

Feb. 16, 1961

S-1-6 (e)

SECRET

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. BRYCE

Security Policy

After further study of the memorandum which Harvison left with us yesterday and some discussion with Kelly of his staff, I am in some doubt as to the usefulness of calling a meeting of the Security Panel to consider these matters prior to your departure for the United Kingdom at the end of the month.

It seems to me that the questions which we have to consider, in something like this order, are:

- (a) when and how best to inform the CBC that the government is not prepared at this time to participate in its proposed television program;
- (b) amendments to our basic security policy which may be required by a Cabinet decision on the question of review and appeal;
- (c) further amendments which may be required as a result of a meeting of our Special Committee with the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice on the question of human weaknesses;
- (d) the inclusion in a revised Cabinet directive of these and a number of other amendments based on our security experience in recent years;
- (e) the preparation of a statement of security policy for presentation in the House of Commons, probably during the consideration of the R.C.M. Police estimates, and the necessary relationship between such a statement and a revised Cabinet directive on security;
- (f) the question of the kind and degree of publicity which might be given to espionage cases in Canada and cases in which Soviet bloc officials in this country are declared persona non grata; and

- 2 -

(g) the feasibility of briefing members of the Cabinet and possibly certain members of the Opposition on communist party activity and Soviet bloc espionage activity in Canada.

It seems to me that these various questions are not only inter-related, but that there is a logical sequence in which they should be considered and in which action should be taken on our conclusions. The question most important to public acceptance of our security procedures is, I am sure, the statement which may be made in the House of Commons on security policy generally. There is no question that it would be the subject of close scrutiny not only by the Opposition but by the interested public generally. It should therefore be given the most careful study in order that it might be consistent within itself and with such other public action as we may take in the future. For example, I think it would be unwise of us to publicize any specific case of espionage or any action taken against a Soviet bloc official before an effective base for such publicity or action had been laid in Parliament through a fairly complete statement of the problem and of our means of dealing with it.

If I am correct in this view, there may be some value in having the views of the Security Panel on the sequence of events which I have suggested above. However, considering the limited time which you will have at your disposal during the next two weeks, I think it would be preferable to attempt to get decisions on items (a), (b) and (c) above during this period in order that work might proceed on a revised Cabinet directive during your absence. If you agree with this view, I will draft a letter along these lines to Harvison.

Concerning the CBC program, Watson has informed me this afternoon that he intends to proceed with the first program on Monday next even though he has not yet had any indication of Mr. Fulton's reaction. The purpose of the first program is to set out what Watson considers to be the existing public concern about a security screening program, and raises a number of critical questions concerning such matters as the calibre of investigators, the general secrecy of the whole operation, the lack of an appeal system and some of the effects which the system has had on individuals. Watson is obviously expecting

.. 3

009115

AGC-1143_0002

- 3 -

Mr. Fulton to appear on the program the following week to answer these questions, and is not certain how he will proceed if Mr. Fulton decides not to participate.

I am wondering if we would be correct in suggesting to Mr. Fulton at this stage that he might tell Watson tomorrow that as the government has for some time had the matter of security screening under review, with a view to making a complete statement to the House of Commons during the forthcoming consideration of R.C.M. Police estimates, it would be inappropriate for him at this time to make statements or explanations of policy on a television program which he has not yet been able to do in the House of Commons. While the Minister obviously cannot prevent Watson from proceeding with the program on Monday, he might be prepared to ask him whether he would consider it in the public interest to proceed under the circumstances. Since Watson apparently considers his program to be one of some responsibility, he may be prepared to make some adjustment in the programming of this series.

D.F.W.

Privy Council Office,
February 16th, 1961.

009116

AGC-1143_0003