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Deputy,

POIB is increasingly receiving requests for information, intelligence, open source scrapes, background checks etc on a wide array of societal actors. Many of these entities are social movements that have perspectives that diverge from the mainstream – they may not be engaged in criminal activity, nor do we have grounds to believe or suspect that they are. These requests are emanating from many clients internal and external to the OPP at an escalating rate – and with great urgency.

I have several concerns both professional and ethical:

- *On the ethical front*, several requests do not relate to the parameters that the state/police should consider in intelligence operations. The potential “targets” are not engaged in criminal activity nor do we have reasonable grounds to believe that they will be. They may oppose governmental policy and engage in protest.
- *On the professional front*, many requests are received as a culmination of an email chain with many different departments, entities, persons, etc. weighing in on the requests in the form of partial sentences or merely utilizing the forward button and expressing urgency. As a result, the request and rationale are provided out of context and with not parameters in law. Just yesterday, this occurred with input from a regional health office through multiple levels of government about an activity that was not occurring.

There appears to be an incredibly heightened appetite for any/all information on entities that cause discomfort to the status quo – be they companies, school boards, government authorities or political leaders. And this appetite is being articulated in irresponsible ways – attaching urgency to requests.

I am concerned that “success” is seen as satisfying intelligence requirements and requests quickly – as opposed to satisfying the correct intelligence requirements to the correct actors. I have acted to prevent/slowdown these requests and/or the responses to them. Often, in times of social turmoil, anxiety breeds fear and demands for information. I am reminded, and cognizant, of the mass demand for information on “terrorists” that succeeded 9/11 (resulting in the O’Connor Commission; and the McDonald Commission in relation to the RCMP Security Service over-zealousness that resulted in the creation of CSIS.

Perhaps my biggest concern is police leaders and municipal, provincial and national government leaders demanding/ requesting information to satisfy a request without understanding the wherefore or the why.

Pat

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