard pressure of change. Men — young men in particular — were no longer tolerant of the traditional simply because it was traditional.

And at a time when more and more of them were college graduates, there was less and less willingness to wait years before being allowed to make independent judgment openly.

The Ramsay articles initiated a series of questions in Parliament and in mid-summer the Solicitor General, Jean-Pierre Goyer, met with Mr. Ramsay and, subsequently, promised to study the many questions raised.

Mr. Ramsay decided also to do something on his own. Last fall he became an organizer for Canada's third largest union, the Public Service Alliance, with the announced intention of organizing a union of the Mounties.