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SECURITY SUB-PANEL

The second meeting of the Security Sub-Panel was held in the Privy Council Committee Room at 2:30 p.m. on Friday, June 26, 1953.

PRESENT

Mr. R. G. Robertson Chairman
Privy Council Office

Mr. G. de T. Glazebrook
Department of External Affairs

Commander G. Tottenham,
Department of National Defence

Mr. E. S. Perkin
Department of Defence Production

Superintendent G. McClellan
Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Mr. C. E. S. Smith,
Department of Citizenship & Immigration

Mr. P. M. Dwyer,
Privy Council Office Secretary

ALSO PRESENT

Mr. H. R. McNaughton
Civil Service Commission

Inspector G. Ashley
Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Mr. J. K. Abbott
Department of Citizenship & Immigration

Major W. E. Braun
Department of National Defence.

I. Security Screening of Government Employees and Applicants for employment

1. The Sub-Panel had before them a memorandum from the officer i/c Special Branch setting out a number of proposed changes in procedures for security investigations. One proposal recommended that a check of R.C.M. Police

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central criminal records should be abandoned in future. In a covering note to the memorandum the Secretary examined the effect of this proposal on present government security policy and set forth a number of possible courses of action for consideration.

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2. Superintendent McClellan reviewed in detail the problems which had led to the proposals for changing procedures used in making a security file check within Special Branch. He pointed out that the proposals were based on recommendations made by the Organization and Methods Service of the Civil Service Commission, and emphasized that a trial period had demonstrated the effectiveness of the new procedures in checking the subversive records of Special Branch. If, on the other hand, a check of criminal records were to be maintained the use of fingerprints would seem inescapable.

3. Mr. Glazebrook considered it important to establish in principle if a security check called for a knowledge of any criminal record a person might have. In his view it did. Defect in character which might make a person subject to blackmail or other pressures was an important consideration when the reliability of an employee was to be assessed. Since a field check, which might provide such information, was no longer obligatory for clearances to secret and top secret, he considered it essential to ensure that a file check included an examination of criminal records.

4. The Chairman agreed that a satisfactory security clearance could not be given without prior reference to criminal records. He reminded members of the Prime Minister's statement on government security policy made in the House of Commons in December 1951 and pointed out that in the light of this statement a change of policy would clearly be involved if a check of criminal records were to be abandoned.

5. After further discussion, the Sub-Panel agreed that an examination of criminal records was an essential part of a satisfactory security investigation.

6. The Sub-Panel then examined in detail how such information was to be obtained and considered the possible courses of action set out in the secretary's paper.

7. The Sub-Panel agreed:

(i) that since adequate criminal records were not maintained centrally in Ottawa on a name basis the information required must be sought through other means;

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(ii) that although the information required was kept locally by municipal and provincial police, any attempt to obtain information from criminal records by direct contact between departmental security officers and provincial or municipal police authorities across the country was entirely impractical;

(iii) that since the information required was immediately available by fingerprint comparison (but not on a name basis) at the Identification Branch of the R.C.M. Police in Ottawa, and since a number of government departments and agencies already fingerprinted their employees as a routine matter, the desirable course, in order to carry out the policy of the government with regard to security screening, was to extend the fingerprints to all government employees requiring access to classified information; and

(iv) that although the government and a number of departments might not welcome this procedure, there appeared to be no other course than to advise the Security Panel that no other means appeared to be available of making adequate security checks.

8. The Sub-Panel considered a second recommendation by Special Branch/R.C.M. Police that in future Special Branch should not maintain an index of the names of government employees concerning whom there was no adverse record.

9. The Sub-Panel agreed that this practice was not essential and that the secretary should inform departmental security officers that it would cease immediately.

II. Exchange of unclassified information between Canada and the U.S.S.R. and its satellites

10. At its 48th meeting the Security Panel had agreed that if possible some measure of security control should be exercised over publications distributed by the Queen's Printer and by Canadian Government departments. The Sub-Panel now had before them a paper suggesting a course of action and including the views of the Canadian Embassy in Moscow.

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11. The Secretary explained that, although foreign missions were now sent a check list of Queen's Printer publications and required to order copies, publications could be purchased quite easily over the counter.

12. The Sub-Panel agreed that such publications were largely uncontrollable but recommended that the committee at present examining the distribution of publications to determine where economies might be made should be asked to consider if the Queen's Printer check list could in future be distributed on grounds of economy to only those foreign missions whose governments gave reciprocal treatment.

13. The Sub-Panel then examined the distribution of departmental publications or information to Soviet and satellite countries and agreed:

(i) that this should in future be a departmental responsibility;

(ii) that information should only be given to persons or organizations in Soviet or satellite countries when some useful return might be anticipated, or when it was felt some other advantage might be gained by providing the information; and

(iii) that when in doubt departments should consult the Security Sub-Panel for advice.

III. Standards of Security Clearance for Aliens or Former Aliens employed by Government departments or Agencies.

14. At its first meeting the Security Sub-Panel had examined a guidance paper for security officers on the employment of aliens and former aliens. Members had recommended a number of substantial changes. The Sub-Panel now had before them a new version of the paper re-drafted by the secretary.

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15. The Sub-Panel examined the paper in detail, made a number of further emendations, and agreed that the paper should be distributed to all departmental security officers.

IV. Security Control of Foreign Ships plying the Great Lakes System

16. At its first meeting the Security Sub-Panel had agreed that the new Immigration Act represented the most likely authority by which security control of foreign seamen plying the Great Lakes system might be exercised. The Sub-Panel now had before them a paper drafted by the Secretary setting out procedures by which controls might be made effective under the new act.

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17. Mr. Smith reminded members that no provision had been made for ships which, although passing through the Canadian canal system, would touch only at U. S. and not at Canadian ports. He pointed out that crew manifests could be obtained from these ships while they lay in Canadian waters awaiting entry into the canal system.

18. Superintendent McClellan said that the checking of additional names of foreign crew members on behalf of the Canadian government might strain the resources of the U.K. security organizations, but agreed to refer as many as possible.

19. The Sub-Panel agreed:

(i) that the proposed security controls should be extended to include foreign ships entering the Great Lakes System without touching at Canadian ports; and

(ii) that the recommendations should be submitted to the Cabinet Committee on Emergency Measures for approval.

V. Confidential Questionnaire for Government Employees

20. The Sub-Panel had before them a note from the Secretary stating that a number of government departments and agencies were not using the approved form to obtain information required for a security check. This lack of uniformity slowed up the work of Special Branch/R.C.M. Police.

21. The Sub-Panel agreed:

(i) that a group of security officers should examine the present form and make any improvements which seemed necessary; and

(ii) that the Secretary should then distribute this form to all departments and agencies with a request that only the approved form be used.

VI. Canadian Corps of Commissionaires - Rates of Pay

22. The Sub-Panel considered a memorandum from the Secretary pointing out that the government paid less for the services of commissionaires guarding government buildings than was paid by some private concerns in industrial areas. It seemed possible therefore that government buildings which required greatest protection were not receiving the best men available.

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23. The Sub-Panel agreed that this problem should be referred to the Commissioner of the R.C.M. Police and to the Treasury Board for further views.

P. M. Dwyer,
Secretary of the Security Panel.

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June 29,
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