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Solicitor General
of Canada



Soliciteur général
du Canada

HOUSE OF COMMONS BOOK
LIVRE DE LA CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES

Date 1992-04-27
Agency - Agence CSIS

Subject/Highlights - Sujet/Points saillants
"RCMP SEARCH FOR HOMOSEXUALS DURING 1960's"
 On 1992-04-23/24 various media reported that, for reasons of national security, the RCMP Security Service, from 1959-68, investigated male public servants who were suspected or admitted homosexuals. The Security Service had learned that the KGB used blackmail against homosexuals in an attempt to obtain intelligence from western countries.

Sources
VARIOUS MEDIA REPORTS

Assessment - Evaluation Classification
SECRET

- On 1992-04-23/24 various media reported that, for reasons of national security, the RCMP Security Service, from 1959-68, investigated male public servants who were suspected or admitted homosexuals. The Security Service had learned that the KGB used blackmail against homosexuals in an attempt to obtain intelligence from western countries.
- The information had been obtained by the media under the Access to Information Act.

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Suggested Reply - Réponse suggérée

Questions concerning RCMP activities from 1959-68 with regard to homosexuals:

THE MCDONALD COMMISSION THOROUGHLY REVIEWED THIS MATTER AND RECOMMENDED THAT FILES WHICH WERE OPENED CONCERNING THIS INVESTIGATION BE DESTROYED. THE SOLICITOR GENERAL HAS ADVISED ME THAT ALL FILES OPENED SOLELY ON THE BASIS THAT AN INDIVIDUAL WAS A HOMOSEXUAL, HAVE SUBSEQUENTLY BEEN DESTROYED. THE SOLICITOR GENERAL WILL NOT OFFER FURTHER COMMENT ON THIS INFORMATION WHICH REFLECTS ON ACTIVITIES THAT OCCURRED MORE THAN 25 YEARS AGO.

Question concerning CSIS' policy with regard to the hiring of homosexuals:

CSIS HIRING PRACTICES DO NOT DISCRIMINATE ON THE BASIS OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION. THE BEHAVIOUR OF PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYEES, INCLUDING THEIR SEXUAL ORIENTATION, IS ONLY OF CONCERN IF THEY ARE VULNERABLE TO BLACKMAIL OR COERCION.

Questions concerning the role of sexual orientation in the determination of a government security clearance:

WHEN PROVIDING ADVICE TO CONCERNED GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS WHO ARE SEEKING A SECURITY CLEARANCE FOR AN EMPLOYEE, OR PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYEE, THE SERVICE MUST PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE LOYALTY TO CANADA AND, SO FAR AS IT RELATES THERETO, THE RELIABILITY, OF AN INDIVIDUAL. SEXUAL LIFESTYLE, A CRIMINAL RECORD, OR AN INDIVIDUAL'S FINANCIAL SITUATION ARE EXAMPLES OF FACTORS TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION.

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ASSESSMENT CONT'D

- According to the articles, by the late 1960s the RCMP investigation had identified 8200 admitted, or alleged homosexuals, who worked in the public service and private sector. Investigations focused on males in the Ottawa area, the majority of whom were public servants working for the federal government.
- The media reported that this investigation was directly related to a 1959 federal cabinet committee decision which restated government policy established four years earlier. That policy allegedly denied homosexuals access to secret documents and authorized the dismissal of homosexual employees for reasons of national security.
- Cabinet Directives which preceded the current government security policy, identified features of character as one factor that should be taken into account in relation to a security clearance. Homosexuality was considered to be a feature of character which could result in an individual being considered a person in whom the government could not repose full trust and confidence.
- Under current government security policy, homosexuality is not a barrier to employment in itself, if individuals can openly deal with their sexuality. If an individual is unable, or unwilling, to be open about his/her sexual orientation, then the issue becomes one of vulnerability to blackmail or coercion.
- It was further reported that the RCMP, in conjunction with research psychologists, attempted to develop and use clinical tests that would identify homosexuals within the government, who had access to classified documents. It was anticipated that these tests could also be used to screen prospective employees. By 1964, 51 individuals were tested with inconclusive results. Subsequently, the clinical tests were abandoned. We do not know if the RCMP Security Service ever had the research material. No trace of it can be found on file today.
- The McDonald Commission thoroughly reviewed the RCMP Security Service's investigation of homosexuals and recommended: "that the existing Security Service files on homosexuals be reviewed and those which do not fall within the guidelines for opening and maintaining files on individuals be destroyed." (Volume 2, Chapter 1 of Part VI) The files were subsequently reviewed and those that did not relate to a proper investigative mandate were destroyed.
- A previous housebook card, (#34-783, dated 1991 07 19), dealt with the issue of sexual lifestyle during a security assessment interview with CSIS.

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