

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, February 13, 1984

The House met at 11 a.m.

● (1105)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

CANADIAN SECURITY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE ACT

MEASURE TO ESTABLISH

The House resumed from Friday, February 10, consideration of the motion of Mr. Kaplan that Bill C-9, an Act to establish the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, to enact an Act respecting enforcement in relation to certain security and related offences and to amend certain Acts in consequence thereof or in relation thereto, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs.

Mr. Blaine A. Thacker (Lethbridge-Foothills): Mr. Speaker, when we adjourned on Friday, I had just nicely gotten into the substance of my speech. I had made the point that discussions with my constituents and other people had shown that the primary concern that Canadians have about this Bill relates to their total lack of trust in the present Government. I can understand why that mistrust exists.

There is no doubt that Canadians trust the RCMP and believe that the current Liberal Government let the RCMP down concerning all of the events that occurred in the early 1970s with the FLQ and separatism threat in Quebec. I was arguing that the Government has given much evidence that it cannot be trusted. People can remember the wage and price control promise and the gas taxes that were not going to rise but then rose enormously. People from the east and west remember that first constitutional proposal that would have forever in our constitutional history locked an absolute veto into two provinces, leaving out the other eight provinces and all other new provinces. That provision ultimately had to be removed from the Constitution because it violated that sense of fairness which Canadians possess. But this too has built up this perception of mistrust in the present Liberal Government.

I am sure you were as horrified as I, Mr. Speaker, when the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) stood in the House last week and said that he saw no problem at all with the Prime Minister's Office personally handling extreme patronage in cases where Liberal Members of Parliament were allocated \$500,000 each but not members of the Opposition. We must have an enormous gap between what the Prime Minister

believes his role should be and what I as a Member believe. I think the Prime Minister should stand up and defend the whole country and the interests of all the people, even though in some parts they have not elected members of his Party. You cannot get around the fact, Mr. Speaker, that when the Prime Minister came to power he had 27 members in the west. Now he has none. He did not lose those seats because people in the west are perverse, nor did he lose them because there was anything wrong with the Constitution. He lost those seats because of the policies of his Government.

● (1110)

Mr. Evans: How many do you have in Quebec?

Mr. Thacker: When the Conservative Party meets those regional perceptions and needs of the people of Quebec, we will get members there as the next election will show. By the same token, the Liberal Party has to meet the needs of the people of the west if it expects to get members elected there. That is why I am saying the Prime Minister, in occupying the highest office of the land, surely has a duty to go out of his way to make sure those people feel comfortable. He has not done that. That is why he lost those seats in the west and that is why he will lose the next election.

I suppose I should come back to the major question as to whether we need a security service at all. That question was answered many, many years ago in the affirmative after the Second World War. We have a major security service within the RCMP. We have some important equipment in the Department of National Defence. Security work is being done. The question is whether that security service should remain within the RCMP or moved and set up as a civilian agency.

We have been told, and we all know, that other countries have separate civilian agencies. I am thinking of the United States and the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom has a separate service despite its long historical attachment to Scotland Yard, just as our attachment is to the RCMP. The question is whether there is something unique or something that has changed within Canada that makes it imperative we move the service away from the RCMP and into a private civilian agency. The people who want this separation argue it is because of police barn burning and incidents where the police actually broke the law and therefore we should have a separate civilian agency with checks and balances.

That argument does not wash generally in the west. People believe the RCMP were betrayed by the Government. They believe that the highest ranking authority in the Liberal Cabinet told the RCMP to get the FLQ, to get behind it and find out all the evidence so they could get a handle on it. When the RCMP broke the law and were caught, was there minis-