

Alert Service Correspondence with R.C.M.P.

work would be immediately almost completely negated. Efforts would have to be recommended from the beginning to build up a file of information, a body of information, which is now available.

Indeed, if we started naming names and naming organizations we would lose, I would think, at least 80 per cent if not more of the sources of information we now have.

Mr. Pickersgill: Is that really correct in the case of an organization like this Finnish organization? It is common knowledge that there are a certain number of communist front organizations in this country, particularly appealing to some people who have come to this country fairly recently. I do not believe there is any doubt but that, as the hon. member for Port Arthur has said, a good many people get inveigled innocently into these organizations. There may be some secret organizations that the minister and the police would not want to reveal, but in the case of organizations that conduct their activities in public it does seem to me that there is a point the government ought to consider. I do not refer to the minister because the minister is quite right when he says this is a matter for the security panel and for the government, not for the R.C.M.P.

Mr. Fulton came back in reply saying:

—I wish to point out that at no time, certainly since I have been minister and at no time prior to that of which I am aware, have the R.C.M.P. ever identified any organization as being a subversive organization. I should like to make it clear here that I am not accepting what my hon. friend says he was told—

Then he goes on to kill a few of the arguments which I made and which the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate made. Later on, the man who is now Prime Minister commented in this same debate:

I think he—

That is Mr. Fulton.

—was right, of course, when he defended the practice of not making public lists of subversive organizations, which is perhaps not quite the same as lists of communists or communist front organizations which are known to be such. That is in contrast, of course, to the practice—and I think it is a good contrast—across the border where they do have their blacklists or lists of subversive organizations, and where I suspect they have lists of Canadian organizations which they consider to be subversive and perhaps a list of members of those organizations.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the former minister of justice underlined the fact that the practice has been that the R.C.M.P. does not publish and does not give information on what are communist front organizations and what are subversive organizations, but it is acknowledged that it has co-operated with this particular organization, the Alert Service, which it says is reputable. My conclusion is that the Alert Service, if it is reputable, as the R.C.M.P. claim, got this information from the R.C.M.P. It does not say so, but this is the conclusion I draw.

In the judgment of the R.C.M.P. this is a reputable publishing organization. It publishes this list, and keeps it up to date, of

[Mr. Fisher.]

communist front organizations, and including the various unions in Canada that are sympathetic.

I am willing to withdraw this motion if the parliamentary secretary to the minister will give me an assurance that the R.C.M.P. has never communicated to this organization this particular list that I have read, or a facsimile of it, from which the Alert Service drew this, or if he will give me an assurance that there has been no communication of any kind, or anything of this kind, by the R.C.M.P. with the Alert Service. But if, as I have strong suspicions, it is true—and I feel certain the R.C.M.P. intelligence and security director has communicated with this publishing service, which is considered reputable—and if the R.C.M.P. has provided it with this particular list, I want to see the communications and I want to know why, because we have it on the record that the R.C.M.P. is against this.

In substance, Mr. Speaker, that is my case. So far as the statement is concerned where Mr. McClelland identified the mine, mill and smelters workers' union as a communist organization, I would also like an explanation of that, but I can find it in another way and on another occasion.

Mr. D. S. Macdonald (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, I would like to refer first to the closing remarks of the hon. member for Port Arthur (Mr. Fisher), particularly with regard to his undertaking to withdraw this particular motion if I would give him an assurance that the list in question, the one he read, the one that was published in the Alert Service, was not furnished to the publisher of the Alert Service by the R.C.M.P. I would have to say I have not actually seen the correspondence which we have here in question, and therefore I am not able of my own knowledge to state whether or not that was the case.

However, I have discussed this matter with the commissioner of the R.C.M.P., the gentleman who, at the time referred to, was responsible for security within the R.C.M.P., and from my conversations with him it is my understanding that information of the kind referred to by the hon. gentleman was not furnished to the Alert Service by the R.C.M.P. A more fundamental question, which I think is underlying the debate on this particular motion, is one as to whether or not in the proceedings of this house it would be desirable to compel the R.C.M.P. to disclose to members, on notices of motions for the production of papers, correspondence which it has with any individual, with any group of individuals, with any corporation or otherwise—the question of whether or not, in