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CONFIDENTIAL

Ottawa, January 19th, 1961.

Hon. E. D. Fulton,
Minister of Justice,
Justice Building,
O t t a w a.

Dear Mr. Fulton:

You may recall my mentioning to you after a meeting of the Cabinet a few days ago that Patrick Watson, a television producer for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, had spoken to me about his intention to produce a half-hour television program about the security screening of government employees, to be shown on the program "Enquiry" in about six weeks. Watson and his research staff are at present studying the public record on this question, and will shortly be seeking your views on the extent to which the government would be prepared to cooperate in producing the program.

I believe that the primary difficulty faced by the government as a result of this request lies in the fact that no public statement of government security policy has been made, and if such a statement is to be made, it should probably be made in Parliament rather than on a television program. Any statement on security screening policy leads inevitably to the complex question of review or appeal against decisions to move or dismiss employees on security grounds, and Watson has expressed his specific interest in this question. You will recall that the matter was discussed at some length by the Security Panel and by a Cabinet committee over a year ago, and that a draft order in council was prepared for consideration by the Cabinet, although it has not yet been considered.

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As this question of review or appeal is central to the matter of security screening policy as a whole, the Security Panel has deferred its general review of the Cabinet Directive on Security of December 21st, 1955, until a decision has been reached on the appeal problem. This Directive is thus still the basis for our present security procedures. The Panel has, however, been studying in recent months means of dealing with security cases involving certain human frailties, and will shortly be submitting a report to you and the Prime Minister as a basis for discussion with a view to establishing procedures for dealing effectively with these cases.

In the light of these various developments, you may feel that the government should now review the whole matter of security screening policy, taking into account the question of review or appeal as well as that of how to deal with cases involving human weaknesses. I have asked my officials to prepare a revised draft of the Cabinet Directive on Security, leaving these latter two questions in abeyance until they can be considered by Ministers. If decisions on them are reached and appropriately reflected in a revised policy directive to departments and agencies, the government will be in a better position to make, on its own initiative, a fairly complete public statement of security policy, should that be considered desirable. It is my own view that if such a statement is to be made it would be preferable to have it made in the House of Commons.

In this connection I should mention that during 1956 and 1957 the National Film Board prepared scripts for two half-hour films on espionage and security screening to be shown on the television program "Perspective". I believe it was your view in 1957 that it would not be advisable to produce the film on security screening at that time, and no further action was taken. Members of the Film Board staff have recently confirmed their continuing interest in producing these films, and would, I suspect, feel that their request of three or four years ago should be considered prior to the more recent request

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of the CBC, if the government felt disposed to have these matters treated publicly. While the CBC would in principle be quite able to decide itself to put on a program on this subject, the cooperation of Ministers, civil servants or the R.C.M. Police would probably be necessary in order to produce a worthwhile program.

If you agree that a general review of security screening policy by the government is desirable at this time, I would suggest the following steps for your consideration:

- (a) that the Cabinet be asked to consider the memorandum entitled "Security Review Procedure" of June 24th, 1959, and determine whether the system of review described therein should be instituted;
- (b) that the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice meet with a small committee of the Security Panel to determine how best to deal with security cases involving homosexuality;
- (c) that, on the basis of these decisions, the Security Panel be asked to prepare a revised directive on security screening for consideration by the Cabinet, and for eventual distribution to departments and agencies;
- (d) that the government inform the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation that, as the security screening program is at present under study and review, it would not be appropriate for those connected with the government to participate in a television program on this subject until the government has been able to make a report to Parliament on it.

I would be grateful for your guidance on these suggestions.

Yours sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY
R. B. BRYCE

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