

Security Intelligence Service

agency, to do the same work that today is being done under the aegis of the RCMP. The reporting mechanism is through the Commissioner of the RCMP. The Government position, in essence, is that there should be a separate civilian agency. Our position, and I believe it is also the position of the NDP, is that it should be left under the aegis of the RCMP.

Let us consider what the witnesses said. The Attorneys General attended the committee and said:

The provincial Attorneys General note that the need for a new separate security service is open to question.

● (1950)

The Attorney General of Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick have all sent telegrams to the members of the justice committee making known their opposition to a new civilian agency. The Attorney General of British Columbia actually came and gave evidence before us with respect to Clause 3. Among other things he said:

It seems to me to make a lot more sense go build on the institutional credibility that is already established, to use the umbrella of confidence that there is there, and to direct it and make it an effective security agency and make it an accountable one. I believe the Royal Canadian Mounted Police can be made an effective security force.

The Attorney General for Ontario in a speech on February 7, 1984, said this:

But I find extremely unattractive and fundamentally unsustainable the assertion in this legislation that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police would exceed a statutorily defined mandate, evade the formal external review mechanisms, thwart ministerial accountability and abuse its defined statutory powers. The history and tradition of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police suggests very clearly to me that once there is an end to the absence of governmental direction and responsibility, which gave rise to the RCMP wrongdoing, the force will respond willingly and effectively to the wishes of the Canadian people as reflected in the new legislation.

The Attorney General of Saskatchewan submitted an extensive brief dealing largely with separation of the security service. At page 14 he states:

There is no indication, however, that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, as it is presently being managed, by its senior officers, is not being responsive to the needs identified by MacKenzie and McDonald for flexibility and change.

This is the evidence of people who have real expertise in the area. It is evidence we heard at committee, the result of which came back to this House by way of amendments. That is why we plead with the back-benchers on the government side to simply read the record, because I believe if they did they would be prepared to turn to the Minister and say "Mr. Minister, with no disrespect to you, we do believe that we could accept these additional protections where there is doubt".

Mr. John Russell, the Executive Director of the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association said the following in his testimony in committee on May 10, 1984:

The Senate committee and McDonald commission cite essentially two reasons for civilianization. One is that the intelligence personnel of a security agency require different training and abilities from those RCMP officers have; and, secondly, the police hierarchy is incompatible with the strict process of review and control that is envisioned for a civilian security agency.

I think the lie is given to the first item by the fact that the RCMP security section is going to be given over to the new security service. So we are left with

the conclusion that either the RCMP does train competent personnel, in this case, or that the service will begin its life with unsuitable employees. In our view we would prefer that the Security Service, if there is to be a Security Service, should remain within the purview of the RCMP where threats to national security are more likely to be placed in a realistic context; that is, they will be assessed in relation to other criminal activity and not isolated.

I believe the coup de gras for the argument of the Government is that in the justice committee on May 23, 1984, the Solicitor General of Canada (Mr. Kaplan) made a very important admission. I quote the question put to the Minister by the Hon. Member for Vancouver South (Mr. Fraser):

The fact is, Mr. Minister, that for many months now—for many years in fact—since the revelations in the House of Commons in 1977 and the action which was taken consequently, the security service has been working as a part of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The commissioner has been reporting to the Solicitor General effectively, competently and in a manner in which I am sure you would agree meets with your approval. You testify that this has been done in a manner which meets the appropriate sensibilities of the Canadian public. Is that not so?

The answer of the Solicitor General was, "Yes, that is so". There we have it, Mr. Speaker, right from the Minister's own mouth. The people working in security presently under the RCMP are meeting all of the needs of the Minister and, therefore, if our amendments were accepted, it could very easily be that the RCMP in the future would operate under the statutory sections covering court orders for warrants, the inspector general would monitor and keep tabs on what the RCMP were doing in that area, as well as the review committee, which consists of Privy Councillors who are not active in the House or the Senate. It would be very easy to amend this legislation in a step-wise fashion. This is really a revolutionary change as compared to an evolutionary change. When it is put in the context of how deeply so many people feel about the RCMP, and the trust they have in it, we just should not be making that move to a civilian agency.

I have had the moving experience, Mr. Speaker, of talking to many of my constituents who are from eastern European countries. Indeed, my neighbour for many years still has the tattoo on his arm. They speak from first-hand knowledge about how a separate civilian agency can get out of control. If we talk to those people from South America we find it does not matter whether the Government is an extreme left wing government or an extreme right wing government, they create secret services which have the potential of growing totally out of control. As we know from our debate on the definition of "threats", particularly with respect to domestic subversion, this is a possibility, albeit this Minister does not intend that. It could happen just as Watergate developed in the United States, starting with President Kennedy. One can see how subsequent administrations increasingly took the power and abused it more and more, until Watergate occurred. That is what could happen here, Mr. Speaker and I sincerely ask Hon. Members opposite to take a good look at this, because just a few amendments could fix this legislation dramatically.

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I have not spoken in this debate on Bill C-9 because I wanted to listen to the comments being made by Hon. Members on both sides. I would like to try to put into perspective from my point of