

Supply—Justice

knowledge of the communality. I think we have to keep alert and vigilant in this particular field. Any time we give an organization authority and work to do that we cannot examine openly and know how they are working, we have to watch very closely; we have to check on it on occasion to make sure it is needed; that the dangers are so severe and terrible that we allow this particular type of police organization to be free from the surveillance of the elected representatives.

I do not feel personally that we have had that kind of reassurance from the minister either this morning or on the two previous occasions he has spoken on this topic. I do not think any member of this committee needs to be ashamed or even worried about standing up and questioning from this particular point of view, because a police organization is fundamental to the laws and the security we have in this country. However, when in certain areas you give a sort of *carte blanche* and the general public or the elected representatives do not know the standards under which the police agency operates, then I believe you have to keep prodding to find out what those standards are and keep reassessing the position that led to this particular aspect of police work being made so secret.

Mr. Fulton: Mr. Chairman, I do not believe the hon. member appreciates the point I have made, and I will repeat it. The police in this field do not pass any judgment or perhaps I should say do not give any effect to the information obtained by translating it into a judgment to deprive a man of any status or any thing to which he thinks he is entitled. The police function is almost exclusively ascertaining the facts and reporting the facts to others who have to exercise their judgment as to what they will do in the light of those facts so reported. It would be very different indeed if the police had the responsibility not only of collecting the facts but also of exercising a judgment as to what should be done as a result of those facts or as a result of the information so collected.

Viewed in that light, then, I think it can be seen why it is proper that security and intelligence activities of the force should not be disclosed in detail. In the first place it is not, as I have said before, the responsibility of the force to lay down the standards of security that will be followed by any government department or agency in connection with its work; that is a matter of collective government responsibility.

[Mr. Fisher.]

As to the suggestion that we should name and list the organizations which have a record or an indication that they are undesirable, from a specific point of view this would be the most self-defeating policy or practice I could imagine. Practically every piece of information that was known to the police would immediately have to be made public; the extent of police knowledge would be made public, and the value and effectiveness of the work would be immediately almost completely negated. Efforts would have to be recommenced 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. However, I do believe there is a real point here which is deserving of consideration.

Mr. Fulton: Mr. Chairman, 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 by some other policeman. I am not saying he was not told, but I am simply saying that so far as the R.C.M.P. are concerned I am making no comment upon it because at no time have we ever identified any organization as being subversive. For the reasons I have given we do not intend to make such a statement. If we were required to say, in answer to a question, is this or that organization subversive, then the whole list would have to be named and we would then be in a position where we