

ON NATIONAL DEFENCE

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*BOMr. Robinson: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank my colleagues for their indulgence. I will try to be brief. I have questions in two areas, and maybe I will just briefly pose them.

The first question is with respect to the policy of the Armed Forces on the question of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. The Minister is aware that the current policy, CFAO-1920, apparently remains in effect.

I want to ask the Minister whether he is prepared to assure this committee that he, in fact, know an individual who is a member of the Armed Forces who happens to be gay or lesbian, and who is otherwise qualified, will, in fact, be released from the Armed

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Forces while the study which has been announced is currently under way.

I just note to the Minister that the Solicitor General imposed a similar policy in the case of the RCMP, while the RCMP was studying the government's response to the equality report.

*BOMr. Andre: Mr. Robinson, if any incident like that were to occur, it would be as a result of deliberate action, not as a result of automatic application of this rule. Can I put it in that terms?

The statement of the government, made by the Minister of Justice is quite clear. We have this chartered task force, as we are calling it, internally looking at the necessary adjustments we need to make to give effect.

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But, within the context of maintaining an operationally effective Armed Force, I do not think I would be fulfilling my responsibilities if I were to foreclose the possibility of behaviour resulting in a dismissal, but it would be behaviour, not the fact that somebody informed that such and such is a homosexual or lesbian.

*BOMr. Robinson: It would be inappropriate behaviour by the individual, whether homosexual or heterosexual.

*BOMr. Andre: Precisely.

*BOMr. Robinson: Thank you.

*BOMr. Hopkins: Mr. Chairman, it was

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