

Supply—Justice

course, different standards required for different positions. Positions classified as security positions may require a higher standard of certainty and of safety with respect to subversive activities or actions than other types of positions, but those are all matters which are determined by departments other than the R.C.M.P. They are determined by the department concerned with the employment. We, as I have said before, maintain records—that is admitted—and, if called upon to do so by a department or agency entitled to call for it, we are required to make a report as to the information in our possession with respect to that individual.

Mr. Fisher: Mr. Chairman, the minister is emphasizing the passive nature of this particular directive, but in the brochure issued by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police it is stated:

The directorate of security and intelligence must be prepared at all times to counter subversive activity. In the job of preserving national security, its chief tasks at present are to investigate communist activity and subversive organizations, maintain a watchful eye on the stream of immigrants, and in co-operation with other government departments foil efforts to place subversives in the federal government employment and vital industry.

Those are pretty positive chores that are given in this directive. I think the communist scare in terms of internal risk has certainly subsided enough that we should have some kind of assessment as to what you consider subversive. Give us an idea of some kinds of organizations that are subversive. I am sure that a great many people in the lakehead region would have nothing to do with the Finnish organization of Canada if they were perfectly clear in their minds that the government considered it subversive. Where are the definitions in this field? In all innocence people can get tied up with an organization like that; yet, judging by the experience of this lady who applied for citizenship, it is a definite black mark. Why do we have to have this zone of silence or this area that is unknown? Why can we not have a statement? It does not involve giving away any particular secrets that I can see. It is just an enunciation of what is considered subversive.

Mr. Pickersgill: Before the minister answers I should like to put a question to him supplementary to that asked by the hon. member for Port Arthur, and then the minister can perhaps answer both at once. I think the minister has rather left the impression from his answers that the information gathered by the police is given in the raw or crude form to other government departments. I wonder whether the minister can tell us what steps are taken to make an evaluation of information gathered, as the minister himself says,

[Mr. Fulton.]

sometimes by constables without much experience, and what the police do before they supply information to other departments. Obviously it is not supplied just in the form in which it is collected.

Mr. Fulton: To reply to the last question first, as I am sure my hon. friend knows the answer might vary according to the form of the request. If the request is for advice with respect to whether there is any record of association with subversive organizations, that answer would probably be given by a relatively short yes or no; not exactly yes or no—

Mr. Pickersgill: I do not think the minister—

Mr. Fulton: I think I will come to it in a moment—in a manner which is pretty well just an answer to the question. If the department concerned asks for particulars and says, "We want to look into this matter further", then the force will supply the particulars by showing what information is on file as to the record.

There are occasions when the force is asked to make an evaluation, and I shall come to this directly. As I have said, I have had experience on this from both directions, both as the acting minister of citizenship and immigration and as Minister of Justice; and I can say, that the force is scrupulous not to make any evaluation and to be the judge as to whether or not this person is a security risk. They will, however, make an evaluation, if asked, as to the nature of any subversive organization to which the persons concerned may be shown to have belonged. But again this is a statement of fact, and it is up to the department or the agency concerned to make its own decision as to whether or not the facts disclosed warrant a favourable or unfavourable decision on its part.

Mr. Pickersgill: I do not think the minister has answered the question I asked. Probably it is because I asked it clumsily. This information about an individual is not necessarily all gathered by one constable, and certainly I think I am not betraying any secrets when I say that the information which is provided to another minister by the police is not the question—perhaps the minister would let me finish—and answer type that a policeman gets when he goes out and interviews people. It is a statement which is obviously, in many cases, a composite of various bits of information.

I thought that would help the hon. member for Port Arthur. I think he has a very legitimate question here which is in the minds of many people. I know many people came to me when I was minister of citizenship and