

*Supply—Justice*

would have to give the house an answer with respect to every organization or every individual named.

Then indeed you would have a witch hunt, if you like. In the first place, you would have names being named on a basis that would possibly be unfair to the individual or the organization concerned. In addition, as I have said, the information that has been carefully built up over the years, including the sources of this information, would be rendered practically valueless. I am indeed surprised at what my hon. friend from Bonavista-Twillingate has said. He had some responsibility for many years as a very senior civil servant closely connected with this work, and later as a cabinet minister he assumed a different sort of collective responsibility. It is indeed surprising to think it has taken him all this time to come to the point of view he has put forward and which I am rejecting. I have never, when in opposition, said that this should be done.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I never suggested, and I would never have used the word, that any agency of government should give the names of subversive organizations, because if there are any subversive organizations the government should prosecute them. However, there are communist front organizations—everybody knows this quite well—which are not classed as subversive. They have a legal existence in this country and have not been made illegal. They are generally known to sophisticated members of the public and officials of government departments. The suggestion that in some way the security of the country would be jeopardized by admitting publicly what we all know as a matter of fact is, I think, quite wrong. I rose merely to say that I never suggested subversive organizations be named, because I realize how ridiculous that suggestion would be.

**Mr. Fisher:** I feel it would be ridiculous too, Mr. Chairman, but I should like to come back to the minister. He is, for example, changing the definition of obscenity in the Criminal Code in an effort to enable the country to cope with the menace of indecent books, and that sort of thing. He is trying to set out a better definition so we can have something that will be more operative. Today we lack a definition of the subversive types of organizations, the genuine security risks. Surely the minister must be the first to recognize the anomaly when we talk about communist organizations in this little brochure, while at the same time we have a political situation in this country where the communist party and communist candidates are quite legitimate.

So long as this situation prevails I think we need a reassessment, often and regularly. It is nice, from a cloak and dagger point of view or the sort of quick look you take at magazines on the newsstand which suggest that this sort of thing is threatening us, to believe that this magnificent red shield is protecting us from the menace.

I should like to know more about the menace from which we are being protected in the light of the fact, too, that we may have to depend upon the integrity and honesty of the minister himself in the assurances he gives us. I cannot see why, as elected representatives, we cannot know more about the standards of what is subversive, what is a security risk.

In so far as the point made by the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate is concerned, there are a host of organizations which have had the label "commie" pinned on them. I can think of a number of unions that have had that label pinned on them, and a number of cultural organizations. If the minister suggests that by keeping things secret while the gossip runs abroad he is protecting people from a witch hunt, then I think he is putting up a rather shallow defence.

**Mr. Fulton:** I do not know that there is a great deal more I can add. I respect the point of view of my hon. friend and his sincerity in seeking to get what one could call a standard definition of subversive. Perhaps the point at issue between us therefore really is whether or not we can get a standard definition of "subversive", and I doubt that very much. It is for that reason that the responsibility for judging as to the suitability or otherwise of the applicant—be it an applicant for citizenship or for employment in the government service or by an agency of the government—is left to the department or the agency concerned. They assess the suitability on the basis of information which the force provides to them, that information having been screened at the headquarters of the director of security and intelligence with respect to its weight in this sense, particularly as to the reliability of the source from which the information is received.

We recognize that there may be prejudice and other motives, or that certain things may be based on hearsay or surmise, and a conscientious effort is made to make an accurate, independent and fair assessment of the reliability or the weight to be attached to the particular source of information. But as to laying down a standard definition of what is subversive and what should be judged to be a subversive or what should be