

Security Services Policy

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Spokesperson: Russel Norman MP

Introduction

This policy represents a 'small' but nonetheless important step towards achieving our democracy, non-violence and justice principles.

Security Intelligence Service (SIS)

The SIS was established in 1956 and was legislated for in 1969. Previously its original functions were carried out by the police.

The SIS has had a chequered history. Most notable events have been the six year long effort to prevent legitimate Algerian asylum seeker Ahmed Zaoui from gaining residence, the inaccurate naming of 20 anti-tour 'subversives' in 1981 and the Bill Sutch case. The release of SIS files in recent years has also shown a disturbing pattern of its resources being used to spy on law abiding political dissenters. The SIS' annual budget is over \$20 million.

With the cold war well and truly over the powers of the SIS were expanded in 1996 to justify its continued existence. The definition of security now includes 'the making of a contribution to New Zealand's international well-being or economic well-being'.

Policy points

- The Green Party believes that the SIS should be stopped from spying on people solely because they hold different views from the government on what is in New Zealand's 'international well-being or economic well-being'. We will therefore tighten the definition of security in the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service Act to include only 'espionage, sabotage and terrorism'.
- The Green Party believes that it may be more appropriate for the police to have responsibility for protecting New Zealand's security. We would therefore institute a select committee enquiry into whether the SIS should be abolished and its responsibilities returned to the police.

Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB)

The GCSB was established in 1977. It is a signals intelligence organisation which 'spies' electronically on private communications. The GCSB operates a spy base at Waihopai near Blenheim that eavesdrops on international telephone, telex, fax and email communications, and a base at Tangimoana near Bulls, which monitors radio signals.

The GCSB is linked with agencies in the United States, Britain, Canada and Australia. It is generally accepted that it operates for the benefit of American and British interests rather than for the benefit of New Zealand. It is exempt from key provisions of the Privacy Act and the Crimes Act and it costs the New Zealand taxpayer \$35 million per year to run.

Policy point

- The Green Party believes that New Zealand's international relations, defence and security needs are not well served by spying on private communications

between our Pacific neighbours and New Zealand and therefore we will abolish the GCSB and close its two signals intelligence bases at Waihopai and Tangimoana immediately.

Intelligence and Security Committee

The Intelligence and Security Committee was established by statute in 1996 ostensibly to increase the level of oversight and review of intelligence and security agencies.

In fact, the existence of the committee has had the opposite effect. This is the first statutory committee ever to be set up by the New Zealand Parliament. The Act stops select committees from consideration or scrutiny of anything to do with intelligence and security agencies including their operations and finances.

The committee comprises the Prime Minister, and two of her nominees and the Leader of the Opposition and one of her nominees. One person now combines the offices of Prime Minister and Minister in Charge of the SIS with chairing the very body it ought to be independently examining the activities of intelligence and security agencies.

Policy point

- The Green Party believes that Parliament is the rightful place to scrutinise the intelligence and security activities of the government. We will therefore abolish the Intelligence and Security Committee Act.

Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security

The position of Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security was created in 1996. The Inspector-General has very limited powers to investigate the activities of intelligence and security agencies. While the Green Party intends to abolish the GCSB and restore core security functions to the police we believe there is still a place for an independent Inspector-General of intelligence and security and that the jurisdiction should be extended to the Defence Force.

Policy points

- The Green Party believes it is essential for a healthy democratic society to have a truly independent watchdog over the government's intelligence and security gathering activities. We will therefore make the Inspector-General an officer of Parliament.
- We will also repeal the Minister of Security and Intelligence's powers to limit the Inspector-General's ability to investigate and report on their activities.
- The Green Party will extend the jurisdiction of the Inspector-General of Intelligence and security to include the New Zealand Defence Force.

Other agencies

Little is known about two bodies which exist within the Prime Minister's Department: the Domestic and External Security Secretariat and the National Assessments Bureau. It may be appropriate to review the functions and the existence of these bodies.

Policy point

- The Green Party will review the functions and need for the Domestic and External Security Secretariat and the National Assessments Bureau.