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SECURITY - CLASSIFICATION - DE SÉCURITÉ

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OUR FILE/NOTRE RÉFÉRENCE

6000-10-C-30

YOUR FILE/VOTRE RÉFÉRENCE

DATE

March 31, 1980.

SUBJECT
OBJETThe Fruit Machine

Several of the appendices of the RCMP report on Homosexuality and Canadian Internal Security (6000-10-C-30) refer to the establishment of a research programme aimed at objectivity testing for homosexual tendencies. Reference to this research programme can also be found on p. 600 of Betke and Horrall's Canada's Security Service: An Historical Outline, and in paragraph 102 of the unabridged version of the Report of the Royal Commission on Security (4000-5). The Commission recommended that the programme continue "as a Canadian contribution to the development of the investigative process".

The Fruit Machine was an apparatus combining the Hess-Polt pupillary visual stimuli test, the McCleary Palmar Sweat test, and the plethysmograph to measure pulse rate. A clinical experiment involving this apparatus was apparently established under the auspices of the Privy Council Office as a means of objectivity testing for homosexuality. There are several missing links in our documentation on the story - the precise authorization, extent and termination of the project. It supposedly petered out sometime in the mid 1960's still in the testing stage. I suggest that we do not inquire further into this matter; it is not a current issue, except as raised by Jeff Sallot, and we have no evidence that it ever passed the experimental stage. The following is the story of the "Fruit Machine" as I could piece it together from the documentation at hand.

In 1958, after dealing with a difficult security case that involved a character weakness, Prime Minister Diefenbaker directed the Security Panel "to determine whether it might be possible to treat cases of character weaknesses differently from those involving ideological beliefs, without of course weakening present security safeguards". As a result the Security Panel produced a memorandum on May 12, 1959, entitled Security Cases involving Character Weaknesses with Special Reference to the Problem of Homosexuality (SP-199, Appendix 7 of 6000-10-C-30). The memorandum concluded that it did not appear feasible to make any changes in existing policy, and that the case of the homosexual was particularly difficult because of the paucity of information available generally or obtainable in specific cases.

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Following up on this report the RCMP submitted another report for discussion in May 1960, to the Secretary of Cabinet, Mr. R.B. Bryce. (Homosexuality within the Federal Government Service, May 1960, Appendix 11). A special group of the Security Panel met on September 20 and 29, 1960, to discuss the RCMP report. In the record of these meetings there is the suggestion by Commissioner Harvison that "a group of experts be brought together to consider the feasibility of devising tests which would assist in the selection of persons to be appointed to positions considered vulnerable to blackmail" (Appendix 13). This suggestion was incorporated, though ranked lowest in the list of priorities, in a document meant for discussion by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice (Security Cases Involving Homosexuality, Dec. 19, 1960, Appendix 15). The Prime Minister and Minister of Justice never met to discuss this report, although it was read by the Prime Minister (letter to the Hon. E.D. Fulton, Minister of Justice, from Mr. R.B. Bryce, Clerk of the Privy Council, Feb. 2, 1961).

The Privy Council Office proceeded, even before the report to the Prime Minister was finished, to establish a research group to study homosexuality (Letter to Commissioner Harvison from Mr. R.B. Bryce, Clerk of the Privy Council, Dec. 20, 1960, Appendix 15). Dr. F.R. Wake, a psychologist from Carleton University, submitted a preliminary report to the Security Panel in June 1960. After studying in the United States, and visiting their security intelligence establishments with Mr. Don Wall of the Privy Council Office, Dr. Wake submitted a further report to the Privy Council Office (Report on Special Project, 1962, Appendix 12). The experiment he proposed in this report was centered around the "Fruit Machine", a photographic electronic apparatus to record visual and visceral responses to various stimuli. The project apparently got under way. In 1963 the RCMP solicited the co-operation of 15 known male homosexuals for the clinical experiment. The Force claimed it did not have contact with the lesbian community and therefore could not supply any female subjects. The Force also provided technicians from the Identification Branch. The Force felt that the normal "control group" subjects should come from other government departments. (It is not inconceivable that the reason for this was due to exactly what John Sawatsky describes as the response of RCMP members to the request to act as experimental subjects).

This is where the story ends in our documentation. The project apparently came to an end due to the lack of sufficient individuals to test. Further documentation could perhaps be found in RCMP file IP-165-2, Vols. 4-6.



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