

Security Intelligence Service

ing the RCMP. It should be the consensus of this House, by a majority, as to which one is the best for the country. If there are only two security services, which one is better for the country? That is the proper approach to take, not to say we cannot discuss an item as important as the RCMP being the security and intelligence service of this country. It would be a sad day indeed if that were the decision.

I would like to talk first about the point I have already mentioned, that under our democracy a government should reflect in its legislation the thinking of the people to the greatest possible degree. I am convinced—perhaps others are not—that the majority of the people of Canada want to retain the RCMP as their security force. That statement, I feel, is the strongest argument, if it cannot be challenged, and I do not believe it can be. The rank and file of our people in Canada are not illiterate. They come to conclusions because of what they see and what they hear and on what happens. They have watched this matter of security over the years and they are satisfied with what the RCMP have been doing.

Another reason, though, which is probably almost as valid, is that the RCMP is noted for protecting the rights of Canadians against undue interference with their civil liberties. If I find my civil liberties are being attacked, I can go to the RCMP and I know I will find a friendly officer who is going to make sure that, to the greatest possible degree, those civil liberties are going to be protected. That is their life. The RCMP came into being to fight unlawfulness, not lawfulness. They fight against those things that are unfair, whether it was for the Indians in the early days, new immigrants, or Canadian women and children. Those who are doing things that are wrong are the ones who are afraid of the RCMP because they stand for doing the right thing, things in accordance with the law. Therefore, when we change our security service we are saying in effect that the RCMP has not been doing its job. But that is not the case.

• (1250)

The Solicitor General (Mr. Kaplan) paid tribute to the work that the RCMP have done and are doing in the security service. If they are doing well, why do we want to throw out the known for the unknown? We do not know how this new body is going to react to various things in the country, how it will fit in. What is it going to do in regard to civil liberties? That is the worry of many of the speakers in this House today. When we say we should keep the RCMP in this area, we are basing that on the confidence the people have in the RCMP.

I wanted to deal with another point, Mr. Speaker, concerning the spy situation but I see that my time is running out. However, I want to urge Members of the House to realize what we are doing. We can build on the force we have. Surely we do not want to throw that out and start building something brand-new which may be built on a faulty foundation.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): Debate.

Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I want to assure everyone that the Opposition have as

much time as possible to make their points. As indignant as I am about some of the things I have heard today, because they are simply not valid criticisms of the Bill, I will not take the time required to deal with each of them. Let me just say in summary that, having sat and listened to the far-fetched concerns and fears, all of which were raised on second reading when we heard 57 speeches on the subject of this Bill, and in committee where we spent dozens of hours and hundreds of briefs were received and dozens of witnesses heard, I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that the Government feels there are good answers to all of the suggestions made.

The suggestions are that this Bill goes further in the direction of violation of the privacy and civil liberties of Canadians. Far from it. We are dealing at the moment with an area of activity presently within the security service of the RCMP. We are moving it into an organization which can be put under much better controls and safeguards than is appropriate for a police force under the Canadian system of government. I know some Hon. Members opposite recognize that. I note that the *Calgary Herald* urged the Conservative Party, in its editorial of June 2, to stop the long bid to keep national security under the wing of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and get on with the task of scrutinizing the Bill to ensure that Canada gets the most efficient security service consistent with the maintenance of civil liberties.

The *Calgary Herald*, for one, backs separation and it is not alone. There are many, many observers across the country who have studied the Bill. They are not saying the Bill is perfect, and that is not the Government's case. The purpose of report stage is to try and improve the Bill. But we recognize that this Bill represents a step forward in further securing the privacy and civil liberties of Canadians. We are subjecting our security service to a more careful and effective outside scrutiny and control than it has ever had before. I am delighted that we have reached report stage and are talking about clauses rather than seeing the spectacle that we have had in the past of delay for its own sake by an Opposition Party, the NDP, which has firmly declared, apart from what they are saying about clauses and due debate, that they are going to be doing everything—to quote the Hon. Member for Burnaby (Mr. Robinson):

—going to be doing everything within our power, using all of the parliamentary devices at our disposal, to ensure that this does not in fact become enacted before the end of the session.

That is what we are witnessing and we might as well recognize it.

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, the Solicitor General (Mr. Kaplan), in his usual way, tells just part of the story. Of course, we have said we are going to oppose this Bill, that we are going to try and stop its passage. But we have said it for very good reasons, reasons which are supported by the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, most of the major churches, by organizations such as Operation Dismantle, and by the provincial Attorneys General. We are in very good company.

The reason we are opposing this Bill is not because we are opposed to legislation which would give Canada the security