

G 355-9-1 (Vol. 10)

Your Ref: [REDACTED]

May 30, 1962.

CONFIDENTIAL

The O.C. "A" Division,
R.C.M.P. - OTTAWA, Ontario.

Re: Security - Screening of Personnel
Applicants and Employees Generally
(Federal Govt.)

This refers to "A" Division memorandum dated February 21, 1962 over the signature of the Officer in Charge, Security and Intelligence Branch. The difficulties experienced in interpretation of Interim Instruction 855 are discussed and clarification of Headquarters intent is sought, specific reference being made to the ambiguity of paragraph 11(b).

2. We have withheld comment for several reasons, one of which has been our desire to establish whether other Divisions are having similar problems. Although certain impediments have been encountered elsewhere, the offending paragraph is apparently causing particular concern to Security and Intelligence personnel in your Division. We agree that the terminology is ambiguous, but it is purposely so since it must provide a standard to be met in all cases and yet leave sufficient elasticity to permit Divisions to develop satisfactory alternative sources. From the experience gained during our survey we are now of the opinion that certain clarification should be provided and with this in mind it is Headquarters intention to amend Interim Instruction 855 as soon as possible. In the interval, however, we are anxious to provide some measure of relief by amplifying our instructions insofar as they relate to the points raised in the submission first mentioned above.

3. The requirements of our customer departments are many and varied and in an effort to cope with them it is necessary for this Headquarters to maintain just under one hundred policy files. Obviously such varied commitments could not be incorporated into one short directive and consequently, in framing Interim Instruction 855 it was our intention that paragraph 11 should provide general guidance concerning the basic requirements of all Security Screening. Here we must point out that in most instances our customer departments do not indicate the degree of clearance to be accorded the candidate, but merely request a field

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investigation. In some cases the departments are not immediately aware of the sensitivity of the project on which the candidate will be employed this being determined only after a favourable report has been received. Panel Directive 29 rules that a field investigation is mandatory only if clearance to TOP SECRET or higher is required, a stipulation of which all security officers are aware. This then, is the problem with which we are faced and accordingly it must be recognized that basic requirements of a security screening or character investigation do not depend on the degree of clearance being sought. A security officer may ask for a field investigation and at the same time indicate that the contemplated position requires clearance to SECRET. Once having received a favourable report arising out of a field investigation he is quite justified under the terms of Panel Directive 29 in subsequently clearing the candidate to TOP SECRET should the changing conditions of employment reflect that such action is necessary. It therefore follows that in any screening investigation the basic requirements as outlined in paragraph 11 of Interim Instruction 855 must be followed as completely as possible. If for some reason this is not practicable, the circumstances prompting the omission or alternative procedure should be included in the report.

4. Concerning the interpretation of paragraph 11(b) it was our intention that this sub-paragraph should apply not only to the applicant, but equally to his relatives. We point out that this is implied in the first sentence of paragraph 11(b) where one of the Division's responsibilities is stated to be "Interviewing all employers listed on the Personal History Form". We would also ask that the final sentence of the same sub-paragraph be considered, i.e. "If an applicant requests that no approach be made to his present employer, additional care should be taken to determine character and reliability from alternative sources". Here we would suggest that the necessity of making specific reference to the applicant serves to illustrate that the other requirements of the paragraph are also applicable to the applicant's relatives. We find it difficult to visualize a set of circumstances which would prompt an applicant's relative to ask that his employer be not interviewed.

5. The submission under review makes reference to the increased work load occasioned by the necessity of interviewing the employers of relatives. This is a very real problem, and one toward which we are not unsympathetic. We cannot however, agree that the solution is to lower our standard of screening nor do we agree that the equivalent of a separate security enquiry must be conducted with respect to each relative. We do ask that when practicable, investigation be carried out at the indicated place of employment to confirm that the relative is actually so employed and at the same time, to make limited enquiries sufficient to satisfy the investigator that the relative is not of questionable character. Political reliability is not so much the factor to be established here, but should adverse political information be available it should not be overlooked.

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6. There is some merit to the viewpoint expressed in paragraph 6 of your S.I.B. Officer's letter wherein it is suggested that the value of extensive enquiries into the relatives of applicants would appear to be questionable in relation to the effort involved. We also agree in principle with the statement that derogatory character information on a relative has little effect on the security status of an applicant. We are, however, bound by the decision of the authorities providing our terms of reference and would ask that the following quotation be considered: "The decision as to whether the granting of a clearance is clearly consistent with the interests of security will be a determination based on all available information. Based upon such information a determination shall be made as to whether or not such individual is of unquestioned loyalty, integrity and trustworthiness and of such character, habits AND ASSOCIATES as to cast no doubt upon his discretion or good judgement in the handling of classified information". We would suggest that the specific reference to "associates" as having a bearing on security is most pertinent, as under normal circumstances, an individual has few associates more closely bound to him by ties of kinship, loyalty and affection than the members of his immediate family.

7. The responsibility of this Force is defined in Panel Directive 29 as follows: "The function of an investigating agency IS ONLY to provide all the available information pertinent to both character and loyalty in the form of evaluated factual reports". The Security Officer's responsibility is defined in the same paragraph in these words: "A Security assessment and a clearance based upon such reports is the responsibility of the department or agency concerned and is one which must not be taken lightly". Here we have the division of responsibility. Ours to supply the information -- the Security Officer's to grant or withhold a clearance based on the information supplied. The decision as to whether criminal, communist activities, or character weaknesses on the part of the candidate's relatives should, or should not be a bar to according the candidate a clearance is a decision that the Security Officer must make. If, through an inadequate investigation, we are not able to provide him with all the available information we are, in effect, denying him the tools of his trade.

8. Paragraph 3 of your S.I.B. Officer's submission reflects that it has been general practice to attempt to confirm employment and obtain a character assessment on relatives through alternative sources, such as a person who has had close knowledge of the family over a period of years. If this can be accomplished satisfactorily and if the type of information obtained is comparable to that which might be anticipated from an employer, then this alternative is quite acceptable. The investigator must, however, satisfy this Headquarters that the information is sufficiently reliable to allow the department concerned to reach a decision. Care should be taken to ensure

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that such alternative procedures should not degenerate into general neighbourhood enquiries. In this respect, we agree with the statement set forth in your S & I Branch submission wherein such enquiries are objected to on the grounds that they are "not particularly beneficial".

9. The problem of enquiries at Canadian Government Departments is one that presents difficulty. If prior experience has shown that specific departments are not co-operative and the value of the information which might reasonably be anticipated is not commensurate with the effort involved, then such interviews should not be undertaken. The investigator should, however, include the reason for the omission in his report. In a number of instances we have noted that a helpful assessment of the employee has been obtained from Civil Service Commission records.

10. With reference to the request set forth in paragraph 8 of your S.I.B. Officer's submission concerning the standards of a "Special Assignment" or "S.A." Clearance, this is the highest level of access that can be accorded an individual and the investigation must be the most searching possible. It must cover the applicant or employee, his immediate family and any person to whom he may be reasonably bound by ties of affection, kinship or obligation. Investigation of the candidate must cover the 20 year period immediately preceding the application, or to the subject's eighteenth birthday -- whichever is the earlier. As in all screening, the investigation will, of course, be instituted on the basis of information provided in the personal history form which is required of any candidate for clearance.

11. As previously stated, the basic requirements of all security screenings are set forth in Interim Instruction 855 at paragraph 11. In the case of Special Assignment clearances, the fact that a period of 20 years of the applicant's life must be covered will be indicated by inclusion of the relevant information on the personal history form. The absence of this material can, in certain cases, be explained by the individual's eighteenth birthday lying within the 20 year period.

12. Additional requirements are provided in paragraph 12 of Interim Instruction 855 reflecting that, in certain cases, neighbourhood enquiries as well as at educational institutions are necessary. These two areas of investigation are required only for S.A. and certain types of TOP SECRET Clearances. To avoid confusion resulting from the varying requirements of Government Departments previously mentioned, it is stated in the same instruction that these enquiries would be made only when requested by Headquarters.

13. In resume it may be stated that the basic quality of a screening investigation does not depend upon the degree of clearance being sought. The additional, or supplementary requirements of the investigation do, however, increase with the sensitivity of the clearance required.

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To provide guidance in this respect it is our intention to continue the policy of asking for educational and neighbourhood enquiries only when the degree of clearance being sought reflects that such enquiries are necessary.

J.E.M. Barrette,
for D.S.I., A.O.D.

Inspector,

Handwritten initials and date: 11/11/53

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