



Royal Canadian Mounted Police Gendarmerie royale du Canada

1982 March 15

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The Honourable Bob Kaplan, P.C., M.P.,
Solicitor General of Canada,
Ministry of the Solicitor General,
Room 330, Sir Wilfrid Laurier Building,
340 Laurier Avenue, West,
Ottawa, Ontario.

Dear Mr. Kaplan:

Some time ago you asked me to direct my attention to the development of new file destruction criteria for the Security Service. In doing so I have been mindful of your wish to reduce the file holdings of the Security Service in line with the recommendations of the McDonald Commission but not at the expense of hindering the ability of the Service to carry out properly mandated national security investigations. I feel this objective is accomplished in the recommendations I am attaching for your consideration and approval.

Appendix "A" assures the retention of Security Service files for operational reasons as well as meeting the legal and historical requirements of the Government. It also ensures that files which may be needed in criminal prosecutions or disciplinary procedures arising out of various commissions of inquiry will be retained for however long it may take to dispose of these matters.

Appendix "B" is the "Recommended Destruction Policy" for those files not retained under the provisions of Appendix "A". A great deal of discussion and consideration in the operational areas of the Security Service has gone into arriving at the recommended period of retention before review and the criteria for destruction and I am satisfied that a reasonable compromise has been struck between the need to reduce files and the efficiency of operations.

Included in the recommended destruction policy is a description of the file category, recommended retention period before review for destruction, a very close approximation of the number of files currently in the data base and an estimate of the reduction in holdings which can be expected with the

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The Commissioner Le Commissaire

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implementation of this new policy. In total, we expect to be able to reduce our holdings by 154,000.

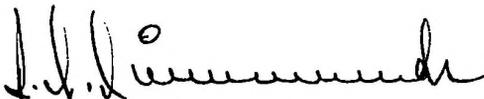
I expect you may have questions in respect to these recommendations and I will be pleased to discuss with you any aspect you may find troubling. I particularly wish to draw your attention to the file category [REDACTED]. This category of files has been subject of much public debate and I do recognize that in the absence of a clear link between an individual of prominence and a mandated Security Service investigation there can be absolutely no justification for maintaining a file. Nevertheless, in those instances where files have been properly brought into existence there is merit, in my view, in affording these files an extra measure of confidentiality by way of including them within a special category.

Another category of files that has received considerable public attention are those files falling within the [REDACTED] category. I have concluded that this specific category of file is unnecessary for us to perform our responsibilities under Cabinet Directive 35 and I am recommending that it be discontinued. The files currently in this holding will be reviewed and those with national security relevancy will be reclassified and those with no discernable relevancy destroyed.

The propriety and merit of retaining the [REDACTED] category has also been carefully considered and debated within the Security Service. Though not identifiable in terms of direct involvement in subversive activities, a number of Canadians do come to frequent and repeated Security Service notice in the course of mandated investigations. It is important to have what is essentially a neutral file held completely without prejudice in confidential circumstances on those Canadians, first as a vehicle for assessment and, secondly, as a reference point to obviate the necessity of making new inquiries each time they come to attention. I am of the view that it is mandatory for the efficient effective operation of the Service in performing its national security responsibility to retain this category.

You will note that the attached policy recommendations treat only individuals. Files on organizations of concern to the Security Service and administrative files are not included.

Yours sincerely,



R.H. Simmonds,
Commissioner.

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