



BRIEFING NOTES FOR JUSTICE AND LEGAL AFFAIRS SUB/COMMITTEE

To begin I would like to reiterate the position I have consistently taken with regard to homosexuals in the RCMP. Last year when I appeared before the Justice and Legal Affairs Committee and the Special Committee of the Senate on the Canadian Security Intelligence Service I stated that the Force would not knowingly hire a homosexual and that, if one surfaced within the Force, I would deal with the case on its merits. Since appearing at these two committees and after careful consideration of this issue I have come to the conclusion that it is not in the best interest of the Force to employ a homosexual in a peace officer role.

Currently the Force has no written policy in this regard nor is there a specific regulation prohibiting the employment of homosexuals. I have, however, taken steps to draft such policy and I have made my position known to the Solicitor General. To date members who have surfaced as homosexuals have either resigned from the Force or taken alternative employment not requiring peace officer status. In the light of the provisions of Section 15 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, I believe it is important to resolve this issue.

I have not come to my conclusion on the narrow grounds of security, but rather in the context of suitability to be a peace officer in the Force. Security, conduct or performance issues can be dealt with through appropriate mechanisms, but

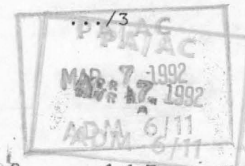
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- 2 -

none of these address the general suitability of an individual for peace officer service in the nation's police force, nor the administrative burden this places on those responsible for its management.

While homosexuality as an alternative lifestyle may be accepted by some, it continues to be an issue of debate. I expect this is particularly so with respect to the smaller //conservative communities and rural areas where a large number of the RCMP represents law and order in the Canadian society. I believe that if it were known that Force members could be homosexuals, this would reduce the favourable image and credibility of the Force, thus affecting its policing function.

Of equal concern to me is the internal morale, esprit de corps and discipline that is necessary in order to have a viably managed organization. I am certain that if you were to ask members of the Force for their views on this issue, their answer would be resoundingly against the employment of homosexuals. While we may not subscribe to this view, this is the reality of the situation which could lead to internal strife in an organization where members must work together in a variety of circumstances. Because of these attitudes a homosexual member could find himself/herself in an untenable situation, resulting in disruptive incidents affecting the effectiveness and efficiency of Force operations.



04 SEP 1990

115

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AGC-0355_0002

- 3 -

I do not wish to imply that an individual has not the right to his/her own sexual preferences, as long as their actions are within the law and not imposed on others. However, I believe I have a responsibility for the management of the nation's police force and in my judgement the employment of homosexuals as peace officers is not in the best interests of the Force. Because of this I will not take the lead in employing them as peace officers. If, in the final analysis, the government or the courts tell me this is discrimination and I must employ homosexuals in this role, then this will be done, in spite of the problems this may cause. But I would hope that those making such decisions will reflect very deliberately on the impact this will have on the efficiency of the Force, its role in the Canadian society, and the nature of the administrative burden placed on its managers.



04 SEP 1990

114

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