

*Statement by Prime Minister on Security*

The government of Canada is grateful to the members of the royal commission, Mr. M. W. Mackenzie, M. Yves Pratte and the Honourable M. J. Coldwell, P.C., for having undertaken the heavy burden of making a full and confidential inquiry into the operation of Canadian security methods and procedures, and for having reported thereon within two years. The views expressed in the report are, of course, those of the commissioners themselves. Their recommendations and the arguments underlying them are under serious study by the government and indeed some of them have already been put into effect in some degree. While it is reasonably clear from study thus far that not all of their recommendations will be accepted, and that not all of those accepted will be implemented immediately in whole or in part, a substantial number will be both accepted and implemented. Apart altogether from such specific action, however, it is our conviction that the report as a whole will serve as a most useful and stimulating basis for public discussion and for a better understanding of the problems of security.

It seems to us particularly important that Canadians at this time in their history be enabled to participate in full and informed discussion of security matters, an area of public administration which all too often in the past has been the subject of misunderstanding and misconception, and has thus come to be regarded, both in this house and among the media and the public at large, with excessive and unwarranted drama and mystery.

There will of course always be matters which governments must keep privy to themselves in order that the public interest may be best served, even in the freest and most open of societies. As the commissioners have stated, and I quote:

Canada remains the target of subversive or potentially subversive activities, attempts at infiltration and penetration, and espionage operations—

and they emphasize that:

—the duty of the state to protect its secrets from espionage, its information from unauthorized disclosure, its institutions from subversion and its policies from clandestine influence is indisputable; what are matters for dispute are the organizations and procedures established by the State to meet this responsibility in an area which can touch closely upon the fundamental freedoms of the individual.

The government fully agrees with this view, and also agrees that "effective security arrangements must have a firm basis in public awareness and understanding". We are

[Mr. Trudeau.]

also grateful to the commissioners for having prepared their report in such a manner that the bulk of it can be made available for thoughtful consideration by Canadians generally.

[English]

Mr. Speaker, as you and hon. members will note, the royal commissioners have expressed dissatisfaction with several security methods and procedures, and have recommended certain organizational changes and improvements. The most significant of these is for the establishment of a new civilian non-police agency to perform the functions of a security service in Canada. The commissioners suggest that this agency would eventually be quite separate from the R.C.M.P., and would not have law enforcement powers, although it would operate in close liaison with the R.C.M.P. and other police forces.

They base their proposal in large part on their conclusion that there are wide differences between police and security duties, and that these differences "should be reflected in recruiting methods, in training and career patterns, and in organizational structures." They also concluded that, although it was almost impossible to measure the effectiveness of a security service, particularly in the important fields of counter-espionage and counter-subversion, the effectiveness of procedures for the security investigation of persons appeared to be capable of improvement.

Further, the commissioners considered that the association of the security function with the police role tended to make the work of the security authorities more difficult, and that "inquiries by civilians in connection with the security clearance of personnel would be regarded with more understanding than are inquiries by policemen."

After careful study of the considerations put forward by the commissioners in support of their recommendation, we have come to the conclusion that current and foreseeable security problems in Canada can be better dealt with within the R.C.M.P. through appropriate modifications in their existing structure than by attempting to create a wholly new and separate service.

We are keenly aware that the R.C.M.P. are one of the most honoured and respected of Canadian institutions. The force has come to be recognized as one of the finest national police forces in the world, whose members, as the commissioners rightly state, are "carefully selected, highly motivated, and of great