

amendments in committee that would narrow the effective scope of the mandate that would ensure that law-abiding Canadians engaged, for example, in the support of liberation movements in Central America, or a church group which chooses to send money to the African National Congress in South Africa, would not potentially be the subject of the intrusive techniques under the Bill.

We tried in committee to narrow the powers which would be available to the service. Certainly, as we proceed with report stage and the amendments which I have tabled on behalf of my Party, we will be indicating the extent to which we believe the powers proposed in this legislation constitute any serious threat to the fundamental civil liberties of all Canadians.

We have proposed that there must be a role for Members of Parliament to play in the oversight process. It must be an effective role to ensure that the new civilian security service, which is shrouded in such secrecy, does not in fact become a political instrument in the hands of the government of the day.

Those are the fundamental areas of concern with respect to the legislation. I should indicate that in raising these questions we are reflecting the deeply-held apprehensions, indeed the fears, of a broad cross section of Canadian society. It could be the Canadian Council of Churches representing 12 major church groups across the country. It could be the Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Canadian Labour Congress, environmental groups or peace groups. It could be civil liberties groups, such as the Canadian Civil Liberties Associations which has made very strong representations on this legislation. Its general counsel as late as this morning indicated that the Bill in its present form, as adopted by the committee, poses a very profound threat to the civil liberties of all Canadians. It could be *la ligue des droits et libertés* in the Province of Quebec, a broadly-based group of men and women concerned about the threat which this legislation poses. I see Quebec back-benchers laughing at that suggestion, indicating that the concerns of *la ligue des droits* with respect to this legislation should not be taken seriously. Certainly I know that it has members throughout that province. Indeed, as recently as last Friday it held a press conference in the City of Montreal to express its anger at the manner in which the Government is attempting to proceed with this legislation.

● (1210)

It flies in the face of the sensibilities of Canadians who insist that we do not want a new secret agency that would have unprecedented powers, powers unprecedented in any western industrialized country. It would spy on the lives of innocent Canadians. As I indicated earlier, it would spy on Canadians by looking at their income tax records, by examining their medical records and by breaking into their homes, businesses and offices.

During the course of report stage and certainly during third reading, we intend to set out very clearly for the record our profound reservations with respect to this Bill. We have seen abuses historically of civil liberties. In 1970 we saw the proclamation of the War Measures Act in this country by the

Security Intelligence Service

same Government which now comes before us and asks us to trust it with the powers it is seeking in this Bill once it passes. Its record does not warrant the trust it is seeking from Canadians. In the course of continued debate over the next few weeks and months, we will certainly be making clear our reasons for fundamentally rejecting the premises of this Bill.

Hon. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South): Mr. Speaker, I have to say first that I am disturbed at the implications of the preliminary ruling of the Chair. I am concerned that amendments that this Party put forward at committee will not be allowed to come before the House. I want it very clear on the record exactly what some of these proposed amendments are that we would bring in and which were brought in at committee stage.

The first amendment deals with whether it is appropriate under the circumstances to remove the security service from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. If we have the chance, that will be argued in some detail. At committee stage, one thing that was argued as a consequence of questions which were asked of the Solicitor General (Mr. Kaplan) was whether a case had been made by the Government for the removal of the security service from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. It was pointed out in committee that both the Mackenzie Commission and the McDonald Commission looked backwards to events of many years ago, events in the late sixties and early seventies. If Hon. Members care to look at the record of the committee hearings, they will see that I put this question to the Solicitor General at that time, and I quote:

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 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?

That is the question I asked of the Solicitor General. The negative of all that was the reason that it was proposed that the security service be removed from the aegis of the RCMP. I asked the Solicitor General whether the security service under the RCMP for many years has been reporting effectively, competently and “in a manner in which I am sure you would agree meets with your approval”. I said “You testified that this has been done in a manner which meets the appropriate sensibilities of the Canadian public. Is that not so?” That was my question. The Solicitor General replied:

Yes, that is so.

The indication of the preliminary ruling of Mr. Speaker means that we could not vote on that issue, the argument being that it is somehow foreign to the main principle of the Bill. It is very curious that that is not what the Solicitor General spoke about as being the main purpose of the Bill at second reading. If I get a chance later, I will refer to that.

The motion to amend Clause 4 put forward by myself on behalf of my Party deals directly with whether or not the Director of the security service should be appointed at pleasure. That means that he is appointed by the Government.