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PRIVY COUNCIL November 10, 1977
OFFICE

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. PITFIELD

Nov 16 4 09 PM '77

Reply to Edgar Gallant's letter re: personnel security requirements

Attached for your signature, if you agree, is a reply to Mr. Gallant's letter to you of October 24 concerning complaints which the PSC has received relating to personnel security requirements. The reply refers to the policy set out in the relevant documents, emphasizes the need for departments to adhere to it, and points to the mechanisms - advice from the PCO and the security committees - which are available to assist in achieving such adherence. It also refers to the draft security clearance directive which the ICSI will be considering soon, and suggests that Mr. Gallant might raise the problems for discussion in that context.

I think Mr. Gallant's intention was to draw to your attention a number of problems of concern to the Commission in the administration by departments of security clearance policy. His letter was drafted by Tom Morry, Director General of the Anti-Discrimination Branch of the PSC, who deals with complaints from public servants and applicants, including complaints relating to security. Mr. Morry phoned my office before submitting the letter to Mr. Gallant for signature, and outlined the details of some of the complaints he received. He made the point that, through conversations with my predecessor, Don Hall, he knew that there was concern in the PCO that personnel security policy was in some cases applied improperly, and not in the spirit intended. I have also learned that, at Mr. Gallant's request, Don Hall met with him (Mr. Gallant), Mr. Morry and other PSC officials on November 15, 1976 to discuss security problems involved in the staffing function. Mr. Gallant was interested in the information provided to PCO, in accordance with the requirement in CD 35, concerning dismissals, resignations, transfers and denial of employment, for security reasons. I understand that the PSC officials were surprised on that occasion to learn how few cases are involved (e.g. 23 people denied employment for security reasons in 1975). Mr. Gallant proposed that the figures be made public. Mr. Hall raised this with Mr. Robertson, who indicated he did not favour publication.

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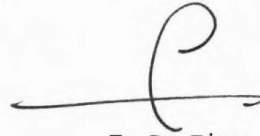
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In the attached draft reply to his letter, the suggestion is made that the revised directive on security clearance should serve to minimize the kinds of problems Mr. Gallant has raised, but that continuing guidance for departments in its application will be needed. I think this is the basic approach, given the large element of flexibility which is implicit in departmental responsibility for security. I would expect, however, that Mr. Gallant and his advisers will have questions to raise about some aspects of the revision - for example the requirement that "sexual behaviour" be considered in the screening process in relation to reliability.

Attachment.



T. D. Finn

Privy Council Office
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