

*Routine Proceedings*

Toward the end of the preface of the introduction the former Solicitor General says: "But confidence in the system, that is the security system, can be improved by providing Parliament with more information on security issues".

All I can say this morning is that this statement by this minister is a profound disappointment. There is virtually nothing in here that will inform Parliament or the Canadian public on matters referring to intelligence and security.

I say that knowing full well there are certain matters in the intelligence and security system that cannot be divulged either to Parliament publicly or to the general public as a whole. Quite frankly most experts, most good books on the subject, will argue very forcefully that upwards of 80 per cent, to 90 per cent of the information that security and intelligence services have world-wide in democracies could be released to their legislatures, and through their legislatures to the public, without any diminution whatever in maintaining the security of those democratic countries.

I offer that to the minister. I hope that in his next report in a year's time if we are still sitting here—and I said if we are still sitting here—that he will come forward with a document that has more substance to it, that will clearly inform not only this side of the House but his own members on matters of national security. Having said that, I want to get to the substance of my remarks which will be brief.

We in the New Democratic Party welcome this first of 117 recommendations made to the government by an all-party committee some two years ago.

As my hon. friend across has said in his ministerial statement on national security, the world has indeed changed in the last 24 months. But complacency still remains one of our worst enemies in the face of the very real threats of terrorism and industrial espionage.

This statement on national security and all others that will follow in the years to come must remain part of the process of government accountability as well as publicity.

A year ago the parliamentary Sub-committee on National Security was created and the first problem it confronted was disclosure, tight-lipped government officials hiding behind the argument of national security in order to dodge questions of accountability.

There is a way to keep our country safe, while at the same time preserving the fundamental principles of openness in a democracy. It has been done elsewhere and it can be done here.

This document is more interesting by what it omits than by what it contains. This government has the duty and obligation to disclose to the committee all arrangements made between CSIS and foreign countries.

What memoranda of understanding does CSIS have with its American counterpart, the FBI, or the National Security Agency through CSCE, or the CIA for that matter, or any other foreign intelligence agencies, namely Mossad, if there are in fact any memoranda of agreement or understanding with those agencies.

Does the government not know that foreign intelligence services are operating in Canada? The Victor Ostrovsky/Mossad affair is a case in point. Israeli intelligence officers entered Canada and intimidated a Canadian citizen, chased him around this city, followed him to Toronto and harassed him. Despite a dozen appeals by this citizen, CSIS took no direct action to protect this individual, or at least we do not know whether CSIS did or not. Only a municipal police force showed any willingness to assist him. All the government did was to slap an Israeli diplomat's wrist over the whole affair. This government must answer for this particular negligence.

We must also demand accountability on how the CSIS Act has affected us at home. Does CSIS share information about Canadians with Employment and Immigration, External Affairs or National Health and Welfare, to name only some departments?

Canadians know barely anything of the Canadian intelligence system through no fault of their own. What about the most secretive of all agencies, the Communications Security Establishment? There is not a single law that regulates it. What does it do, what powers does it have, whom does it serve, what method does it use to gather information, what is its budget, who makes sure