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Chief of the Defence Staff | Le Chef d'état-major de la Défense

7 Oct 91

The Minister

CANADIAN FORCES POLICY
ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION

[redacted]

In our very extensive review of the existing policy we have confirmed that a substantial number of service members do not favour a policy change. To the extent that recent survey results reflect the opinion of all serving members, it is clear that the strongest concerns centre on the perceived loss of privacy and the inability to control personal relationships under conditions where physical and social privacy is impossible to provide. Undoubtedly, there are other concerns which may reflect moral and societal values. Some members feel so strongly on the issue that 19% of survey respondents declared that they would take their release if the Canadian Forces policy were revoked. While it is unlikely that these expressed intentions would be acted upon in all cases, they do illustrate the depth of feeling on this subject. In sum, a policy change will inevitably impose a burden on the leadership of the Canadian Forces to ensure that cohesion and morale, which are essential to military operational effectiveness, are not significantly impaired.

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Notwithstanding the above comments, I believe that members of the Canadian Forces are deeply committed to both a sense of duty and of fairness. If a policy change is made, we will draw on that commitment to accomplish the change with the least possible adverse impact on the capability of the Canadian Forces.

[redacted]

A.J.G.D. de Chastelain
General

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