

FOREWORD

The Special Committee on the Review of the *Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act (CSIS Act)* and the *Security Offences Act* was established by an Order of the House of Commons dated June 27, 1989. This Order required the Committee to undertake a comprehensive review of the provisions and operation of both the *CSIS Act* and the *Security Offences Act* and to report its findings to the House of Commons. These findings are the subject of this Report.

The mandate under which the Committee proceeded was legislatively required by Parliament in 1984 when it adopted both the *CSIS Act* and the *Security Offences Act*. While not constituting sunset clauses in the strict sense, both statutes called for parliamentary review of their provisions and operation after five years, a point that was reached on July 16, 1989. Although a relatively recent development, legislation has from time to time required parliamentary review after an initial period of implementation and experience. This is one part of the continued development of Canadian parliamentary institutions, through which the role of parliamentarians in the consideration and review of policy and legislation has been strengthened and reinforced.

The comprehensive review undertaken by this Committee, while an integral part of the continued development of parliamentary institutions, had its own unique difficulties. The task facing this Committee was to undertake a comprehensive review in a public forum – Parliament – of legislation and agencies that believe they function most effectively when they are shielded from exposure to public scrutiny. This challenge was faced not only by the Committee itself but also by those it was mandated to review. All of those involved in this comprehensive review understood the challenge, but not all of the difficulties encountered in meeting it were resolved satisfactorily. It is hoped that this Report and the recommendations it contains will, in the long run, build confidence between Parliament and the security and intelligence community. The result will be a more effective and accountable security and intelligence community, to the benefit of all Canadians.