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COMMANDER OF AIR COMMAND

COMMANDANT DU COMMANDEMENT AERIEN

1460-2 (Comd)

Air Command Headquarters  
Westwin, Manitoba  
R3J 0T0

28 November 1986 3/12

National Defence Headquarters  
Ottawa, Canada  
K1A 0K2

Attention: CDS

NDHQ - CDS/VCDS/D Sec GENERAL OFFICE		
REFERRED TO	DATE	BY
CA/COS	2/12/86	[Signature]

CHARTER TASK FORCE ON EQUALITY RIGHTS - SEXUAL ORIENTATION (C)

- References:
- A. Charter Task Force Final Report dated September 1986 (C)
  - B. NDHQ 1745-42-9 (CDS) Final Report - Charter Task Force on Equality Rights 13 September 1986 (C)

1. (C) The Charter Task Force Final Report, and in particular the chapter discussing the sexual orientation issue, has been fully reviewed by this Headquarters. In an attempt to address sexual orientation as a prohibited ground of discrimination, several key factors which could affect the operational performance of the CF resulting from the employment of homosexuals are discussed. It is felt that a policy of employing homosexuals would carry a very high risk of serious damage to our operational effectiveness, and as such a recommendation to maintain the status quo is supported.

2. (C) The need to remain operationally effective is our mandate from the Government of Canada; therefore, in stating our case regarding the employment of homosexuals, only valid arguments relating directly to the factors influencing our operational capability need be presented. Unfortunately, certain information presented in the Task Force report appears to degrade that argument in places, and possibly could undermine our position because of the extremes used to illustrate the case. To this end I believe that the following issues will have the greatest impact on our operational effectiveness: morale and its potential impact on unit cohesion or lack thereof, discipline and the possibility of rank structure erosion, and to a lesser extent the recruiting of new members and retention of present members in the CF. With a view to strengthening and supporting our "hold the line" attitude these issues are discussed within the Air Command perspective. In addition, a brief statement on the effects which the discovery of the AIDS virus has had on society is included.

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3. (C) The success of any military mission or the achievement of any significant goal is dependant upon the group or team working together in close co-operation. In many instances, team cohesion is not only important but absolutely vital if the mission is to succeed. Whether it is on the flight line or within the cockpit, co-operation between members of the crew is essential. Generally, this close co-operation is achieved through the belief that:

- a. every member of the team possesses the skills and ability necessary to achieve his/her part of the task;
- b. every member is performing a task for the betterment of the team and not through a sense of personal gain or personal preference; and
- c. each member has gained the mutual acceptance and respect of his/her teammates through acceptable behaviour in what is considered to be a normal way of life.

In view of the substantial reservations in the acceptance of homosexuality, it is reasonable to assume that the homosexual will not have the respect of his peers to the extent required and thus will not be accepted by the group. Should this occur, the homosexual will be ostracized from the group, team cohesion will be eroded and the success of the mission seriously jeopardized.

4. (C) As stated in the Task Force report, the aversion to association with homosexuals was most pronounced within those units forced to live and work under adverse conditions. Within Air Command these entities would include tactical and shipborne helicopter squadrons, mobile and tactical air movements teams, weapon loading crews and isolated stations, to cite a few. It was also indicated that the major underlying causes of this unwillingness to work with homosexuals were the anxiety and discomfort associated with situations requiring direct or indirect personal contact. These results indicate that serious problems would result from integration of known homosexuals into many Air Command units. The final result would be a lack of unit cohesion which would impact adversely on operational effectiveness.

5. (C) Sound military discipline assures leaders that subordinates will follow lawful commands and behave within an acceptable code of conduct. For this to occur, the leader must have the respect, trust and confidence of his/her subordinates. The acceptance of homosexuals in the CF and their progression within their occupations would eventually place these individuals in positions of authority. Consequently, the reaction to a homosexual supervisor by a subordinate with an aversion to homosexuality would be diminished respect and confidence, leading to an erosion of the superior to subordinate relationship. Given the current social climate, it is further submitted that these supervisors could not operate effectively and, consequently, would not be able to perform their essential leadership functions. The end result undoubtedly would be a degradation in operational effectiveness at the air units to which these individuals are assigned. In some instances, flight safety could be adversely impacted.

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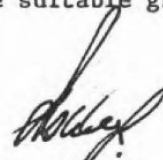
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6. (C) Finally, it is fundamental to the operational effectiveness of Air Command to be able to attract and retain competent members. Consequently, consideration must be given to the potential effect of recruiting and retaining of homosexuals. As indicated in the subject report, available evidence suggests that a policy of employing homosexuals would cause a substantial reduction in the recruiting of heterosexuals. Prospective recruits from the large segment of Canadian society which, at best, tolerates homosexuals in specific situations, undoubtedly would re-examine their motives for joining the military. One wonders if the "macho" image of an operational air force could ever recover if homosexual fighter pilots were actively recruited. Certainly, the indications are that there would be a significant decline in the number and quality of applicants recruited. The result would be a serious and adverse impact on our operational effectiveness.

7. (C) In the discussion relating to the employment of homosexuals in the CF, personal emotions may creep into the presentation of issues. While it is important to restrain these emotions, it is also important to appreciate that certain values are harboured within each and every one of us to some extent, and will result in a response and behaviour pattern which could influence unit cohesion, discipline, and recruiting sufficiently to degrade our operational performance. It is, therefore, recommended that the current policy of not employing homosexuals in the CF be continued.

8. (C) In view of the controversy surrounding the advent of the AIDS virus and its widespread prevalence, the acceptance of homosexuals by society at large is presently the subject of global debate. Large segments of society and, indeed, entire nations are re-examining their attitudes and policies regarding homosexuals. The end result of these reviews may well be a return to traditional and more conservative human values. Careful consideration of this issue suggests that it would not be prudent to introduce homosexuals into the CF at this time.

9. (C) In the event that our current policy regarding this matter is not upheld by the Government, the CF fall back position on this issue should be such that only those "well-adjusted" homosexuals be retained. It is emphasized that the term well-adjusted refers to homosexuals engaged in relations between consenting adults and remaining within the provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada. The basic rules governing the sexual conduct of heterosexual members of the CF must also be applied for homosexual members. Any deviation from this norm would constitute unacceptable behaviour and hence would provide suitable grounds for release from the CF.



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