

Can Under CIA - Canada

A 16

NYT 11/25/77
C

MOUNTIES OF CANADA ARE LINKED WITH C.I.A.

Inquiry Into Spying Activity Turns to Allegations That U.S. Agency Trained Civilians and Military

By ROBERT TRUMBULL
Special to The New York Times

OTTAWA, Nov. 24—Reports of close links between the Central Intelligence Agency and the security unit of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have emerged in the public examination of alleged spying activities by the Mounties.

Questions concerning relations with the C.I.A. came up in the House of Commons several times this week in discussions of the intelligence-gathering methods of the Mounties, whose responsibilities include functions similar to those of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the United States.

Mention of the C.I.A. is part of an unfolding drama here that has filled many columns of newspaper space and much radio and television news time for weeks. Another lively development in the affair has been the appearance of a Canadian spy novel purporting to give the inside story of intelligence operations here, with what are said to be thinly disguised characters based on actual persons.

The Mounties, have been under fire in Parliament for weeks, and are the subject of a judicial investigation in Montreal and pending scrutiny by a federal commission in Ottawa. Involved are charges that the security unit of the force has committed illegal break-ins, burned a barn in one instance, stolen dynamite in another, illegally tampered with private mail, obtained confidential tax and medical files and infiltrated political parties and other organizations in security and intelligence operations.

The federal Government has gone to court to try to limit the Montreal inquiry to specific allegations of illegal action by the Mounties in Quebec Province, excluding examination of day-to-day activities. Critics of the Government have charged the authorities, including Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau, with attempting to cover up questionable procedures in a manner reminiscent of the Watergate scandal—an analogy Mr. Trudeau has rejected.

The long series of allegations and disclosures, all extensively covered by the news media, has inspired a backlash in letters to newspapers and other public expressions in favor of the Mounties, whose glamorous image as scarlet-jacketed guardians of the law who always get their man has been dear to Canadians for generations. So strong was the reaction that the critics in Parliament have changed their tactics, taking the stand that well-meaning policemen have been the innocent pawns of an ill-intentioned Government.

A reported C.I.A. role in the continuing drama was first mentioned in Parliament this week in connection with attacks by Opposition members on an operation known as Featherbed, involving the collecting of dossiers said to contain intimate information on senior officials, including Prime Minister Trudeau. Solicitor General Francis Fox, the Cabinet member responsible for the Mounties, has acknowledged the existence of the files but has refused details.

Tom Corsitt, a Progressive-Conservative Party member of the Commons from Ontario who specializes in goading the Government with touchy questions on intelligence matters, referred to a report that the C.I.A. had interrogated the retired head of a security unit who has been linked to the Featherbed operation. The officer, Leslie J. Bennett, denied the report from his retirement home in Perth, Australia.

Training by C.I.A. Reported

The nationally circulated and influential Toronto newspaper The Globe and Mail listed C.I.A. connections with Canada among eight featured articles on the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and security affairs in today's editions. The paper reported, among other things, that the C.I.A. had given training in intelligence techniques to members of the Mounties, the Canadian armed forces and other departments of the Government, including the Foreign Office.

In an article across the top of the front page, the newspaper's Washington correspondent, John Picton, quoted Victor Marchetti, co-author of a controversial book, "The C.I.A. and the Cult of Intelligence," as saying that the Canadian Government had submitted secret court testimony supporting the agency's unsuccessful legal effort to prevent its publication. Mr. Marchetti, a former C.I.A. officer who wrote the book in collaboration with John Marks, was quoted by Mr. Picton as saying that Canada was concerned that disclosure of the range of cooperation between the C.I.A. and Canadian agencies could "cause grave diplomatic eruptions between Canada and the United States." The book was published after the authors agreed to many deletions by the C.I.A., which, Mr. Marchetti said, included the references to which Canada objected.

"The biggest thing they did for us," Mr. Marchetti was quoted as saying of Canadian intelligence operations for the C.I.A., "was to keep an eye on deserters and draft dodgers because we had no way of keeping an eye on them."

As for the spy novel, insiders have been busily trying to match real people with characters in the book, published recently in Toronto by Ian Adams, a journalist, under the title "S—Portrait of a Spy" and the subtitle "R.C.M.P. Intelligence—The Inside Story." The plot concerns a double agent said to have worked for both the R.C.M.P. and K.G.B., the Soviet security and intelligence organization.

Mr. Bennett, the retired security officer, said he was considering a libel action in connection with material in the novel.

Child of Darned S...