

G 369-66

August 13, 1963

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Mr. Wall:

Having carefully considered the report on the 71st meeting of the Security Panel on June 28, 1963 I find that I am not in agreement with the Panel's decision to exclude cases of homosexuality and other serious character defects from the proposed review and appeal system.

Our security screening procedures are designed to identify applicants and employees for employment on classified work who have a recognized potential to be disloyal to Canada, by reason of political unreliability or serious character defect. For many years our efforts were concentrated on detecting persons whose security status might be jeopardized because of their political activities or associations. However, during the past few years, through our increased awareness of the aims of the Soviet Bloc Intelligence Services to recruit agents by pandering and by threat of blackmail, we have placed more emphasis on the detection of serious character weaknesses. As a result, the number of adverse reports to employing departments relating to an applicant or employee with a serious character defect has increased appreciably, and will continue to increase as we become more adept in this area of investigation. Consequently, we may anticipate a corresponding increase in the number of persons whose employment with the government is placed in jeopardy because of a serious character defect. Therefore, if an appeal system is to be introduced to protect individual rights it must, in the interests of justice, be made available to this type of person also.

I do not believe that because a character weakness can usually be established as a matter of fact persons being considered for dismissal on security grounds due to a character weakness should not be afforded recourse to any appeal or review system that may be provided. The proposed procedures are predicated on a recognized need for justice and equality. Therefore the review or appeal may be based not only on the security information but also

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on the judgement made on the basis of that information as to the degree of security risk involved. In cases involving human frailties there may be extenuating circumstances which are not present in cases involving political unreliability. A system of review would no doubt do much to ensure that all the circumstances of each case are given consideration, thereby making final decisions equitable and just.

Of recent date the public's interest in matters of security has been clearly illustrated in the press. While they disapprove of poor security risks being employed in vulnerable positions they are just as concerned about any real or alleged injustices against government employees. At the same time it has been our observation that the public does not distinguish between a security decision based on a character weakness and one based on political unreliability. Any procedure which even suggests a double standard of justice will invoke an immediate critical reaction.

While I continue to be opposed to the introduction of a formal appeal procedure I firmly believe that if such a system is to be implemented it must be made available to every government employee who is being considered for dismissal on security grounds.

Yours very truly,

C.W. Harvison,
Commissioner

This letter was not sent, but Insp. Barrette directs that it remain on file; (see A-5 d/48-63 on 6369-66)

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