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See RCMP bias

Homosexuals asking equal job treatment

From the Ottawa Bureau
 of The Globe and Mail

OTTAWA — The National Gay Rights Coalition, which represents 33 homosexual groups in Canada, asked Solicitor-General Francis Fox yesterday for a meeting to discuss discrimination against homosexuals by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

A press release said the request was spurred by an RCMP spokesman's statement

in The Globe and Mail on Tuesday that investigations of prospective officers focus on "character weaknesses," such as homosexuality. The force wants exemption from a proposed new law giving federal employees access to their own personnel files, the spokesman said.

Coalition co-ordinator David Garmaise said his organization wants assurances from Mr. Fox that homosexuality is not a consideration in the hiring of Mounties or in RCMP security clearances of other federal employees.

"If this attitude prevails in the hiring of its own officers, how many security clearances and, therefore, promotions and jobs does the RCMP deny gay people?" his letter to Mr. Fox asked.

Mr. Fox's office said it was too soon to say if the request for a meeting would be granted.

The coalition has also written to Justice Minister Ronald Basford asking that the proposed Human Rights Act include "sexual orientation" among categories of prohibited discrimination.



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