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THE SENATE

Motion to Recognize the Necessity of Fully Integrated Security
throughout the Parliamentary Precinct and the Grounds
of Parliament Hill and to Invite the RCMP to
Lead Operational Security—Motion in Amendment Negatived
and Motion Adopted

Speech by:

The Honourable Larry W. Campbell

Tuesday, February 24, 2015

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MOTION TO RECOGNIZE THE NECESSITY OF FULLY INTEGRATED SECURITY THROUGHOUT THE PARLIAMENTARY PRECINCT AND THE GROUNDS OF PARLIAMENT HILL AND TO INVITE THE RCMP TO LEAD OPERATIONAL SECURITY—MOTION IN AMENDMENT NEGATIVED AND MOTION ADOPTED

Hon. Larry W. Campbell: Thank you, honourable senators. I feel that I have to speak to the comments of the honourable senator from Alberta, whom I quite respect and I treasure her ideas greatly. However, 20/20 hindsight is perfect and talk is cheap.

It's only through the oversight of the RCMP that we know about the difficulties that they've had over the years and the fact that they are the largest police force, the most visible and involved in virtually every portion of the justice system that we know. I think we have to understand that they are under the microscope.

This is not about the RCMP, however. Nobody here is arguing that the RCMP could not set up a security service, could not run a large organization involving security, except for perhaps Senator McCoy. The fact of the matter is that they are qualified.

How long has it been since we've been kicking this issue around on the Hill? I've been here nine years; it was long before my nine years that there was an attempt to reach an agreement where we would have joint security for the Hill.

• (1730)

Nobody can argue that separate security systems in one building are anachronistic and, quite frankly, dangerous. We agreed on that, but we couldn't agree on whether the other place or this place would get together and figure out how it would be done. We simply refused to deal with the issue. You would think that when you've had people crawling on the roof of your building, even though it was a peaceful demonstration and nobody was in danger, that fact should not be forgotten. Certainly, it should be recognized that people who would want to do us harm would take notice of the incident and the lack of security.

We've been forced to act. It seems like I've been speaking too much on this, but we did what we were supposed to do here. We set up a subcommittee under the two houses. We met, made decisions and made changes. In all honesty, I don't know if at the end of the day we still could have ended up with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police being in charge of security on the Hill. The decision wasn't made as to who should run the security; rather, the decision was made that we required total and full Hill security in whatever form that might take.

What happens to the present security staff? Where do they go? I can tell you with some certainty that they would not be considered on an equal footing with the RCMP. I can speak to that from experience. It's not that they aren't good or that they aren't well-trained. It's just that they aren't Mounties. That's the simple bottom line. What's going to happen to them? How do we treat them? How do we make them know that we respect what they do and what they have done in the past? What's it going to cost? God knows the government is chopping here and chopping there as we

all try to get our government in order. What's it going to cost to go through this process?

Right now, costs are pretty minimal as we've got the people in place. We just have to figure out how we're going to go about guarding and how it will work; and then you add the RCMP.

I have no idea what the cost will be, but I can tell you one thing: You can't sit in a car outside. You cannot do static security on the Hill. Senator McCoy is right in that fact. The danger came through the ranks of the RCMP and got to the Hill. That's one of the issues we have to deal with when we look at unity.

Do we just unify the security on the Hill? Do we ignore the gate to the door? Well, we ignored the gate to the door the last time, and we know what happened. We believe in looking around the world and visiting different places to see their security. We need security that goes not only to the gate but also outside the gate, as they have in Washington, D.C., where they have overlapping jurisdiction with the Washington police, the Metropolitan Police Department. In the event that anything takes place, they can help; and they're always on the same wave length and on the same phone line.

What do we know about this incident? We know that a person took a gun and killed a member of the Armed Forces at the cenotaph. We know he came across the street, commandeered a car and drove onto the Hill. Where was security on the Hill that should have been advancing to the front doors, which is where you want to protect? What happened there? We keep talking about hindsight. We'll find out about that from the OPP. They will tell us what happened. Certainly, there was a breakdown. The fact that we need to go from the Hill to the gate is obvious, I believe. We need to control the whole Hill.

We could do this by changing the RCMP Act and having the Mounties take over. It would seem like the normal course of action. It would seem like the logical thing to do. Yet, we find ourselves in this interesting predicament where we will pass a motion, but, as Senator Ringuette said, we'll have no force after September, unless of course there is a bill sitting in the pipe to change the RCMP Act or to change the Parliament of Canada Act. However, we have no indication of that happening. You're going to have to change at least one of them to make it permanent. We're going to end up with another constitutional challenge; and I'm not sure whether the RCMP has jurisdiction to take over on the Hill.

I would urge you to consider this motion for way down the road. Consider how long it's going to be in effect. It's not just going to be in effect for us, as was pointed out by Senator Joyal. This will live on forever, so we had better get it right. This rush to judgment is of great concern to me because we are not taking the time to look at it. We have our security in place right here, but we don't have it on the whole Hill, I agree; but we aren't taking the time to figure out how to go about it. We're saying, "This is what we're going to do, and once it's done, then we'll go back and we'll do these other things and change these other acts so we can figure out where everybody will fall into place."

What happens if the Mounties do not agree to a contract that says that the two Speakers are in charge of the Hill and that they answer to the two Speakers? I really ask you to think about this. If you want to know what happens, pick up the phone tonight and call any of the mayors that have the RCMP as their municipal police force. It's just a given that they serve the citizens of Burnaby, but they answer to the commissioner. They don't answer to the mayor. They don't answer to the B.C. police commission. They do not answer to any of the oversight bodies provincially that they are contracted to.

I truly believe that you would need to change the act, and you would need a change in philosophy to have them answer to our two Speakers. I'm not saying it couldn't be done. I'm not saying

that it wouldn't be a fine service. I'm simply saying that we don't know. We certainly haven't looked at it past the point of keeping this place safe.

I know that you're going to vote against the amendment and for the motion and pass it. But remember, 10 or 15 years from now when the wheels fall off the wagon again, they're going to be looking at us as they say, "What the hell were these people thinking when they did this?"

Remember, it's sober second thought that we supply here. We're the ones that take a look to see where we're going on this and what the pitfalls are. Rushing willy-nilly into this is not doing our job; rather, it's doing a great disservice to this place.
