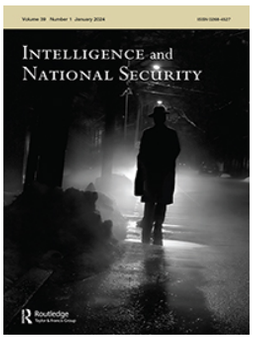

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ABSTRACT

This article examines an interval during 1970–1971 during which the Canadian Federal government established a clandestine body code-named FAN TAN within the Prime Minister's Office to conduct surveillance of, and 'political action' against, the Quebec separatist movement. This organization, led by Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister Marc Lalonde, sought to persuade the Security Service of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to provide intelligence in support of what was a party political entity based in the Prime Minister's Office and not in the actual national security machinery of the Privy Council Office. We examine how John Starnes, Director General of the Security Service, went to considerable lengths to resist this effort to politicize his agency, and to warn the government of the potential scandal should FAN TAN become publicly known. We conclude that the FAN TAN affair leaves a number of serious questions to be answered such as: who actually originated the scheme, its legality as well as propriety, what intelligence was used or continued to be collected after the RCMP sought to end its involvement, and why the matter was ignored by the subsequent McDonald Commission that prompted the dissolution of the Security Service.[1]

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> . . . the Security Service has always adopted a completely non-partisan stance. Its activities have never been in support of any political party and it has been at pains always to preserve that posture. To have done otherwise would have been quite unacceptable in our society. John Starnes, Submission to the McDonald Commission16 December 1977[2]

Introduction

The Security Service of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), precursor to today's Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), is generally remembered today as the quintessential domestic intelligence rogue elephant, burning barns, conducting warrantless clandestine search and seizures and circulating domestic disinformation. All of these nominally illegal and supposedly unauthorized actions took place in the context of the rise of the secessionist, 'separatist' movement in the French-speaking Province of Quebec. This included a brief but intense crisis during October 1970 due to the actions of a separatist terrorist group, the *Front de libération du Québec* or FLQ which prompted the government to invoke the War Measures Act in the Province. As a consequence of revelations in the press about these activities, and others, in July of 1977 Canada's Solicitor General Francis Fox announced the creation of the 'Commission of Inquiry Concerning Certain Actions of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police', headed by Judge David Cargill McDonald and subsequently known as the McDonald Commission. The most direct consequence of this was the abolition of the RCMP Security

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Service (hereafter just 'the Security Service'), and the establishment of CSIS on a clear statutory footing with an explicit statement of the agency's powers and an equally explicit regime for oversight and accountability. Subsequently, the RCMP Security Service has lived on in Canada's collective political memory as an out-of-control, heavy-handed, law-breaking, department of so-called 'dirty tricks'.[3]

Fragmentary leaks and archive document releases have since served to keep discussion and doubts alive, despite lacking the depth, detail or contextual information necessary to form really robust and reliable judgements about the events in question, their nuances or significance.[4] Similar concerns have also been sustained in a literature on Security Service vetting and countersubversion that has largely focused on surveillance of the political left and marginalized communities[5] but with comparatively little reference to strategic exigencies of the period or questions of higher authorization and responsibility or governmental knowledge. Issues raised here, however, have largely paralleled discussions of vetting and countersubversion elsewhere.[6] This suggests that these problems essentially reflected historical difficulties affecting vetting and the intrinsically fraught nature of countersubversion as a security intelligence task more than any peculiarity of RCMP Security Service activities.

By contrast, senior Security Service officials, most notably its former Director General John Starnes, always maintained that there had been a government mandate authorizing operations in Quebec. It is worth keeping in mind that, at the time, McDonald acknowledged that much of the 'illegality' of Security Service activities resulted from the lack of an explicit statutory framework for intrusive investigatory powers (as they would be termed today).[7] And, over the subsequent decades, a sporadic drip-feed of documentary releases under the Access to Information Act has prompted some challenge and revision of the received wisdom. In 1992, *Globe and Mail* journalist Richard Cleroux gained access to the minutes of a December 1969 Cabinet Meeting that clearly indicate that then-Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau advocated the use of military and Security Service intelligence capabilities against separatism.[8] A year later, academic Reg Whitaker published an article, drawing on other releases, that acknowledged that government claims that there had been a Security Service warning intelligence failure regarding the FLQ were false. Furthermore, during the crisis Security Service assessments of the FLQ, separatism and of events were 'relatively sophisticated' and 'cooly realistic' amidst borderline panic in other governmental and political quarters.[9] Most recently, Dennis Molinaro has demonstrated that the Security Service was scrupulous about legal compliance and proportionality in undertaking electronic surveillance and telephone intercept.[10] As Whitaker concludes of his analysis of the Security Service's conduct during the FLQ Crisis, by failing to provide a justification for intelligence for the controversial War Measures Act, 'The RCMP Security Service was a somewhat reluctant participant and then a scapegoat when the government later found itself in difficulties justifying its actions'.[11] There has also been new evidence of governmental knowledge of (and even intervention in) vetting criteria and investigations.[12] Indeed, Whitaker, Kealey and Parnaby conclude in their most recent work that the plausible deniability enjoyed by politicians of the era that claim to have had no knowledge of Security Service actions 'has become less plausible with time'.[13] What has been emerging, therefore, is an increasingly nuanced picture of a much more professional and competent organization than is remembered. But one that ran aground on the shoals of Quebec separatism nonetheless.[14] And this was largely a result of the unique policy and security challenges presented by secessionist movements for the contemporary nation-state.

That picture acquires additional depth and nuance from a subsequent release of Privy Council Office (PCO)[15] papers under the Access to Information that carry the covering heading FAN TAN. The FAN TAN papers detail the existence between spring 1971 and winter 1972 of a body within the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) the purpose of which was the surveillance of, and 'political action' against, separatism at large and primarily the non-violent, legal branch of the separatist movement. They also expose attempts by this body to task the Security Service in support of the group's activities – and the successful measures taken by the Director General of the RCMP Security Service John Starnes to rebuff these efforts to politicize the work of that Service. Consequently,

not only did the government consistently turn a blind eye to setting a proper legal framework and guidelines for the RCMP Security Service in its intelligence collection for at least a decade leading up to the 1970s, this despite the Service itself agitating for reform. In fact, the Prime Minister's aggressive stance toward separatism and its calls for the RCMP (and military intelligence) to target it set the tone for what was to come. Moreover, the government directly targeted a legitimate political party (the PQ) from a secret surveillance unit set up within the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and then tried to task the Security Service in support of that party political experiment in domestic espionage, despite the warnings from the former Director General of the RCMP Security Service John Starnes.

The FAN TAN files

The FAN TAN file covers several separate sets of papers foliated together under the title FAN TAN with the reference 'Exhibit MC-15'. This appears to be because some or all of them had been included with a written submission to the McDonald Commission by John Starnes. The papers can be broadly divided into papers dealing specifically with the FAN TAN incident; Starnes' submission to the McDonald Commission; some contextual materials around Starnes' accession to the post of Director General of Security and Intelligence (DGSI) and advice to his successor in 1973, General Michael Dare; and an updated version of the papers released to Cleroux in 1992 possibly including some additional materials around the crucial 1969 Cabinet Meeting that provided the Security Service, and, indeed, the military, with the political mandate that created the 'permissive environment' which was the context for the activities and scandals that followed.

The papers are a mix of original correspondence between members of the Security Service, civil servants and senior politicians, and a large number 'Memoranda for the Record' of meetings and discussions written by Starnes himself to record these events. Starnes' submission to McDonald runs some 57 pages and covers the entire period of his role as DGSI, and detailed side discussions on intelligence policy, issues and principles. Many, but not all, of the papers have been redacted to some degree, with some documents escaping untouched while others are entirely blank sheets. It is important to point out that that the assorted Memoranda for the record give us *Starnes'* version of events, as does his lengthy note to the Commission. There is no internal correspondence from within the 'Vidal Group', or record of discussions within the PMO regarding that body. There are, however, internal RCMP documents that also show how FAN TAN triggered profoundly different responses from different parts of the Security Service, and Starnes' almost frantic efforts to get the intelligence toothpaste back in its tube in the face of a looming potential 'political scandal of major proportions'.

The RCMP security service

In 1951, in the wake of revelations from Soviet defector Igor Gouzenko and at the height of the Korean War, the Canadian government created a secret emergency order, P.C. 3486 to permit the RCMP to wiretap anyone suspected of disloyalty. This became known as Canada's first wiretapping authority for its intelligence services at the time, the RCMP. When that power was set to expire in 1954, in order to preserve this intelligence collection ability, the Service needed some type of legal authority to continue it. But the problem was the federal government wanted the RCMP to have this power but did not want the public to know it did. In June 1954, the government settled on using Canada's existing legislation to target the leaking of classified information, the Official Secrets Act, as the vehicle in this endeavor. Section 11 in particular would be the section designated to authorize wiretapping. This was the search warrant section of the Act, and the argument the government made was that electronic communications could be considered evidence that could be seized. As Canada entered the 1960s, it did so with this regime in place, with the RCMP writing warrants and submitting them to the phone company for execution, and while the legislation made no mention of requiring minister approval, the RCMP still brought its warrant requests to the minister for approval.

The system evolved over the decade with the RCMP taking care to ensure that warrants were not used to 'fish' for leads and that there was sufficient justification provided to the Minister to approve the Service's warrants but these warrants saw no federal court and had no judicial oversight. The government of the day, however, was always aware of the RCMP's secret wiretapping authority and its targets.[16]

In time-honoured Commonwealth tradition, to conduct these security investigations, the RCMP established a Special Branch which by the 1960s had developed into the Directorate of Security Intelligence.[17] The Directorate was chiefly staffed by regular RCMP personnel recruited in ordinary course who subsequently underwent additional screening and training, plus a smaller cohort of 'special constables on surveillance duties' and civilians as 'translators, technicians, researchers and public servants on clerical duties'.[18] By 1970, the Directorate had evolved into a semi-autonomous agency-within-an-agency RCMP Security Service, referred to in internal correspondence simply as the Security Service. The change was due to recommendations made in 1969 by the Report on the Royal Commission of Security, known as the Mackenzie Commission. It wanted to see the intelligence function of the RCMP civilianized because law enforcement lacked adequate and efficient analytical capability. It also weighed in on the Official Secrets Act and claimed that national security warrants pertaining to intelligence should be treated differently than law enforcement ones and that they should fall under ministerial authority. The Commission wanted to see changes in legislation, as Canada's allies like the US and UK were already ahead in this realm by introducing legislation to deal with this type of intelligence collection. The RCMP wanted changes too.[19]

The Mackenzie Commission also rejected the Official Secrets Act as a plausible stator basis for the domestic interception of communications. Even as he took over, John Starnes, the new Director General of Security and Intelligence, wanted a new National Security Act and had a draft prepared and voiced it to both Commissioner William Higgitt and Solicitor General Warren Allmand. It was overly broad in some areas but represented a clear attempt by the Security Service to put together a legal mandate and clear articulation of its powers and investigative authorities when the government had so far refused to do so. And it was rejected. Instead, the government buried a new amendment to the Official Secrets Act, the addition of section 16 to cover wiretapping in, as Martin Friedland put it, the 'named or arguably misnamed' Protection of Privacy Act of 1974.[20] The question of oversight was, however, essentially stalled after the Mackenzie Commission rejected the notion of parliamentary oversight.

It was not the responsibility of the security service to create its own mandate and its own legislative framework. This task fell to the federal government but instead the government's clear preference was to have the RCMP Security Service operate without a well-defined legal mandate for intelligence collection and to secretly carry out its duties free from the scrutiny of the public or the courts, with only the government aware of its activities. Throughout the 1950s and the 1960s the government was in favor of this regime and did not appear overly concerned with altering this arrangement. It was precisely this arrangement that was in place in the 1970s and contributed to an environment where the RCMP could secretly carry out the government's wishes to aggressively collect intelligence on separatism, free from scrutiny or oversight.

The separatist problem: national security versus national unity

The events covered by the FAN TAN papers commence only a handful of months after the October Crisis, and in the context of a steady growth of separatist sentiment in Quebec since the early 1960s that would lead to the Parti Quebecois being elected in the provincial legislature half a decade later. Separatist movements like that taking shape in Quebec at the time present something of a dilemma from a security intelligence point of view. On the one hand, secession of a part of a nation state is, by definition, a threat to the territorial integrity of that nation state. On the other hand, the pursuit of independence by legal and constitutional means falls within the normally accepted boundaries of free speech and legitimate dissent.

Separatism can, therefore, present a very specific problem in terms of the risks of politicization from the perspective of any domestic security service. Since the 2003 invasion of Iraq, discussions of politicization have largely focused on the policy contamination of foreign intelligence analysis. Domestic security intelligence, however, has always struggled with its own, quite different version of politicization which has largely been concerned with the boundary conditions between matters of national security and those of partisan politics. This distinction was expressed most clearly in the Commonwealth sphere by UK Home Secretary's 1952 Directive to MI5 that, *inter alia*, its work 'should be kept absolutely free from any political bias or influence' and it should avoid 'any suggestion that is concerned with the interests of any particular section of the community, or with any other matter than Defence of the Realm as a whole'.[21] It is, after all, essential in a democracy, that a security service avoids taking action that hints of the kind of regime protection generally viewed as axiomatic to authoritarian regimes. As a consequence, the UK government made a particular effort to promote some version of the Maxwell-Fyfe instructions in their advice and guidance to Dominion governments setting up their own post-war security services, most visibly in Australia and New Zealand.[22]

The Mackenzie Commission took up this problem with specific reference to Quebec separatism, arguing presciently in the FAN TAN context that Separatism in Quebec, if it commits no illegalities and appears to seek its ends by legal and democratic means, must be regarded as a political movement, *to be dealt with in a political rather than security context*. That being said, were there evidence of anti-democratically 'subversive' or 'seditious' intentions or 'any suggestion of foreign influence' then the question did become one of security and 'at the very least' the Federal Government 'must take adequate steps to inform itself of any such threats'. Indeed, the Commission noted, while 'more moderate' separatists 'have up till now been conducting a largely political campaign', there were factions and individuals inclined towards 'subversive' or 'seditious' activities who 'have achieved positions of influence in at least some of the separatist groups and agencies, helped by the often bitter factionalism within the movement itself'.[23] These concerns, and especially the problem of overlapping membership between 'political' moderates and 'seditious' extremists in the various separatist groups, were brought into especially sharp relief just over a year later during the FLQ Crisis.

The 1969 mandate and the 'permissive environment'

Pierre Trudeau's government held little back in its views of Quebec separatism. From Trudeau's memoir statements that the full force of the law should be employed against it, to recent American diplomatic document releases that state he was willing to leverage the Power Corporation of Canada to bring unemployment in Quebec up to 20 per cent to damage the independence movement, his disdain for it was known and well documented.[24] But Cabinet documents from 1969 and 1970 offer not only a candid view of the PM's views but how far the PM was willing to go to collect more information about it. On 17 December 1969, the Prime Minister signed a memorandum for the Cabinet Committee on Security and Intelligence convened to discuss what action the government planned on taking when it came to dealing with the 'disruptive forces at play in Canada, and particularly in Quebec'. This was less than a year from the October Crisis and separatism was regarded as the top security threat. While a letter from the Clerk of the Privy Council Robert Gordon Robertson notes that while PCO prepared the draft, he asked the PM to carefully look it over to ensure it reflected his views as the PM was to sign it as coming from him. He also reminded the PM of a discussion they had where they agreed that 'you as Prime Minister should take initiative in this matter'.[25]

Within the memo, the PM states that the government feared that the FLQ could gain supporters and lead to creating chaos in the province. The PM recognized that in spite of its fears of a large-scale insurrectionary movement, separatism could not be dealt with just in the realm of security. It had to anticipate difficulties in dealing with it, plan and put in place 'preventative control measures' and plan and execute 'long-term curative' measures. But to do all this it recognized that collecting

information, or rather, intelligence, was of paramount importance. The PM recognized that the RCMP was currently the main source of intelligence, but it was 'hampered' by several factors. Jurisdictional wrangling was a problem, but the PM believed that the RCMP could go further and do more to acquire more intelligence, but the documents are redacted where the PM suggests what the RCMP could do. The PM does note that 'the risks are such that they would require specific governmental instructions to proceed along these lines'. Whatever the government wanted the RCMP to do, it was of a high enough risk that the Service could not undertake the activity without government signing off on it. The PM stated the government would want several questions answered, such as: what were the motivations behind the bombing incidents that occurred in Montreal (they would later be attributed to the FLQ)? How widespread was separatism in the Quebec government, public service, universities, unions, etc.? What were the primary causes of unrest and were there any unique qualities to riots in French Canada? The memo outlines that answers to all these questions demonstrated a need for 'security intelligence' as well as 'political intelligence' and information on 'mass psychology and behavior'. The areas where the memo suggests information should be gathered and how are redacted, but some are not, and include an expansion and re-direction of 'information-gathering functions of party organizations at all levels'. The government was not averse to having more information collected about political parties in Quebec.

The memo goes on to consider possible outcomes such as a disintegration in order in Quebec and the possibility of re-examining statutes connecting to providing aid to the civil power, a sign that the PM was already exploring the use of the War Measures Act. But the following passage clearly illustrates the PM's views on separatism and what the government was willing to do to target it:

> If it is agreed that the immediate and urgent objective is to neutralize seditious and terroristic activities, the federal, provincial and municipal forces of law and order will have to work closely together to bring the full force of the law to bear upon those who engage in criminal activities. In addition, the words and actions of the 'subversive' or 'revolutionaries' who do not actually engage in criminal acts must be exposed for their inconsistency and their deleterious psychological effect. The 'waverers' or 'fence-sitters' must be persuaded of the value of commitment to the cause of national unity, and those already committed must be fully supported in their efforts.[26]

Not only was the PM committed to bringing the full force of the law upon separatists, but those who did not engage in criminal acts also posed a threat and their 'deleterious psychological effect' needed to be exposed. Among the PM's conclusions, were that 'There is an immediate need to establish a central body to coordinate and analyze information from all sources, both covert and overt sources to provide a cohesive base for decisions as to policies and programmes'. Furthermore, RCMP should give a detailed report on all aspects of separatism.[27] The document makes it clear that there were few places the PM was not willing to go to in order to crush separatism including the creation of a separate body to coordinate and analyze information.

On 19 December 1969, the Cabinet Committee on Security and Intelligence met. Present at the meeting were the PM, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Solicitor General, the President of the Treasury Board, the Minister of National Defence, the Minister of Justice and the Secretary of State. Senior government members of the national defence and intelligence community were also present. The meeting was to discuss the PM's memo. In introducing his memo, the PM made it clear that 'no modern state would allow a threat of this magnitude to its unity and integrity without mounting a consistent and coordinated defence against it'. He stressed the urgency of the problem of separatism and that more sources of information were needed beyond the RCMP. He was undoubtedly the most hawkish on the subject at the meeting. Others attempted to introduce some caution such as the Minister of Justice John Turner who expressed some caution in that the PQ should not be viewed as a law and order problem but a unity one in order to avoid the danger of being accused of using 'law and order as an anti-separatist tool'. Secretary of State for External Affairs Mitchell Sharp agreed and that 'great care' needed to be taken if more information was to be gathered though portions of his statements are redacted in terms of the target of the collection. The vast majority of the redactions in these documents fall under Section 14 (s.14) of the Access to

Information Act which is an injury test applied at protecting the role of the federal government in provincial/federal relations. It appears that the PM's memo had suggested gathering information on a wide swath of Quebec citizens because Sharp cautioned that 'involvement in counter-espionage against Canadian citizens who were not acting illegally would pose serious risks to the federal position and could greatly increase Separatist strength. The Government could be accused of persecuting a legitimate political movement'. More of the PM's views that appear redacted in the original memo were possibly exposed by the comments of other ministers.

A significant point of difference was the role, or not, of the military in the response to separatism. The Solicitor General George James McIlraith stated that he 'welcomed the memorandum and the opportunity to discuss this important subject. He was concerned at the suggestion that the intelligence resources of the Armed Forces might be increased to deal with Separatism, in that there might be a conflict in having the Forces deal with essentially a civilian problem'. McIlraith does not state who suggested this, but he offers this comment immediately in response to discussing the PM's memo. The minutes make no mention of anyone stating this before his comment. The PM's memo outlined that information gathering had to be expanded and that the RCMP faced jurisdictional issues, but the information was redacted, and based on this comment by McIlraith it appears likely that the PM's memo suggested having the Canadian military gather intelligence on the Canadian population.[28] That this was even a consideration demonstrates how myopic the PM had become in viewing the threat of separatism that gross violations of Canadians' privacy and rights were on the table. The Minister of National Defence, however, expressed his support for the military to gather information on Canadians. The PM did not directly address the debate but stated that it was necessary to ascertain the difference between the 'law and order problem, which included aid to the civil power' and the problem of national unity and separatism and that much more information on the first issue was needed to address the second, but Cabinet should discuss a separate bureau to deal with both. The PM also set the tone for how separatism should be viewed by stating that at one-point communism was such a 'menace to democratic structures' that police had more power to collect information on it and the government should consider if the same techniques 'should be applied to all separatists'.[29]

But the PM faced pushback from his ministers on this question with Sharp, Turner and Gérard Pelletier the Secretary of State, all espousing the position that targeting revolutionaries might not 'disturb' the Canadian public, but it would be 'a different matter' were the same techniques being levelled against all Separatists. In the course of this discussion, the RCMP Commissioner Higgitt weighed in, making it clear that he would require 'clear direction from the government before embarking on the same investigative activities against Separatists as he now conducted against Communists because of the extreme sensitivity of the problem'. The Commissioner added that it was not that it was not possible, but he felt obliged to 'point out the risks involved'. In conclusion the committee agreed that the 'law and order' issue may have to be dealt with differently than the 'separatism' issue and the new 'central body' needed to be studied further.[30]

The notes of the RCMP Commissioner about this meeting also provide more information on the takeaways for the Service. The notes stated that there was a 'need to gather more and better info to co-ordinate it and put into effective use'. Again, much is redacted in the documents citing s.14, but the notes indicated that a redacted portion proved the need for a central mechanism to analyze information. The notes also highlight that the 'situation in Quebec cannot be viewed as exclusive in context of "national security" or law and order – it is to be viewed in the light of long-term national objectives'.[31] The conclusion then for the RCMP was that the line between law and order and national security did not exist in Quebec. The focus was on the long-term, on the collecting of more and more information on separatism as the PM certainly advocated for. The documents reveal that the PM had wanted more intelligence on separatism and up for consideration was even utilizing the military to collect intelligence on law-abiding Quebecers. The lack of a legal framework and guidelines for the RCMP on intelligence collection, combined with the zealousness of the PM in going after separatism was a recipe for the scandals that would emerge in the 1970s involving the

RCMP. But what was not known publicly at the time, was how personally invested the PM had become in collecting intelligence on separatism. However, the cabinet meeting minutes stated the creation of a central committee needed to be studied further, which may have been inserted to accommodate the views of ministers. A letter to the PM about his memo from D. F. Wall of the Privy Council, just two days before the cabinet meeting, tells the PM that in regard to a central information body 'it seems to us desirable that any such organization should be under the control and direction of the Prime Minister, and that it should be located in your Office or in the Privy Council Office'.[32] Indeed, what followed was the creation of secret unit within the PMO specifically targeted at separatism and the PQ.

Opening overtures

This secret unit to combine intelligence and 'political action' would come to be known by a number of names. Officially, it was designated the 'Organisme Administratif du groupe de travail sur le fonctionnement du Fédéralisme' (the 'Administrative Organ of the Working Group on the Functionality of Federalism'). In Security Service correspondence it was sometimes referred to as 'the Vidal group' for its head of operations Claude Vidal. Officially, however, in Security Service internal correspondence the 'Vidal group' and its relations with the Service were assigned the codename FAN TAN. Under this cryptonym, FAN TAN would create schisms not just between John Starnes and the government but within the Security Service itself.

Based in Room 1505, 130 Albert Street, Ottawa, the FAN TAN group was headed by Prime Minister Trudeau's Principal Secretary Marc Lalonde. It is important to stress, in terms of what followed, that this placed the group within the Prime Minister's Office, that is to say, his party *political* office and not the governmental national security apparatus centred in the Privy Council Office. Lalonde had an office at Albert Street as well as in the PMO, and worked there each day from 10:30 am to noon.[33] With Lalonde only on site for an hour and a half each morning, day-to-day direction was provided by one Claude Vidal, while the 'gathering of information' was headed by a McGill-educated lawyer and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister called Jean-Pierre Mongeau.[34] Vidal had previously been appointed by the government to head the Company of Young Canadians, a youth group sponsored by the federal government. While there he faced accusations of implementing a federalist agenda on the group and exerting excessive bureaucratic control over the group.[35] The military liaison had clearly been appointed in complete disregard of the Solicitor General's concerns about military involvement in countering Quebec separatism. It took the form of Lt. Col. Henri Chassé,[36] although in fairness, Chassé's previous posting had been highly relevant to the Vidal Group's work. During the October Crisis, he had been the military liaison to the Strategic Operations Centre (SOC) in the PMO. There he had worked with the RCMP SOC liaison to develop 'the most comprehensive picture of the FLQ'.[37] Chassé's role at Albert Street was to act as liaison with the military and with the Security Service. In April 1971, the plan was to grow the 'Organisme' to a staff of around 20.[38]

Efforts to arrange an intelligence sharing arrangement between the Vidal Group and the Security Service appear originally to have been choreographed by Jean-Pierre Goyer, Solicitor General at the time. According to Starnes' account of events, in April that year Goyer had 'asked [Starnes] to explore ways in which the Security Service could cooperate with the unit established under Mr Lalonde's control in the Prime Minister's Office to deal with separatist activity'.[39] Consequently, on 16 April Mongeau telephoned a Sub-Inspector Yelle[40] at the Security Service to request information on a matter redacted in the FAN TAN papers. In one of more follow-up calls by a Staff Sergeant Pethick and Sgt, A.N. Cameron, Mongeau informed the latter two that 'he is heading a committee' to consider the redacted matter and made a request for additional information (the specifics of which are also redacted). Cameron considered this 'an unusual request when one considers that our records facilities are available to him' and a formal letter of response was forwarded to Starnes for signature which went out the same day.[41] Mongeau responded to Starnes on 23 April and assured him that '[a]s agreed,

no use will be made of the material transmitted to me without your knowledge or consent'.[42] Furthermore, any material received from the Security Service by the Vidal Group would only be used to 'compare this material that is to the ones forwarded to me by other sources' to discern whether 'there is any presence of one group into other groups with which we have some communication'.[43]

As we have seen above, the Security Service's authority to investigate separatism was confined to groups suspected of externally sponsored, illegal and/or potentially violent subversive activities. Consequently, Mongeau's goal appears to have been to use the Service's information to discern if otherwise legally legitimate separatist groups were subject to penetration and possible influence by such subversives. 'In such a case' he assured Starnes 'I will immediately notify your Department'. Mongeau concluded by inviting Starnes to visit the Vidal Group in person so that he could 'explain the work we are actually doing'.[44]

In the event, the visit to the 'Vidal Group' was undertaken by the Officer in Charge of G Branch, Sub-Inspector Joseph Ferraris. G Branch has a significance in the subsequent scandals that would almost single-handedly lead to the demise of the Security Service. It would be described by journalist John Sawatsky in the wake of the McDonald Commission as 'a low in the history of the Security Service'[45] staffed by 'amateur operators'[46] and prone to 'hooliganism'.[47] The warrantless covert entries at the Agence Presse Quebequois Libre (APLQ), headquarters of the PQ, and the burning of the barn at Ste. Anne de la Rochelle were all G Branch adventures. While Sawatsky's language verges on the tendentious and reflects some of the outrage felt in many quarters of Canada's political classes in the wake of the revelations of the 1970s, G Branch was indeed something apart from the rest of the Security Service. It was created shortly before the October Crisis, in September 1970, on the entirely reasonable basis of setting up a specialist capability within the Security Service to deal with separatist militancy and terrorism,[48] much as MI5 would later establish specialist Branches to deal with domestic and international terrorism during the 1980s and 1990s.[49] However, the separatist problem presented the RCMP with an additional difficulty. The force as a whole had historically been dominated by Anglophone Canadians with limited recruitment from and participation by the various Francophone communities across the country. This was at least as true, if not more so, of a 5 Eyes-facing, Anglophile as well as Anglophone Security Service. In the event G Branch was headed by a trio of Anglophone Security Service officers in the form of Ferraris, Donald Cobb and Don McCleery, and Starnes noted in instructions to another part of the Security Service regarding G Branch 'Regrettably, correspondence [from G Branch] intended for other Divisions will still have to be carried out in the English language'.[50]

G Branch was, therefore, established not just to be 'devoted to the problems associated with Quebec separatist terrorist activity' but would be 'capable of conducting business in both the English and French languages'.[51] Lacking a significant number of Francophones internally, the Security Service was forced to recruit for G Branch from the policing rather than security side of the RCMP. The new Branch was, therefore, staffed at the working level by largely law enforcement professionals rather than career intelligence practitioners, and therefore neither trained nor socialized into the standards and conventions of the intelligence community.

On the face of it, however, G Branch was the natural point of contact with the 'Organisme'. But this also meant that the Security Service was represented at the meeting by part of the Service playing to very different rules and standards from its parent organization.

Reporting back to Starnes on 11 May, it was evident that Ferraris liked what he found at Albert Street. In the released copy of his report, there was a paragraph that had been crossed out but left unredacted describing the purpose of 'this new apparatus' as:

> to coordinate all means of action against separatism in order to preserve Canadian unity. Their method of operation will be to gather information from other government departments where necessary but more directly to operate a system of information gathering in the Province of Quebec making use, principally, of the Liberal Party organization.[52]

Ferraris acknowledged that, although the activities of Vidal's Working Group' were 'strictly political' they would, in fact, 'be operating a service somewhat parallel to ours in the Province of Quebec' and 'gathering information through various means'.[53] What those 'means' might have been, however, *has* been redacted. Ferraris also reported that

> what I have seen of this group impresses me very much that is that it will be much more than a straight advisory committee for the government. The people working there are very dynamic and their main occupation will obviously be a direct attack on separatism and subversion in Quebec *through any means at their disposal*.[54]

In something of an aside that should probably have set off alarm bells for him and the rest of G Branch at the time, Ferraris added that what was 'not clear in my mind' was the group's relationship with the formal national security apparatus in the PCO. Even after the visit, he remained unsure of 'whether or not this new operation is parallel to' the PCO's 'office regarding separatism and subversion in Quebec' or if it would eventually 'replace it for certain matters'. His expectation was that Vidal's 'Organisme' 'will certainly take over many of the responsibilities' of the PCO adding 'I would not be surprised, [sic] eventually they even took control of *cases of separatists employed by the Federal Government*'.[55]

Nonetheless, Ferraris judged it 'imperative that we maintain very close contact' with the the Vidal organization.[56] Consequently, he negotiated an intelligence sharing agreement with Vidal, Mongeau and Chassé. Although many of the details have been redacted from the FAN TAN papers, the agreement included provisions that the Vidal group would provide the Security Service with 'all the information they obtain which has subversive connotations' and that where such subversive activities 'require additional investigation' the Security Service would take on responsibility for that investigation and not the Organisme. In return, *inter* redacted *alia* the Security Service would provide Chassé with twice weekly 'situation reports' on 'what activities of a subversive nature are expected to take place in Quebec over the next few days'. In return, information transmitted by the Security Service to the group would be kept amongst the leadership, other members of the Working Group would not know where the information originated, nor would it be sent to third parties without the agreement of the Service. And above all, if any Security Service information were to be used 'operationally', then 'all necessary caution' to ensure 'that, at no time, will the Security Service be implicated with the group's activities'.[57]

Ferraris concluded with the bureaucratically artful observation that '[a]lthough this project is very worthwhile . . . it will place an excessive burden on the already meagre resources of my branch [sic]'. Consequently, 'if we are to cooperate fully . . . and do our share of the work, additional resources will have to be available to "G" Branch [sic]'.

In later years, Ferraris would later be sternly critical of government over-reaction to the separatist threat, comparing invoking the War Measures act with using 'an atomic bomb for a riot on St Catharine Street'.[58] In the spring of 1971, however, he clearly found the establishment of a 'parallel' covert cell inside a party political office collecting intelligence up to and including running HUMINT sources and undertaking political action against a domestic intelligence movement an acceptable level of escalation. From the G Branch point of view, the Security Service would be only too happy to be providing intelligence to, and receiving intelligence from, a secret unit that functioned within the PMO with neither constitutional nor statutory authority (even the broad reach of Crown Prerogative could not plausibly be stretched to include the political offices of the Federal Liberal Party), subject to no external oversight or accountability, and which was intended to spy on Quebecers in a search for 'subversives' while employing the auspices of the Liberal Party to do so.

Flap on FAN TAN

If Ferraris was enthused, Starnes was aghast. On receipt of Ferraris' report the Director General of Security and Intelligence embarked upon a damage control campaign that would ultimately require the direct, personal involvement of the Prime Minister. As he

would later state to the MacDonald Commission 'when the full dimensions of the proposition became clear to me I entertained serious doubts about the propriety of attempting to involve the Security Service in activity of this kind'. Indeed, had Trudeau sanctioned the enterprise when it was brought to his attention 'it was a matter upon which I was prepared to resign and to make public my reasons for doing so'.[59] It is important to keep in mind that Starnes was not a career RCMP officer but had been an outside appointment as the first civilian head of the Security Service. His prior career had been in the Canadian Foreign Service, although he had a substantial intelligence background. During the Second World War, he had served in the Canadian Intelligence Corps and between 1958–1962 headed the Department of External Affairs national security liaison office in which role, *inter alia*, he chaired the Canadian Joint Intelligence Committee and oversaw a reorganization of the country's intelligence interagency apparatus.[60]

One of Starnes' first moves to try and deal with the situation was to meet with both the Commissioner of the RCMP and the Solicitor General on 21 May. He wanted to ensure all parties, including Lalonde and the PM understood the political risk with this unit. He stated that it seemed obvious that there were considerable risks involved in the establishment within the Prime Minister's office, of a unit, the principal purpose of which was to carry out political action against a legally constituted political party in Canada. i.e., the Parti Quebecois.[61] He noted that the lack of expertise within this group made it likely it could become public which means the government would face a scandal about using government resources and employees for political purposes. If the RCMP was exposed as being connected to it, the 'position of the government would be that much worse'. Starnes believed this could become a scandal of 'major proportions'. Because of this, he ensured that no contact with the unit 'remained on their files' and nothing further would be documented to 'confirm such relationships as we already have had with the unit'. Starnes went on to state, and it is worth quoting in full:

> It was one thing for the Liberal Party to use its apparatus to oppose and defeat the aims of a political party such as the Parti Quebecois. It was quite another matter for the Security Service to assist those efforts and in such a way as to provide proof positive of that assistance. It seemed to me that the government could be seriously criticized for attempting to use the facilities of the Security Service to carry out political action, of one kind or another, against a duly constituted political party in Canada. If it became known that the Security Service had provided such assistance, no doubt the question would at once be raised as to whether some similar use was not being made of the Security Service by the government vis-à-vis other political parties.[62]

Starnes did state that he saw no issue with the RCMP *receiving* information from the Vidal Group as opposed to giving information *to* them. But that strict lines should be drawn between the interests of this unit and the Liberal Party and the Security Service. That being said, Starnes did not see an issue with assigning responsibility for any information exchange to higher authority by providing intelligence to the PM that could then be used by Lalonde. Once the intelligence went to the PM, it would be up to the PM to decide if he would share it with Lalonde's group.[63]

Goyer took Starnes' point and indicated that he needed to take the matter up with the Prime Minister. In the meantime, the Security Service 'should take no further steps to follow up' on the intelligence sharing agreement negotiated between Ferraris, Vidal, Mongeau and Chassé.[64]

The resolution followed quickly. According to a Starnes 'Memorandum for File' of 2 June, the Commissioner informed him of a meeting with the Solicitor General the previous evening. At that meeting, Goyer informed the Commissioner that he had raised the Vidal group issue with the Prime Minister. Trudeau's response was that 'the Security Service was to have no direct contacts with Mr Lalonde's group'.[65] In the released papers, an unidentified reader has circled the word 'direct' on the original documents. This is probably because Trudeau's decision broadly followed Starnes' suggested formula of *indirect* communication between the Security Service and the Vidal Group via the PM himself. As when the Security Service found themselves in possession of reports that 'might be of value to Mr Lalonde and his group' then 'they should be made available by the Solicitor General to the Prime Minister' who would then 'decide what, if any, of this material should be forwarded to Mr

Lalonde'. In the meantime, Starnes recorded, Ferraris was instructed that he should simply indicate to the Vidal Group that the matter had been taken up by the Solicitor General and the PM and that 'presumably' Trudeau inform Lalonde 'of his decision'.[66]

Starnes' concern about the implications of the Vidal Group did not end with the narrow concerns of his own agency. Even after Trudeau's decision to shut down the direct link between G Branch and the Vidal Group, Starnes was raising the alarm with the military. Two weeks later, Starnes and the Commissioner attended a lunch meeting with Chief of Defence Staff General Frederick Sharp and his Deputy, General Michael Dare. There they 'discussed, among other things, FAN TAN'. As we have seen, concern had been raised on the Cabinet Security Committee regarding the implications of any military involvement in any activities to counter separatism. Starnes and the Commissioner briefed Sharp and Dare on the involvement of Chassé, still a serving officer, in the Vidal Group. They warned Sharp and Dare about 'not revealing their knowledge on this score' with their own Minister 'should they decide to review the arrangements under which Colonel Chassé had been placed on loan to Marc Lalonde's group'.[67] It is a measure of the degree to which FAN TAN was viewed as a potential political and reputational catastrophe that the Commissioner of the RCMP and the Director General of Security and Intelligence felt the need to try to obliquely have a serving military officer removed from his current posting. In the event, their warning fell on deaf ears because five months later Lalonde confirmed to Starnes that Chassé was still a member of his group *and* a serving officer which 'he seemed to suggest was an advantage'. All Starnes could do was reflect ruefully in his subsequent *aide memoire* that 'Although I did not say so, I am not sure I agree since this fact seems likely to suggest a direct link between the Armed Forces and the activities of [Lalonde's] group, with all that this implies'.[68]

Demise and denouement

By November the cracks were beginning to show in Lalonde's scheme. Starnes made a record of a meeting with Lalonde at which the latter acknowledged that the reports he had been receiving from the Security Service – presumably via the 'indirect' route discussed above – 'seemed to suggest that knowledge of the "Vidal Group" was becoming more widely known'. Starnes confirmed to Lalonde that this had become 'obvious' to the Security Services' 'representatives in Montreal' and, furthermore, that it appeared 'only a matter of time until the existence of the group became public'. According to Starnes, Lalonde acknowledged this and that he had warned the Prime Minister that 'there might be some publicity on this score'. Lalonde assured Starnes of a somewhat implausibly optimistic contingency plan in which 'the government would seek to avoid any detailed discussion' of the Vidal Group while defending its existence on the grounds that both the PMO and PCO 'kept a close watch on developments in Quebec'. Starnes' principal concern, of course, was that there was *documented* evidence of 'a direct link' between the Vidal Group and the Security Service, on which matter he reassured Lalonde 'at least on this score, the government could not be criticized'.[69]

Just over a year later, Starnes met with Martin O'Connell. O'Connell had recently been appointed Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister after losing his Parliamentary seat and place in Cabinet in the 1972 General Election.[70] Starnes records that O'Connell 'had only recently become aware of' the Vidal Group, now apparently run by Mongeau instead. On learning of the group '[h]is initial reaction was that there were too many political risks associated with the continuance of the group' and sought Starnes' view on the matter. Starnes briefed O'Connell on developments over the previous year, reciting the same concerns that he had expressed elsewhere. He added that 'there had been evidence in the past year or so that the activities of the group were known to various people in Quebec' but that its activities had been mistakenly attributed to the Security Policy and Research Group (SPARG).[71] In conclusion, Starnes recommended to O'Connell that the Vidal Group be disbanded, but 'in such a way as to avoid any if its members being embittered', such as finding new roles for them in 'the bureaucracy'. According to Starnes, O'Connell agreed to this, as well as to

Starnes' suggestion that O'Connell take the group's abolition up with Lalonde before taking the recommendation to Trudeau because 'the group had been his [Lalonde's] brainchild'.[72]

The following week, Starnes met with Goyer's replacement as Solicitor General, Warren Almand and briefed him on his conversation with O'Connell regarding FAN TAN. Starnes had Allmand sign a copy of the 21 May 1971 memorandum upon which '[t]he Minister seemed relieved that this was one matter about which he would not have to worry'.[73]

Conclusion

The significance of these findings for Canada's intelligence community and wider political life is profound. It is difficult to measure how much damage the current origin story of CSIS has done to the image of Canada's intelligence community over the decades, in that caution needed to be exercised against an intelligence community 'prone' to breaking the law. The FAN TAN papers further reinforce the accumulating evidence, that, that far from being a Service gone 'rogue', the government of the day supported the RCMP in its intelligence collection activities until scandal forced the government to call a Commission of Inquiry. In his memoirs, Trudeau claimed that the Service was not encouraged to investigate a legitimate political party like the PQ even though, Trudeau stated, the FLQ was trying to infiltrate the PQ and that had to be stopped by every means 'the law put at our disposal'.[74] Declassified documents have now revealed that this is not accurate at best, and at worst – an outright lie by Trudeau. McDonald Inquiry staff noted in 1977, Starnes was adamant that:

> At no time in all the briefings that they [the Security Service] gave to the various Ministers was there ever any suggestion that they should not be doing something that they said they were doing.[75]

The tale of FAN TAN leaves a number of very important questions unanswered. It remains unclear how exactly the 'Vidal Group' came into existence, or on whose authority. We do not know if there was any serious discussion within the PMO and Liberal Party elites regarding the legal and ethical dimensions of their initiative. There seems little doubt, however, that the leadership of the Party fell prey to the same 'permissive environment' that they encouraged amongst the police, Security Service and the military. The group's dissolution is only slightly less cryptic. Mongeau returned to his original calling practicing law, but little is known about the subsequent activities of Col. Chassé or Vidal. Lalonde, of course, was elected MP for Outrement and held a succession of Cabinet appointments until his retirement in 1984.

However, the most important lingering open question concerns the conduct of the McDonald Commission. While Starnes may have agitated for years to secure the release of documents showing the government's role in the decisions and actions of the Security Service and the consequent scandals, he never once mentioned the FAN TAN adventure in his memoires or in any other intervention on intelligence issues. He did, however, provide chapter and verse on the matter to the McDonald Commission. And yet they also, tasked with transparency and lustration, chose silence on a covert and unaccountable party-political exercise in intelligence free enterprise, and its attempt to inveigle the Security Service into serving party political rather than national security ends. And this raises wider and deeper questions about the reliability and fidelity of the deliberations and conclusions of that Commission. There is much yet about FAN TAN and the fate of the RCMP Security Service that remains, and needs, to be uncovered and understood. If there is an untold story still to emerge from the archives, it is more likely that of the disingenuous conduct of successive Canadian governments regarding their intelligence services than of any systematic misconduct by those services.

Notes

1. The authors would like to express their appreciation of the comments from the peer reviews on the initial version of this article, and thanks to Kristian Gustafson, Steven Wagner, Martin Hansen, Dan Lomas and Mohamed Majothi of the Brunel Centre for Intelligence and Security Studies for advice and recommendations on certain sources, and above all to the Privy Council Office official(s) who originally released the FAN TAN papers.
2. John Starnes "Submission by John Starnes to the Commission of Inquiry Concerning Certain Activities of the RCMP" 16 December 1977, 26, 908109–035 PCO. In the following footnotes, we refer to several separate files that were foliated with the FAN TAN release of papers, all of which originate with the PCO. File 929173 as the papers dealing directly with FAN TAN; 908109 covers John Starnes' submission to the McDonald Commission; 9293015 is 'Memorandum for the Cabinet Committee on Security and Intelligence: Current Threats to National Order and Unity: Quebec Separatism' and 9293014 and 907104 are the minutes of the Cabinet Committee on Security and Intelligence of 19 December 1969, originally released to Richard Cleroux in 1992, and supporting papers thereto respectively. All of these sets of documents have inscribed page numbers on them, including blank sheets fully redacted. Other '9XXXXXX' files refer to PCO and 'IA' references to CSIS files released under different Access to Information applications made by the authors. In the following citations, therefore, we cite FAN TAN file document details with internal page numbers on documents above one page, followed by the file reference and inscribed page number separated by a dash, as in the above epigraph.
3. For example, the "historical context" section in the Library of Parliament's publication 'Civilian Oversight of the RCMP's National Security Functions', which is a publication meant to inform MPs on the topic, notes how CSIS was created after the RCMP had been found to be engaging in illegal activities. See Canada, Library of Parliament, Tim Riordan, "Civilian Oversight of the RCMP's National Security Functions' 2004, PRB-04-09E Ottawa, Library of Parliament. A recent examination of the McDonald Commission by a former researcher involved in it also focuses heavily on the 'illegal' actions of the RCMP and the lack of prosecutions of RCMP members for their actions against separatism. See C. Ian Kyer, 'The McDonald Commission Investigates the RCMP Security Service, 1977–83', in *Canadian State Trials Volume 5*, 364–402.
4. See, e.g., The Canadian Press, "RCMP Spied on Tommy Douglas, files reveal," 17 December 2006, *CBC News* https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/rcmp-spied-on-tommy-douglas-files-reveal-1.626622; Jim Bronskill, 'RCMP Spies Suspected René Lévesque Was a Communist, Record Reveal',*The Globe and Mail* (Canada) 17 March 2010, https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/rcmp-spies-suspected-rene-levesque-was-a-communist-records-reveal/article1209617/. Significantly, Lévesque attracted more attention from the RCMP after a visit to the USSR and, given the well-documented penchant of the Soviet Bloc intelligence services for recruiting western politicians as agents of influence as well as HUMINT sources, such surveillance would have reasonably fallen within the Security Service role regarding foreign 'clandestine influence' acknowledged by the Mackenzie Commission. See, e.g., Royal Commission on Security *Report* 5–7; Frolick *The Frolick Defection*; Andrew and Mitrokhin *The Mitrokhin Archive* and *The Mitrokhin Archive II*, all *passim*.
5. See for instance, Whitaker and Hewitt *Canada and the Cold War*); Hewitt, *Spying 101: The RCMP's Secret Activities at Canadian Universities 1917–1997*; Kealey, *Spying on Canadians*:; Kinsmen and Gentile, *The Canadian War on Queers*.
6. On vetting, compare, e.g., the so-called "Radcliffe Report," Cabinet Office *Report of the Tribunal*; Norton-Taylor *Blacklist*; Hennessy and Brownfield 'Britain's Cold War Security Purge' and most recently Lomas '#Forget James Bond' and 'Crocodiles in the Corridors'; on subversion Gill *Policing Politics* 107–123 and concern expressed about the boundary between legitimate dissent and subversion as hostile influence in the various essays collected by Roy Godson in his *Domestic Intelligence*. It is important to keep in mind that 'subversion' was no abstract notion amongst Canadian and allied senior national security officials and policymakers of the 1960s and 1970s. For them, the Soviet-backed Communist seizures of power in post-1945 Central and Eastern Europe were very much a part of living memory. For an influential expression of that awareness, see Seton-Watson *From Lenin to Malenkov*, for a more nuanced current retrospective view Breslauer *The Rise and Decline of World Communism* 101–112.
7. Indeed, there was some sense – dismissed by McDonald – that 'illegal' covert activities could be plausibly covered by Crown Prerogative, Commission of Inquiry Regarding Certain Actions of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (hereafter Commission of Inquiry), *Second Report* 218, 381–388. It is worth noting that Crown Prerogative continues to cover nominally non- or less-intrusive intelligence activities of the Department of National Defence/Canadian Armed Forces intelligence organizations, see Legassé 'Defence intelligence and the Crown prerogative in Canada'.
8. Cleroux "Minutes Link Cabinet, 'Dirty Tricks'". These papers were subsequently bundled with the FAN TAN papers discussed here as file 929305 'Disclosed Version of 14 September 1993'. It should be noted that the cover sheet date has been redacted and corrected, and that the FAN TAN version of the papers post-dates Cleroux's version.

9. Reg Whittaker 'Apprehended Insurrection? RCMP Intelligence and the October Crisis' 388, 392 and *passim*. For more on the use of emergency measures in the October Crisis see Dominique Clément, 'The October Crisis of 1970: Human Rights Abuses Under the War Measures Act'.
10. See variously Dennis G. Molinaro "Hunting 'the Canadians': Wiretapping, Counter-Intelligence and the Search for Legal Authority" and '"In the Field of Espionage, There's No Such Thing as Peacetime".
11. Whitaker 'Apprehended Insurrection' 405.
12. Beeby, 'The Untold Story of how Lester Pearson Influenced the Dubious Spy Probe of a Gay Diplomat'. Like the Douglas and Levesque releases, however, this material was handled in a journalistic fashion rather than incorporated into a more comprehensive scholarly investigation and analysis.
13. Whitaker, Kealey, Parnaby, *Secret Service*, 323
14. While there have been allegations of 'dirty tricks' outside Quebec, this is a vague, pejorative and unhelpful turn of phrase. Covert collection operations that fell afoul of failure of Crown Prerogative as a credible mandate for covert collection (see footnote 8 above) in the wake of the Mackenzie Commission represent a very different class of problem from disruptive actions such as forging correspondence which are much harder to align with essentially defensive security intelligence collection and investigations. Here again, the question of levels of authority and approval, i.e., governmental knowledge, lies at the crux of the matter. But it was the Quebec revelations that were the death knell of the RCMP Security Service. See, e.g., Hewitt 'Key Sectors' 178–179.
15. Slightly confusingly, the PCO is double-badged as *both* Cabinet Office and Privy Council Office, but the latter term is preferred in conventional usage within and without the government circles.
16. As examined in detail in Molinaro, "'In the Field of Espionage, There's No Such Thing as Peacetime': The Official Secrets Act and the PICNIC Wiretapping Program' and "Hunting 'the Canadians': Wiretapping, Counter-Intelligence, and the Search for Legal Authority".
17. Richard Cleroux *Official Secrets* 36; Royal Commission on Security *Report of the Royal Commission on Security* 15.
18. Royal Commission on Security *Report* 15 *infra*.
19. Royal Commission on Security, *Report* 74–6; John Starnes, 'Starnes to Cote, Deputy Solicitor General', 21 September 1971, Canada, RCMP, 'Policy: Orders and Revocations', CSIS file IA-10-4-74; M.L. Friedland, *National Security: The Legal Dimensions*, 78–79; Molinaro 'Hunting The Canadians'; 175.
20. National Security Act [draft], 21 September 1971, 9–12, Canada, RCMP, 'Policy: Orders and Revocations', file IA-10-4-74 CSIS; Friedland, *National Security*, 79; Government of Canada, Official Secrets Act, c.O-3; Molinaro 'Hunting The Canadians'; 175–176.
21. Quoted in Peter Gill *Policing Politics* 225.
22. Murphy "Creating a Commonwealth Intelligence Culture" esp.137–138. Unfortunately, Murphy discusses the southern Commonwealth Dominions of South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, with only passing references to Canada. Indeed, accounts of the very earliest formation of the RCMP/SyS remain surprisingly sketchy, see e.g., Anderson 'The Evolution of the Canadian Intelligence Establishment' 458 which notes only passing the early appearance of the RCMP Special Branch as a 'small group of specialists, under the tutelage of their colleagues in MI5, formed the nucleus of what later became a credible counter-intelligence service'
23. Royal Commission on Security *Report* 8, emphasis added.
24. Canadian Press Staff, 'Pierre Trudeau wanted to sabotage separatism by killing Quebec jobs, according to unearthed documents'.
25. Previous discussions of this memorandum have cited Don Wall in the PCO as preparing it. While the PCO prepared a draft, the file from the Privy Council office contains a letter from Robertson claiming that while the PCO prepared it, this memo was to be signed as being authored by the PM and as such it needed to accurately reflect his views. Pierre Trudeau, "Memorandum for the Cabinet Committee on Security and Intelligence, 'Current Threats to National Unity: Quebec Separatism'" 17 December 1969, 9293015 PCO; R. Gordon Robertson, 'Memorandum for the Prime Minister' 16 December 1969, 907104–01 PCO. See Whitaker, Kealey and Parnaby's discussion of the memo in *Secret Service* 295–296.
26. Pierre Trudeau, "Memorandum for the Cabinet Committee on Security and Intelligence, 'Current Threats to National Unity: Quebec Separatism'," 17 December 1969, 7, 9293015–07.
27. Pierre Trudeau, Memorandum for the Cabinet Committee on Security and Intelligence, 'Current Threats to National Unity: Quebec Separatism", 17 December 1969, 8, 9293015–08 PCO.
28. Whitaker, Kealey and Parnaby's discussion of this meeting note that McIlraith and Léo Dadieux, the Minister of Defence, had a disagreement over the use of the armed forces for intelligence collection in Quebec; *Secret Service* 299. In fact, the Minister of Defence spoke *after* McIlraith raised his concerns, and offered his support to the idea which then leads to the Prime Minister weighing in. McIlraith is the first to mention his opposition to the idea in reference to the PM's memo. D.W. Wall, A meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security and Intelligence was held on Friday, December 19, 1969 at 2:30 pm, in Room 340-S', 5 January 1970, 5, 9293014–04, PCO. Curiously, after this meeting Robertson states that 'what is now wanted is a revision' though he does not state if the revision is of the meeting minutes or just the PM's memo. His reasoning is redacted under s. 14 of the Access to Information Act RSC 1985. It remains unclear if there are different versions of the memo and meeting minutes. R. Gordon Robertson, 'memorandum for Mr. Wall' 22 December 1969, 907104–20 PCO.

29. Wall, "A meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security and Intelligence," 5 *infra*, January 1970, 9293014–04 PCO.
30. Wall, "A meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security and Intelligence," 9293014–05 PCO.
31. N.A., "Commissioner's notes – Meeting of Cabinet Committee On Security," 19 December 1969, 907104–13 PCO.
32. D. W. Wall, "Memorandum for the Prime Minister," 17 December 1969, 907104–0 PCO.
33. Officer i/c 'G' Branch to the D.G.S.I. 'FAN TAN' 11 May 1971 1, 929173–19 PCO.
34. Officer i/c 'G' Branch to the D.G.S.I. 'FAN TAN' 1, *infra*; N.A. 'Jean-Pierre Mongeau' https://prabook.com/web/jean-pierre.mongeau/1132489.
35. N.A. "Brodhead appointed as new director of CYC"; Ron Thompson, 'Trudeau's Federalism in the CYC by Skip Hamlin'.
36. Officer i/c G Branch to the D.G.S.I. 'FAN TAN' 1 *infra*.
37. David A. Charters. *Canadian Military Intelligence* 115; N.B. Chassé is described by Charters as being attached to the PMO *Special* Operations Centre. Charters notes on p.111 that the Centre changed title during the crisis from Special to Strategic Operations Centre. Despite his involvement in a series of intelligence roles during this interval, Chassé was not a career intelligence officer but had had previously been commanding officer of the Royal 22nd Regiment before being appointed a Deputy Clerk of the Privy Council, N.A. 'Obituary of Henri Chassé'.
38. Officer i/c G Branch to the D.G.S.I. 'FAN TAN' 1.
39. John Starnes 'Re: FAN TAN' 21 May 1971 1, 929173–15 PCO; see also Starnes 'Submission by John Starnes to Commission of Inquiry Concerning Certain Activities of the RCMP' p.48, 908109–055, PCO.
40. Possibly Joseph Eugene Alcide Yelle, later Chief Superintendent, see N.A. *Last Post Dernière Sonnerie*.
41. Handwritten Transit Slip by Sgt. A.N. Cameron 19 April 1971; file page 929,173–25 PCO; Starnes to Mongeau S.15(1) caveated SECRET, 19 April 1971; 929173–27 PCO.
42. It is unclear from the documents or context whether this referred to information *already* received or to information that Mongeau *expected to receive* in the future.
43. Jean-Pierre Mongeau, "Mongeau to Starnes," 20 April 1971; 929173–23 PCO.
44. Mongeau, 'Mongeau to Starnes' *infra*.
45. Sawatsky *Men in the Shadows* 26; Sawatsky confusingly refers to the various divisions of the Security Service as 'Sections' rather than their proper, MI5-style designation as letter-designated 'Divisions' and 'Branches' sub-divided into Sections.
46. Sawatsky *Men in the Shadows* 251
47. Sawatsky *Men in the Shadows* 266
48. Starnes to Officer in Charge of SIB, C Division, Westmount and C.C. 'A' Ottawa 'Re: Instructions re Separatist/ Terrorist Investigations and Correspondence' September 1970 IP 7-1-3 28 [file reference in original] 1 908,109–77 PCO; Sawatsky *Men in the Shadows* 263.
49. Andrew *Defend the the Realm* 647,700,745–746
50. Starnes to Officer in Charge of SIB, C Division, Westmount and C.C. 'A' Ottawa 'Re: Instructions re Separatist/ Terrorist Investigations and Correspondence' 3.
51. Starnes "Re: Instructions re Separatist/Terrorist Investigations and Correspondence" 3 *supra*.
52. Officer i/c G Branch to the D.G.S.I. 'FAN TAN', 1.
53. Officer i/c G Branch to the D.G.S.I. 'FAN TAN', 1 *infra*.
54. Officer i/c G Branch to the D.G.S.I. 'FAN TAN', 2, emphasis added.
55. Officer i/c G Branch to the D.G.S.I. 'FAN TAN', 2 *infra*, emphasis added.
56. Officer i/c G Branch to the D.G.S.I. 'FAN TAN', 1.
57. Officer i/c G Branch to the D.G.S.I. 'FAN TAN', 3.
58. Evidence given by Ferraris to the McDonald Commission, quoted in Whitaker 'Apprehended Insurrection' 401.
59. Starnes "Submission by John Starnes," 48, 908109–055 PCO.
60. Starnes "Submission by John Starnes," 19, 908109–055 PCO; Wark 'Spymaster John Starnes'.
61. John Starnes, "Memorandum for File Re: FAN TAN," 2 June 1971, 1, 929173–15 PCO
62. Starnes, "Memorandum for File Re: FAN TAN," 2, 929173–16.
63. John Starnes, "Memorandum for File Re: FAN TAN," 2 *infra*.
64. John Starnes, "Memorandum for File Re: FAN TAN," 3, 929173–17.
65. Starnes "Memorandum for File Re: FAN TAN," 1, 929173–13 PCO.
66. Starnes "Memorandum for File Re: FAN TAN," 1 *infra*.
67. John Starnes, "Memorandum for file Re: FAN TAN," 17 June 1971, 929173–11 PCO.
68. John Starnes, "Memorandum," 12 November 1971, 929173–9 PCO.
69. John Starnes "Memorandum" *infra*.
70. See, e.g., N.A. "Lipad: Martin Patrick O'Connell" *Canadian Hansard Data Set* https://www.lipad.ca/members/record/e9c339e5-75df-4594-b250-d97aebef933e/1/ (for LIPAD project specifics see Beelen, K., *et al*. 'Digitization of the Canadian Parliamentary Debates'); N.A. 'Leadership of the Prime Minister's Office' *Parliament of Canada: Parlinfo* https://lop.parl.ca/sites/ParlInfo/default/en_CA/People/PMOLeadership

71. John Starnes "Memorandum for File" 22 December 1972, 929173–4, 929173 PCO. SPARG was the de facto national secretariat for security intelligence that provided the chair of the PCO Security Advisory Committee but was formally lodged in the Solicitor General's department, Starnes 'Submission', 54, 908109–061.
72. John Starnes "Memorandum for File" 22 December 1972, 929173–5 PCO.
73. John Starnes "Memorandum for File" 21 December 1972 929173–7 PCO.
74. Trudeau, *Memoirs* 131–3; Commission of Inquiry Regarding Certain Actions of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police *Second Report*, vol. 1, 75–84; D.W. Wall, 'Record of a Meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security and Intelligence, 19 December 1969', 5 January 1970; Whitaker, Kealey, and Parnaby, *Secret Service* 298–303, 319–20. Whitaker, Kealey and Parnaby rightly point out that politicians of the period leading up to the McDonald Commission appeared to be seeking plausible deniability, but that deniability has become 'less plausible with time'.
75. N.A., "Notes of a Meeting With John Starnes," 8 December 1978, John Starnes, 5, 929173–005 PCO.

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