



**Canadian
Lesbian and
Gay Rights
Coalition**

**Coalition
canadienne pour
les droits des
lesbiennes et des gais**

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July 18, 1979

Hon. Joseph Clark, M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

ORIGINAL TO Marcel Masse
ORIGINAL ENVOYÉ A
C.C. P.M.O. FILE
C.C. DOSSIERS C.P.M.

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Dear Sir,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Rights Coalition (CLGRC), an organisation which represents some fifty gay and lesbian groups from across Canada. We ask that your government act rapidly to correct inequalities that exist in the Human Rights Act and in our Bill of Rights.

The Coalition met in Ottawa from June 27 to July 2, 1979, at its annual conference. At that time, the Coalition held many workshops and panel discussions on the topic of human rights, and had a meeting with Mr. Gordon Fairweather, Chairperson of the Canadian Human Rights Commission. Even though the CLGRC has many concerns about inequalities in areas of federal jurisdiction including sexual offences, censorship, and child custody, we have decided that seeking amendments in the human rights area was our most urgent and immediate priority.

We are seeking the position of your government on the following issues. As well, we ask that corrective measures be enacted at once to implement the changes we seek.

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Member groups of the Coalition demand the inclusion of "sexual orientation", "physical disability" and "criminal record" in the Canadian Bill of Rights, in the Canadian Human Rights Act, and in any new constitutional Bill of Rights. We demand the strengthening of the Bill of Rights to effectively protect individual and minority rights.

CLGRC calls for the adoption of the principle of primacy in human rights legislation, that is, that human rights legislation should take precedence over all other legislation. We call for the establishment of citizen involvement in the selection of human rights commissions. We oppose any exemption clauses in human rights legislation which act to limit the rights of minorities.

Finally, we demand the inclusion of "sexual orientation" in the Public Service Employment Act and the Public Service Staff Relations Act to protect all homosexuals from discrimination in all departments of the federal public service. Discrimination against homosexuals in the Armed Forces, the RCMP and in Crown corporations must end. Sexual orientation should not be a criterion in determining the security clearances for employees in all branches of the public service.

Progressive Conservative M.P.'s have maintained a consistent silence on questions dealing with the homosexual minority or have generally opposed the granting of rights to gay people on moral and religious grounds. Your party has never taken a position on these issues and we feel that it is incumbent upon you to take a positive position now.

To be denied basic human rights in one's own country is a very serious matter, one which now affects some two million Canadians in their daily living.

We hope that in your capacity as Prime Minister, and leader of the Government of Canada, you will be able to take a serious and responsible look at our proposals. We anxiously await your reply.

Yours sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Denis LeBlanc.

Denis LeBlanc

on behalf of the Coalition.

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REC'D C. P. H.

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