

in the best interests of Canada decide that these people are a bad influence and therefore this group is a bad influence and that by simply holding a meeting with such a person from such a country, that group would then become subject to surveillance and investigation in this country? I think that strikes at the very root of the democratic right that we in the country thought we had, the right to meet in public assembly and to discuss any topic we wish to discuss in public assembly.

● (1630)

By leaving the definition of the interests of Canada vague, ill-defined and almost not defined, and by leaving those decisions to be made by the security service itself, a service which does not properly report to this House and is not properly accountable to this House, a very scary situation is created. In order to have a better clause, we at this time move to have Clause 2 deleted, and that is what we are proposing to do by this amendment.

Mr. Don Blenkarn (Mississauga South): Mr. Speaker, this particular clause of the Bill involves definitions. Grouped for debate are Motions Nos. 2, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9. I wish to direct your interest to Motion No. 5, Mr. Speaker, a motion placed on the Order Paper by a former Solicitor General for the Government, the Hon. Member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Lachine East (Mr. Allmand). I think that this particular motion gets lost in what I might call a ridiculous motion, it being Motion No. 2 which had been moved by the Hon. Member for Burnaby (Mr. Robinson), a motion which seeks to strike out the entire clause. Frankly, I think that was an unreasonable motion and that it should perhaps have been disallowed in the first place.

What is most important is that in presenting his Motion No. 5, the Hon. Member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Lachine East deals with the central issue of this Bill, and that is the vagueness with which the powers of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service are defined. As you will know, Sir, Clause 2 attempts to define "threats to the security of Canada". We wind up with the requirement for another subclause, because "threats to the security of Canada" have suddenly become something detrimental to the interests of Canada. I do not know what is detrimental to the interests of Canada. Frankly, most of the time I think that this Government is detrimental to the interests of Canada. Indeed, a million and a half people who are presently unemployed think that this Government is detrimental to the interests of Canada. Taking a broad look at the Bill, that would presumably allow this security service to investigate everything and everyone.

The amendment put forward by the Hon. Member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Lachine East specifically and narrowly defines in a proper fashion what the interests of Canada are and what threats to the security of Canada are. Rather than dealing with espionage or sabotage that is detrimental, the Hon. Member specifically suggests that the definition in Clause 2 be confined only to espionage or sabotage directed against Canada and not espionage or sabotage that is detrimental to the interests of Canada, whatever those may be.

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That is the Hon. Member's first suggestion and it is clear and understandable. The gobbledegook that is contained within the Bill unnecessarily broadens the grounds for investigation to something far beyond what I think is proper.

The second suggestion made by the Hon. Member is in paragraph (b) of his amendment which reads:

(b) foreign activities within Canada which are harmful to the vital national interests of Canada,—

Paragraph (b) of the Minister's clause reads:

(b) foreign influenced activities within or relating to Canada that are detrimental to the interests of Canada and are clandestine or deceptive or involve a threat to any person,—

If any activities involve threats to persons, those responsible can be prosecuted under the Criminal Code. The fuzzy definition that we are expected to approve in the draft Bill that was returned from committee is improper. The tight wording proposed by the former Solicitor General makes sense and should be adopted.

Throughout this whole debate, we should look very carefully at the suggestions made by the Hon. Member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Lachine East. His suggestions are sensible and tie down the definition of "threats to the security of Canada" in a precise fashion. That definition is tied down to the point where such activities must be related to what is happening within Canada. As the Bill presently reads, it allows investigation of all kinds of activities rather than just those activities which are related to or in support of threats of violence in the country. Again, it is important that the amendment which narrowly limits the grounds on which threats to the security of the country may be investigated by this service be considered.

I believe we ought to take the suggestion made by the Hon. Member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Lachine East very seriously. That Hon. Member has had experience as Solicitor General of Canada. He is interested in the whole problem. He does not produce a blanket "get-rid-of-the-clause" amendment that lacks reason. He produces for us a cogent, well argued and well defined amendment that makes it possible for us to say that if that amendment is accepted this Bill will be a better Bill.

I know that the only change to the Bill from the way it was presented at second reading and altered in committee that was accepted by the Government thus far was the insertion of the word "serious" to paragraph (c) of Clause 2 which falls under the definition of "threats of the security of Canada". That is not good enough. We cannot allow this clause to go unchallenged. We must have the narrow definitions that are required as presented by the Hon. Member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Lachine East.

For example, Sir, paragraph (d) of clause 2 reads as follows:

(d) activities directed toward undermining by covert unlawful acts,—

And it goes on to read:

—or directed toward or intended ultimately to lead to the destruction or overthrow by violence of, the constitutionally established system of government in Canada,—