

Information provided by the Department
of External Affairs

TALKING POINTS

(Homosexuality)

Why does the Government consider that, in general, homosexuals should not be employed in the rotational foreign service, and, in general, why is aberrant sexual behaviour a subject of security concern? Among the reasons are:

- (1) Homosexuality is not yet considered as fully socially acceptable in Canada or generally in the world. Neither the legal or social structure in Canada, or internationally, permits a homosexual to live a life style which can be regarded as routine. Thus, there is a pressure on homosexuals to keep private the nature of their sexual orientation. This, in turn, creates a situation which can be exploited, at least abroad, by those who wish an individual, or an institution, ill, be they intelligence or criminal elements.
- (2) Homosexuality is regarded in international intelligence as a "weakness" that can be exploited for intelligence purposes in the same way as can greed, excessive promiscuity or criminal activity. There has been ample experience to indicate that intelligence services not only do not hesitate to exploit homosexuality, but target on it.
- (3) Homosexuality is not as widespread as is sometimes suggested and the practice of it frequently is "underground". It is difficult for homosexuals to enter into meaningful relations with others and frequently the search for contacts involves substantive risks for the individuals concerned. In turn, this can lead to opportunities for the exploitation of the individual and/or the institution he serves, either directly or through his homosexual partner.

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- (4) In some parts of the world, (although not in Canada) homosexuality between consenting adults is illegal and can be the subject of criminal action.
- (5) Members of the rotational foreign service do, in the course of their careers, have access to highly sensitive information which is, ipso facto, of interest to hostile intelligence agencies. Further, it is mandatory, in order to operate a rotational foreign service, that employees be capable of serving virtually anywhere in the world. Because of the targetting of intelligence services on homosexuals and because homosexuality is still illegal in many parts of the world, homosexuality is, in consequence, a subject of profound security concern in the rotational foreign service.
- (6) Beyond the necessity to make security judgements that protect the national interest of Canada, there is as well a need to protect the individual. To grant a security clearance to a homosexual would expose that individual to severe risks with the potential for exploitation, which is not shared to the same degree by those who do not share the homosexual's orientation. Even in those cases where the sexual orientation is publicly acknowledged, the dangers to individuals are not decreased in many foreign countries.
- (7) The inclination of the homosexual community is to deride any suggestion that the homosexual is more vulnerable than others to exploitation by compromise and blackmail. It is doubtful that those who make this claim are aware of the incidence of exploitation of homosexuals by hostile intelligence agencies, or of the nature of the tactics employed. They may not, too, be aware of the consequences (sometimes tragic) for the individual concerned.