

*Adjournment Debate*

[English]

When the Conservative Party was in opposition, according to the then Leader of the Opposition, now the Prime Minister, this was a dangerous piece of legislation and the Conservative Party was opposed to it. Now that the Conservative Party is in government, what action is it taking to oppose this very dangerous legislation?

I questioned the Solicitor General (Mr. MacKay) in the justice committee on this and he said, "Well, we are going to give it a chance to work". In fact he said that the Conservative Party was not prepared to make any changes whatsoever to this legislation which constitutes such a threat to the civil liberties of Canadians.

I do not have the time to enumerate the many defects in the legislation, the extent to which it does in fact constitute a threat to civil liberties, but I would note, for example, that in speaking on the Bill a Conservative Member of Parliament, the Hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona (Mr. Kilgour), said at third reading:

Let me repeat the point made by others. My Party wants an overview committee consisting of Members of Parliament.

His Party is now the Government of Canada. It has a massive majority. It has the opportunity to implement effective parliamentary oversight. It has the opportunity to bring forward amendments which would significantly narrow the scope and the mandate of the new security service to ensure that Canadians, who break no law whatsoever but merely support liberation movements in Central America or South Africa, do not have their mail opened, their medical files read, their homes broken into or their telephones tapped. That was the position of the Conservative Party when it was in opposition, yet it has completely reversed itself now that it is in Government, and it is doing nothing whatsoever to implement changes to this important legislation.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, I should also point out that so far, I believe, the Prime Minister has refused to meet with the *Ligue des droits et libertés*. It has been seeking an appointment with the Prime Minister, and I hope that the Parliamentary Secretary will give us the assurance this afternoon that the Prime Minister will meet with the *Ligue des droits et libertés*.

The *Ligue* has stated that it considers this service as abusive and undemocratic, and that it shows no respect for the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms or the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Well, Mr. Speaker, now we know that the new security service spends the unbelievable amount of \$116 million a year without any accountability to Parliament. That was unacceptable to us in the New Democratic Party when we were in Opposition in the last Parliament but, more important still, it is unacceptable to the Conservatives. They now have the opportunity and even the obligation to amend this legislation, but they refuse.

[English]

They are taking a position which is identical to the position taken by the Liberal Party when it was in government. That position was a threat to the civil liberties of all Canadians.

[Translation]

—a threat to the civil liberties of Canadians and Quebecers.

• (1805)

[English]

That position remains a threat to civil liberties today. I call upon the Government to bring forward amendments to this legislation and, in particular, to allow for full and effective parliamentary oversight.

**Mr. John McDermid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure of replying to the Hon. Member for Burnaby (Mr. Robinson) this evening who questioned the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) as to whether to size of the CSIS expenditure signalled "major new threats to the security of Canada".

In responding to the Hon. Member, let me advise him that no inference should be drawn on the basis of a comparison between the RCMP budget and that of CSIS. Rather, the net additional amount of money required for the Canadian Security Intelligence Service relates to the standard capital and operating expenses most people in this House would reasonably expect would have to be incurred as start-up costs by any new agency of Government with a national mandate. There are additional expenses other than the actual surveillance and whatever else goes on in CSIS. As I said before, I cannot and will not discuss in public any specific expenditures relating to the Canadian Security Intelligence Service.

The other subject which the Hon. Member questioned the Prime Minister about was the accountability of the service. Given the Prime Minister's response, which related to the appointment of Members to the Security Intelligence Review Committee, I would like to provide the following supplementary information.

In addition to appointing an overview committee composed of five distinguished members, including a very distinguished member of the New Democratic Party, the Hon. Sol Cherniak, the Act provides for the appointment of an Inspector General, responsible to the Deputy Solicitor General, whose function it is to ensure that CSIS operations conform to approved policy. I am pleased to report to this House that Mr. Richard Gosse, a highly respected lawyer, who until recently was the Deputy Attorney General of the Province of Saskatchewan, has accepted an appointment to this position. Additionally, the Act requires that all warrants to intercept communications of whatever kind, be authorized by a Judge of the Federal Court of Canada.

Finally, pursuant to Section 69 of the CSIS Act, a Committee of the House of Commons or of both Houses of Parliament will be required five years hence to conduct a comprehensive review of the provisions and operation of this Act and to submit a report on the review to Parliament, including a