

## R.C.M.P. DOSSIERS ON MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

**Question No. 138—Mr. Howard:**

1. Does the R.C.M.P. maintain any files or dossiers on members of parliament?
2. If so, upon which members of the present parliament are such files or dossiers maintained?

**Answer by: Hon. E. D. Fulton (Minister of Justice):**

All Royal Canadian Mounted Police files on individuals are confidential and many are secret. One of the primary duties of all those responsible for such files is to respect and preserve the confidential or secret nature of their contents.

It will be appreciated also that a large number of such files are started by reports, statements or knowledge of activities coming to the attention of responsible members of the police which they are bound to investigate in the course of their duties. The follow-up on such reports in many cases reveals no necessity for further action, yet there is still a file. This means that many files will be in existence under the names of individuals against whom there is nothing of a substantial, let alone a criminal, nature.

It will therefore be generally agreed that it would be grossly unfair to any such individual to have it revealed or even suspected

*Questions*

that there exists a police file under his name, yet there may be many ways in which such a suspicion could be raised. One of the surest ways of laying the foundation for the raising of suspicion would be to isolate a group of individuals, such as members of parliament, start answering questions as to whether there are any files on any of them and then refuse—as would have to be done—to go any further when questioned as to the existence or non-existence of a file on a specific member or members of such group. But this is exactly the door which would be opened by an answer to this question.

Not only would this lead to the possibility of prejudice to an innocent individual, but if there were in fact with respect to any one or more members of such group a file or files which contained information serious enough to warrant further investigation, the success of the investigation and possibly the security of the state, might be seriously prejudiced by giving any information whatsoever.

It therefore follows that, both in order to protect innocent individuals on whom there may be files and to preserve the interests of the state, the answer must be that it is considered to be contrary to the public interest to give a specific answer to this question.

---