

17. *Toronto Star*, 6 June 1980.
18. Data provided by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency indicates that casualties from international terrorism were 68% higher in 1979 than in the previous year.
19. Gerald Holton, "Reflections on Modern Terrorism", *Terrorism: An International Journal*, vol. 1, no.'s 3, 4 (1978), p. 266.

THE NEW McCARTHYISM

by Maurice Tugwell

Canadians would do well to ponder the injustice they may be inflicting on fellow citizens, and the damage they may be doing to their future security, by the apparently never-ending investigation of RCMP alleged wrongdoings.¹ Close and efficient political control over covert security service activities is essential in any country, particularly a liberal democracy. Failure in this area manifestly occurred in Canada in the early years of the last decade. Anyone with the briefest experience of responsibility knows that when a system fails, and when the consequences are serious, the blame rests squarely on the shoulders of the most senior individual involved. The facts that no politician accepted responsibility for this failure of leadership, and that instead the blame has been shifted down the chain of command to the men who are least able to protect themselves say something unpleasant about contemporary political morality.

The human consequences were dramatically illustrated this May by the suicide of a 30-year veteran of the RCMP immediately after he had testified before the McDonald Commission.² This was the second such incident within months. Whatever errors of judgement certain individuals may have made — and, on the face of it, there were some big errors — these men acted in accordance with their understanding of their orders to protect the country from subversives, terrorists and spies. Although by the illegal style of some operations the security men may have damaged the values they were supposed to be protecting, no one has questioned the sincerity of their motives. The RCMP has undergone month upon month of "trial by commission" before the provincial (Keable) and federal (McDonald) Royal Commissions,³ and this has been amplified and dramatized by the concurrent "trial by media". Commissions may provide a good means of uncovering facts: they are, however, poor guardians of the rights and reputations of their witnesses. If the RCMP witnesses had in fact been suspected subversives or terrorists, and we had kept them in suspense, exposed to questioning and public vilification for more than two years, *without charge or trial, the hue and cry from liberal Canada would have been deafening.* Apparently we see no need to bother our consciences over injustice that only affects law officers.⁴

This at least seems to be the opinion of Mr. David Lewis, a member of a delegation representing the Canadian Civil Liberties Association which on May 14 presented the Solicitor General, Mr Robert Kaplan, with a 15,000-name peti-

tion urging that charges be laid against RCMP lawbreakers.⁵ The Solicitor General reportedly replied that it would be at least two more months before he would consider such action. The lust for vengeance by the so-called libertarians recalls the spiteful and small-minded tyranny of the McCarthy era, but today it is the self-appointed guardians of liberty who are cracking the whip, and those who have endeavoured to serve the nation are at the receiving end.

Throughout this long ordeal, the RCMP Security Service has continued its vital, sometimes dangerous, and always thankless task of maintaining "contact" with sources of possible security danger in this country. The effect on morale, and thus on efficiency, of the investigations can only be measured by success or failure in any future crisis and by the ease with which the KGB (Soviet Committee of State Security)⁶ and their Cuban surrogates, the DGI,⁷ can operate in our midst. This Journal will address the subject of intelligence in a future issue: sufficient now to say that a nation which loses contact with the enemy operating within national territory is in dire peril.

The work of the two Royal Commissions is of first importance to Canada. There is cause for concern that in their endeavours to uncover one set of injustices they may inadvertently be creating others. We should also recognize that, in the struggle to preserve a nation's security there can be no calling "time out". Haste and improvisation in this area would have been mistaken: but after nearly three years the nation and the RCMP are entitled to see results and we should insist that the government follows up the reports with appropriate action. The sooner a good system is implemented and the wounds of the past three years are healed, the better for our prospects of remaining a whole and independent country.

Footnotes

1. For an informed overview, see John Sawatsky, *Men in the Shadows* (Toronto, 1980); for a radical view, see Edward Mann and John Alan Lee, *The RCMP vs the People* (Don Mills, 1979); and for an examination of policy options see Richard French and André Béliveau, *The RCMP and the Management of National Security* (Institute for Research on Public Policy, Montreal, 1979).
2. See *The Daily Gleaner* (Fredericton, May 9, 1980), lead article.
3. The McDonald Commission was established July 6th, 1977 by minute of the Privy Council, no 1977-1911. The Keable Commission was established June 27th, 1977 by Order-in-Council no 1968-77 of the Executive Council of the Province of Quebec.
4. On May 22, 1980, Mr. Justice David C. McDonald finally announced that individuals would be notified of any charges of misconduct so that they might defend themselves. The Commission Chairman also argued, on the one hand, that his Commission reserved the right to prompt provincial attorneys-general into initiating criminal proceedings and, on the other, that the long delay was not the fault of the Commission but of provincial attorneys-general who had neglected to initiate action on their own accord (presumably while the Commission was hearing the same evidence). See *Calgary Albertan* May 23, 1980.
5. *Canadian Press News Service* report May 14th, 1980.
6. The best work on the KGB is still John Barron, *KGB: The Secret Work of Soviet Secret Agents* (New York, 1974).
7. See Rowland Mans, "Canada's Constitutional Crisis", *Conflict Studies*, no. 98 (August 1978).