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In the Event of MY DEATH

GARETH LLEWELLYN 27 Apr 2010 10:10 GMT

ABUSE FROM CSIS

In the Event of my Death...
Life Under CSIS Rule

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Introduction: The writer is a 53-year-old intelligence analyst at the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) who returned to work in the fall of 2006 after a stroke. The author has an astonishing tale about the abuse of 'national security' practices that begins in January 2007 near 300 Slater Street, Ottawa. The author recognizes that any story involving CSIS isn't 'provable' unless a new government feels a review of their actions is in order; otherwise, since CSIS are the experts at hiding their traces, the reader must take the author's word for many of the events described. For liability purposes, please insert "I believe that..." before any statement of fact herein.

Part I

I was sitting in Starbucks in the Marriott Hotel when an auburn-haired lady entered, sat at the next table and started to stare at me. Coat on. No coffee. Her hands were folded in her lap. There was no intensity in her eyes, but she kept on staring. At another table, meanwhile, a game of musical chairs broke out. A man left his seat too quickly and was just-as-quickly replaced by another. Then a third. Not a coffee between them. I returned to work a few minutes later, mystified.

Many people have weird days too. I note that the worn-out idea of filming unsuspecting strangers in manufactured situations a la Candid Camera still hasn't bored the public, so this sort of thing may happen to you. But this ritual played itself out the next day at Starbucks using different people, and intermittently after that. Nobody appeared to say, "Hey, this is a joke" or pointing out the hidden camera.

At work, I discovered that someone has accessed my computer overnight and left little traces behind, called 'electronic footprints' by the IT (Information Technology) people. IT people access our computers regularly for upgrades and repairs, but this midnight visit looked suspiciously like an investigation. For one thing, why do it at midnight?

Right about then, give or take a day, a woman from a CBSA office in Toronto called to ask if I had used a particular work file belonging to their office. She quoted my User ID over the phone. I had never accessed the field file; HQ analysts like me almost never do. Furthermore, a CBSA officer had been arrested recently for "internal conspiracy" – Customs agency jargon for bad things done with somebody else – and it was reported in the media. Understandably, my first reaction was alarm: had organized crime penetrated CBSA and used my User ID? This happens more than Canadians realize. I called my colleague in Toronto back and reported it up the line in Ottawa. She called back saying it was a false alarm, but her 'explanation' was nonsense. Taken together, these irregularities prompted me to report everything to my new manager, Scott. A new top-secret 'intel' unit had just been formed, one of the most secure at CBSA and I was Scott's first employee.

Scott frowned in response. He disappeared soon after and was gone for several days for meetings with CSIS, among other things, and when he returned he asked me, "Did you get a letter pulling your security clearance?"

"No," I replied, surprised. "Have I done something wrong?"

He never answered that question.

My commutes to work then became an event... in both directions. I took the bus to work to see

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strangers glower at me as if I spat on their shoes. At first it was only staring. A couple of times someone would kick at my heels on the bus. Once I was body-checked on the bus platform. A young 'mother' passed me along the sidewalk near the Billing Bridge bus mall one morning, then wheeled around a minute later and crashed her baby carriage into my legs (I guess there wasn't a baby in there after all). I told my spouse (now wife) and she was as bewildered as me.

During my walks home strangers were positioned along my route every few blocks, often in the dead centre of the sidewalk, chain-smoking and gazing into the distance with a leer on their faces. Once I walked a complete circle around one but there was no response. Sometimes I would vary my routes home, even lose them for a few minutes, but they were quick to let me know when they were right back. An older gent wearing sneakers signaled this once by reaching out and wagging his hand like he were shaking a vaudevillian's straw hat as he walked by. Hilarious, I suppose, and effective. In the evening they would stalk me in the grocery stores. Sometimes they looked ridiculous and that made me laugh. At other times I had to suppress an urge to launch my shopping cart at them. The point is, every day became a weird day.

"Am I under investigation?" I asked Scott again.

"Nope."

"No?"

After a pause, Scott added, "You know, of all the people who complain about CSIS surveillance you're the guy I feel most sorry for."

This statement was the only 'support' I ever received from CBSA management.

Scott and I were friends, and I was hurt he wouldn't tell me what was going on. On the other hand, he was also a new manager and had just crossed the great class divide in the public service.

Week after week this stuff continued.

Curiously, I wasn't convinced it was CSIS at the time. I couldn't understand why, for one thing. My security practices were good... provided I knew what they were. Customs has never been good at developing and communicating our security policies. For another, I suffered a stroke in 2005 and had just returned. But it was the people on the street that made me doubt CSIS. I had always bought the canard that CSIS surveillance was the best in the world, so I expected top-quality people as well.

What I saw instead was an overweight matron crowding me to read my PIN at MusicWorld; or an old man without shoelaces or socks posturing as a computer buyer (that one made me laugh), or young and rough kids following me in the grocery store with empty handbaskets. There were a surprising number of recent immigrants with halting English and housewives looking for extra cash.

Who were these people?!

I wouldn't call the antics on the street 'surveillance' either. A long-haired fellow accosted me at the corner of Kent and Slater brandishing, of all things, a hairbrush in each hand. He tried repeatedly to brush my fur hat until I fought him off, no "hidden observer" he. These isolated episodes grew into "gang-stalking1" where teams of five or six would cut me off during my grocery shopping, or in the library. I couldn't leave work for lunch without getting the Treatment, including whipping out their cell phone and reporting my position ("Yes, he's still walking down Bank St...."). One evening, I walked home on Bank Street and cried a tear or two from hurt feelings. What did I do to deserve this?! I lowered my face to wipe away a tear and, looking up, a woman's face was pressed several inches from my own. Jesus Christ!... it was the attack of the personal-space invaders.

The next day, Scott remarked, "I'm starting to worry about your health."

I had done nothing to provoke this remark from Scott. Their communications must be good to put those words in Scott's mouth within 18 hours, not public-service speed at all. Then my Director, Craig Goodes, and my Director General, Caroline Melis, approached me separately to inquire into my well-being. Obviously, Scott, Craig and Caroline all knew something was going on, but no-one would explain why. And what was this anyway... a character test?

In February, they replaced Scott.

An ex-CSIS manager with ice-blue eyes and a baby face named Ken Lamontagne took his place. Looking back, it was a development to which I should have paid more attention, but I was entranced by the gang-stalkers on the street. Some of them smelled. A couple were clearly from the local Mission downtown. The 'toughies' were juvenile delinquents. They would stalk me for 4-5 days, taking most of the weekend off. They then expanded it to include my place of work on 300 Slater Street, known as the Jean Emonds towers, which means they had access to the building. Among other things, it was CBSA's Intelligence HQ.

By March I had a theory.

Although my overall health after my stroke was good, I had inherited several stomach ailments like diverticulosis and IBS that turned my stomach into a ball of fire when stress increased. In the evenings I was left in the foetal position, groaning from the pain because the GP who prescribed me a narcotic painkiller just moved to southern Ontario. My new GP wouldn't prescribe a narcotic. In fact, she

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wouldn't do anything, so I obtained pot (highly underrated as an analgesic and an anxiety/nausea suppressant) for my stomach from a friend. When I met Scott on the street by chance, I told him so and asked if it was a problem.

"Nah. That ain't it," he replied, referring to the reason for my harassment. "If you are smoking it at home..." He shrugged with a rolling of the eyes. I told my Director later on. He didn't seem to care either. Marijuana belongs in the netherworld of offences, you see, where nobody takes it seriously except Customs (where it drives up our seizures-by-dollar-value up, unless the RCMP is scheduled to burn the seizures and the inevitable jokes about camping overnight on a nearby hill will appear), and CSIS (where marijuana was like homosexuality: the culture is waiting for legalization, but CSIS has to ensure you are not susceptible to blackmail as homosexuals were in past decades). I have smelt marijuana on Customs employees, and my manager-before-Scott was a noted alcoholic whose breath could start your barbecue when he forgot to chew his gum. Even CSIS has problem drinkers (I know of two). The point is, marijuana has been subtly severed from the chemicals. Even CSIS adopts a forgiveness-for-past-sins approach, but a zero-tolerance policy thereafter.

Finally I managed to get a prescription for M-Eslon, a morphine painkiller I've taken for many years. In response, the stalkers grew thick around the medical clinic and the pharmacy at the Independent Grocers in Alta Vista where I filled the prescription. CSIS even asked one of their 'friends' in Customs, Dave Beaton, to 'innocently' ask me about M-Eslon. After a long search for another doctor, they staged a drug sting at the brand-new doctor's office to offer excess morphine, but I refused. I got the message, though. I wrote an e-mail to the Director of Internal Affairs, Roger Lavergne, to explain my stomach history, my allergy to aspirin, my lengthy use of a narcotic, etc.

Roger phoned me back. "You're not under investigation."

Whatever.³

My e-mail did produce a change however. For roughly 8 days, there were no more "stalking on steroids" – a term I coined to describe several dozen people who followed me everywhere during lunch, breaks and my commutes to work. Those behemoths standing in the centre of the sidewalks, arms folded, challenging me to pass... vanished. Chewed-over sunflower seeds were no longer spat at me in the Glebe.

This brief hiatus, as I think back to it, was due to the realization by someone that I was not a drug addict after all.

By April, I was flirted at outrageously by beautiful women: a pregnant wink in Chapters, South Keys. Sexual stare-athons aboard the #1 bus. A young Chinese girl did a bump-and-grind in front of my face on the #7 bus and then sat beside me, pouting all the way home. One woman in high heels and a short dress was walking her dog down Clementine Blvd. and, as I approached, floated her eyes as if she was seconds away from an orgasm. Unfortunately for her, she also attracted a male driver who braked and... I didn't stop to find out. When you are a balding, overweight 53-year-old as I am, you interpret these shenanigans as sarcasm. As for my spouse, she was sarcastic too.

After several episodes like this, I reported it to Ken Lamontagne, my new manager. To me, this was an escalation. To investigate anyone for possible drug addiction is a reasonable precaution if you're in a highly-secure position, but to employ "honey traps," a phrase from John le Carré's spy novels, is an espionage practice. Put another way, to investigate anyone for potential drug addiction may mean the subject is drugs. If they use honey traps afterwards, the subject is you.

In response to my very first report, Lamontagne immediately suggested I was delusional and pressed me to submit to a "Fitness to Work" assessment.⁴ I said no. Even then I perceived it for what it was: the most naked threat I have ever received in my career. The over-arching question was why. It wasn't until June that CSIS finally showed itself. They sent me an e-mail at work offering me a job as an intelligence officer, signed by "Natalie Gravelle." I believed the offer, although I don't know if Natalie Gravelle really exists. By all means, write her at ✉ gravellen@smtp.qc.ca⁵ and see if she offers you a job. I showed it to Ken Lamontagne. He smirked. I printed it and showed it to my spouse who urged me to decline it. Too dangerous, she warned. Besides, CSIS has a nasty reputation as an employer. So I said no.

Two days later, Ray Kaduck called. Ray is a tall, angular fellow with a biting wit who travelled frequently for CSIS and just received a plum assignment on a committee for past work well done. We met at Local Heroes.

CSIS wanted me, said he, to penetrate the neo-Nazi movement.

"What?!" I groaned.

The CSIS 'offer' had a history behind it.

I invite politicophiles to remember way back to the turmoil in the PC Party near the end of Brian Mulroney's tenure in 1987-88. The PC party was fragmenting even then. The Bloc Quebecois and the Reform Party were aborning from the ashes. But before that, there were contending theories about what to do about the plummeting popularity for the Tory brand. Can you remember the Christian

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Temas

Heritage Party or the Confederation of Regions Party?... the latter was briefly the official opposition in New Brunswick. Some fellows and I created the Northern Foundation to organize the Blue Tories within the Federal Progressive Conservative riding associations; in other words, to reform the PC party from within.

It didn't work.

What happened instead was this: in the aftermath of the Tory collapse, the Reform Party became the rallying point in English Canada. Unbeknownst to most Canadians, there were neo-Nazis in Canada who thought their time was also now. They apparently resolved to penetrate any conservative organization they could and, according to CSIS, neo-Nazis were at work penetrating the Reform Party and the Northern Foundation. In the latter case, the Foundation was penetrated by a neo-Nazi, a woman who, unbeknownst to us, was padding our mailing list with other neo-Nazis. It was solely my fault to invite her, but all I saw at the time was her industry. Over time she was exposed and since left the country – quite a story by itself, but it isn't the story here.

CSIS operates by soliciting assistance from the inside, and are utterly reliant on their undeserved cachet with the Canadian people to obtain that assistance. In this case they approached an up-and-coming Reform Party politician and asked for his help in ridding Canada and sensible people everywhere of this cancerous scourge. Apparently, he agreed.

What I didn't know in 1988 was that CSIS had targeted me.

Jack Hooper, the former Head of Operations of CSIS, once told the Senate that “when prosecution is not viable... we have other techniques.” The techniques he is referring to are part of their ‘diffuse and disrupt’ policy.⁷ It means the target's life will be ruined. Once, for example, there was a targeted communist professor who had problems in his personal relationship, so CSIS forged a letter on his girlfriend's behalf alluding to an affair with somebody in England. It was torn to pieces and left conveniently in their bathroom wastebasket immediately after the girlfriend left for England for a conference. Great stuff, eh? From my vantage point for almost three years, CSIS seems to enjoy it. But I am getting ahead of myself.

The Reform Party politician was good to his word and I became his target. He denounced me repeatedly. I know this because people called and told me. I was perplexed because I thought we were on good terms. So when he got a job as Deborah Grey's assistant (Ms. Grey was the only Reform Party MP elected in 1988), I went to see him on Parliament Hill. Not only did he throw me out of Grey's office, he (or CSIS) had me banned from Parliament Hill. A Calgary MP saw my ‘Wanted’ poster inside the Commissionaires' desk and passed the word along. The Reform Party politician did other things too, and let's be honest, many Canadians would support his efforts to rid the Hill of neo-Nazis.

CSIS did a lot of disrupting and diffusing against me throughout the 1990s. A rumour was spread that I was a neo-Nazi throughout the branch where I worked in Revenue Canada. Several Jewish friends approached me over the years to mutter something like “You wouldn't believe the bad things I've heard about you...” I was investigated for two years by Revenue Canada (I was cleared)⁸. Many directors couldn't conceal their distaste of me as I passed them in the hall, some of whom I never met. Somebody was stationed outside my house at the time of the Oklahoma City bombing. Many of my successful job competitions suddenly developed irregularities, to the point where I was forced to relocate to Customs.

Does it matter that I was never a neo-Nazi? Let me assure you that I'm salivating at the prospect of CSIS bringing forth the ‘evidence’ not only to clear my name but to alert Canadians about the damage done to many people by CSIS. Lawyers have confirmed to me their key traits that I have seen: Ruthless? Absolutely! But any organization that uses Cold War tactics in a professional environment should provide an inkling that CSIS is also the Keystone Kops of the North, not only making mistakes, but mistakes of the critical sort. You're reading this in the media almost every day now.

And the Reform Party politician? Whatever became of him?

He is now the Prime Minister of Canada.

End of Part I

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