



TO
A

Solicitor General

FROM
DE

Deputy Solicitor General

SECURITY - CLASSIFICATION - DE SÉCURITÉ

CONFIDENTIAL

OUR FILE/NOTRE RÉFÉRENCE

YOUR FILE/VOTRE RÉFÉRENCE

M12197

DATE

15.5.82

SUBJECT
OBJET

CORRESPONDENCE FROM GAYS OF OTTAWA (G.O.) CONCERNING
SECURITY SERVICE FILES ON HOMOSEXUALS

1. This is the third letter on this topic from members of G.O. since publication of the McDonald report. Please see Tab A for copies of previous correspondence.
2. Mr. John Duggan, your G.O. correspondent in this instance, seems to be trying to involve you in an open-ended dialogue aimed at promoting a 'gay' viewpoint in the formulation of security policies. This is a considerable expansion of G.O.'s original concern with Security Service file holdings on homosexuals. Mr. Duggan raises the following points:
 - that gay concerns should be considered in the development of new information management policies in the Security Service;
 - G.O.'s view that any "insensitivity", or "poor analytical capability" within the RCMP, as discovered by McDonald, ought to be rectified by G.O. providing you with expert advice;
 - that you give G.O. an assurance that you will seek public or expert advice in the process of formulating new policies for the Security Service;
 - whether you will consult other national governments, on the handling of homosexuality and security, e.g. Sweden and the Netherlands;
 - what steps you will take to ensure that "homophobia" (sic) is not institutionalized into new security policies;
 - whether you will re-examine the interpretation of homosexuality as a "character defect";

Mr. Duggan concludes by offering G.O.'s services in forming a committee "with access to expert opinion" to advise you on such matters.

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3. Since you last corresponded with G.O., Commissioner Simmonds has responded to your request that the Security Service develop proposals for a new file destruction policy. Analysis of these proposals is not yet complete. It is clear, however, that the RCMP are prepared to consider destroying a portion of their existing file bank on homosexuals, and to re-classify the remainder under categories that can be more closely related to the mandate. I would not advise communicating this to G.O., until the details have been clarified, and the new policy is acceptable to you as a whole. This development would permit you to indicate to G.O. that you are closer to a solution to their original concerns.
4. Even though the problem of homosexual files may be satisfactorily resolved, the underlying problem — whether homosexuals are per se more of a security risk than individuals of other sexual orientations — will not be affected by this decision. One can, I think, realistically anticipate increasing public and political pressure to re-examine existing personnel and security policies, with a view to eliminating perceived "discrimination" against homosexuals. For this reason, initiating a further review of this aspect of our security policy, in addition to the work of SPUR, would be time well-spent.
5. In order to determine the practical dimensions of the problem, I recommend that as a first step the Director General of the Security Service be asked for a full assessment of the security problem homosexuals currently pose, including relevant cases, and specific details of how the Security Service's role in the security clearance program has operated with respect to homosexuals over the past 5 years.
6. With respect to Mr. Duggan's letter, I recommend that you do not enter into the expanded dialogue he is seeking, but restrict your response to an assurance respecting file destruction. You might also inform Mr. Duggan that you have sent copies of his correspondence to the DG of the Security Service, and Mr. Gibson, for their information. Draft letters to Mr. Duggan and to the Director General of the Security Service are attached for your consideration.



André Bissonnette

Attachments