

# KEEPING TABS ON THE NEW LEFT: Informers help the RCMP manipulate Canadian protest groups

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The smoke from Andy Moxley's cigarette adds to the stale, sour stench of his room. At first glance, Moxley, 32, appears to hold strong interests in progressive causes. His wall posters scream of injustice and struggle—"Ban the cruise," "Say No to Apartheid" and "Solidarity with the Struggle in El Salvador." But Moxley wears many hats.

He fought for five years—Command Airborne Six in Cypress, did a two-year stint as prison guard at Kingston penitentiary, and now leads a student life—studying communications at Carleton University, Ottawa.

He's volunteered for political groups, including an El Salvador solidarity committee and the peace movement.

And he's spied on them for the RCMP.

Moxley's revelation last July that he informed on Ottawa and Toronto peace coalitions, was an untimely embarrassment for the Canadian government.

Solicitor General Robert Kaplan was on the hot seat, defending his bill to create a new security service to replace the RCMP's security branch. But criticism was

Using a personal set of stiff criteria, Moxley said he cleared the Ottawa group of Cuban and Soviet influences.

strong. Opposition across the political spectrum said bill C-157 created a secret monolith with the ability to pry into Canadian private lives and nip political dissent in the bud.

Kaplan emphasized the bill's safeguards.

The bill defines how security agents must apply for a judicial warrant to use "intrusive techniques" such as tapping phones, opening mail, secretly entering premises to install "bugs", and gaining access to government collected information on health and tax records.

But Moxley's untimely appearance and press coverage gave Canadians a glimpse behind the bill's legal clauses, into the real world of RCMP interaction and friction with political groups.

That vast, undefined appendage of any security service, its network of informers, is completely ignored in bill C-157. And regulations over the use of informers, arguably the most intrusive of all information gathering techniques are conspicuously missing.

The use of informers is crucial to feeding the RCMP's bank of knowledge. While electronic eavesdropping techniques are improving, a well-placed informer knows many people, their plans and politics. The costs and risks of installing bugs and transcribing recordings are avoided.

In fact, one important reason why bill C-157 gives the new security service access to government data is to enable it to identify potential informers.

Before the federal government's royal commission on the RCMP, the McDonald Commission, exploded the illegal practices, the RCMP obtained confidential health records secretly. It learned of an individual's emotional problems, homosexuality or perhaps treatment for mental illness. Potential informers were thus humiliated or pressured into cooperation.

Other recruitment methods include long interrogations, reminding the person of a criminal record and money offers. Many informers, such as Moxley, volunteer their services out of a sense of patriotism. Others want to inform on their political enemies.

A security agency is as valuable as its network of informers. Once Moxley was established as a participant in the Ottawa peace coalition, he was able to identify people in photos of demonstrations, and discuss their roles and whether he thought they were dangerous.

Moxley felt he played an important role for Canada, looking for foreign influences in the Ottawa El Salvador Solidarity group. He could spot a foreign infiltrator because they would mimic beliefs they didn't really hold, he said.

