

SUGGESTED REPLY

I refer to your earlier inquiries regarding this Department's policy pertaining to the sexual preference of personnel in the Canadian Forces.

The Canadian Forces enrol, and retain, only such persons as are capable of performing all military tasks that are assigned to them, and whose lifestyles are compatible with a military environment. In the case of homosexuals, it is the considered view of authorities in both the Department and the Canadian Forces that such persons, because of their sexual orientation, create a number of serious problems for the Canadian Forces which militate against their employment. Canadian Forces policy in respect of homosexuals is, and remains, that they are not knowingly enrolled or retained in the Canadian Forces.

This policy, however, is not based upon the question of sexual preference or orientation, but rather upon the fact that homosexuality presents a bona fide operational impediment. It is simply not possible to fully utilize homosexuals to meet the exigencies of the Service and it is necessary to do everything to preserve the effectiveness and the operational capabilities of the Canadian Forces.

To this effect, on 1 August 1979, Admiral Falls, then Chief of the Defence Staff, wrote a letter to Mr. Gordon Fairweather, Chief Commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission, stating the policy of the Canadian Forces on this subject. I enclose, for your information, a copy of that letter which expresses the policy, addresses the main reasons for the policy and has my full support in the present circumstances.

A member who is to be released from the Canadian Forces as a

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- 2 -

result of the application of this Order will normally be honourable
released under Item 5(d) of the Table to Article 15.01 of the Queen's
Regulations and Orders for the Canadian Forces. Should a member of the
Canadian Forces believe he has suffered any personal oppression,
injustice or other ill-treatment as a result of the application of this
policy, that member may seek redress under the provisions of the Queen's
Regulations and Orders for the Canadian Forces Articles 19.26 and 19.27
- Redress of Grievance.

I thank you for your interest in this matter and trust you will
continue to rely on my cooperation, whenever possible, in the future.

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