

Solicitor General
of Canada



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CONFIDENTIAL

Commissioner R.H. Simmonds
Royal Canadian Mounted Police
1200 Alta Vista Drive
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0R2

Dear Commissioner Simmonds:

In your letter of April 30, 1986, you indicate your view that there is "some ambiguity" in the Government's position on the issue of sexual orientation as a prohibited ground of discrimination. I do not share this view. I regard the statement in the paper "Toward Equality" to be quite unequivocal. In the light of this, I have given serious consideration to your proposal regarding publication of a Commissioner's Standing Order as requested in the final paragraph of your letter.

Having reviewed the most recent draft of such a Commissioner's Standing Order available to me, I cannot agree with you that publication of such a Commissioner's Standing Order would not put you in conflict with the position of the Government. In my opinion, it would represent a direct conflict with the policy enunciated in "Toward Equality".

I have written to the Minister of Justice to raise with him the issue of an amendment to the Canadian Human Rights Act that would specifically include discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation as a discriminatory practice. For your information, I enclose a copy of my letter. While I look forward to receiving my colleague's response to this letter, I cannot anticipate that an amendment to the Canadian Human Rights Act in this regard will be enacted at an early date.

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Finally, I note your view that you cannot in all conscience, voluntarily alter the position that the Force has taken on homosexuality for many years. I also note your view that you would not wish me to give you a direction in this regard. In light of my conclusion that the Government's policy on sexual orientation is clear and has direct implications for the Force, you might wish to reconsider your view that you do not wish to receive direction. As a member of the Government and as the Minister responsible to Parliament for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, I accept my responsibility for the policy that sexual orientation is a prohibited ground for discrimination. I respect the position in which you find yourself. I therefore stand prepared to provide direction, as authorized by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act, as required.

I would appreciate an opportunity to discuss this subject with you further.

Sincerely,

Perrin Beatty

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