



Minister
of National Defence

Ministre
de la Défense nationale

SCAND

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0K2

31 May 82

Mr. Marcel Prud'homme, M.P.
Chairman of the
Standing Committee on
External Affairs and
National Defence
Room 265-WB
House of Commons
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Prud'homme:

With your kind permission and that of the Committee, I would like to clarify, for the record, my statement of 26 May 82 at the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence in response to a question from Mr. Svend Robinson, M.P. The remarks I refer to were concerning the policy of the Canadian Armed Forces with respect to CFAO 19-20, which is the Canadian Forces' regulation related to the question of the enlistment for training of individuals with a certain sexual orientation or preference.

I said on this occasion that there was no discrimination in the Canadian Armed Forces, and that the policy involved in these orders should not be deemed discrimination since it is not based solely on the question of sexual orientation or preference. My statements in this regard do not reflect any change in the direction of current Defence Department policy. In our experience, homosexuality presents a bona fide operational impediment, in that it would not be possible to fully utilize certain individuals

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to meet the exigencies of the Service; for example, in some overseas postings, at isolated postings, or aboard ships, without jeopardizing the safety of the individuals or the social climate of those around.

Where employees, in this case, Members of the Canadian Armed Forces, have little or no say in where they may be called upon to serve, we feel that it is necessary to do all that we can to preserve the effectiveness of the organization.

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 Armed Forces on this subject. I enclose, for your information, a copy of this letter which reflects the view of the Defence Department on this subject. It is a view which has my full support in the present circumstances.

Mr. Chairman, I leave to your good judgement, the opportunity to transmit this letter to the Members of the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence.

Yours sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNE PAR
ORIGINAL SIGNED BY
J. GILLES LAMONTAGNE

Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne
Minister of National Defence

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