

Body Politic

A magazine for gay liberation

October 21, 1983

R. H. Simmonds
Commissioner, RCMP
Rm G-309, Headquarters
1200 Alta Vista Drive
OTTAWA, Ontario

Dear Commissioner Simmonds:

On September 29, you testified before the Senate committee reviewing Bill C-157. In answer to Senator John Godfrey, who asked you about the denial of a top-secret security clearance to a civilian file clerk, you said that homosexuality "is not an automatic bar to anything. It is just one of the things you have to look at (when granting a security clearance)." Further, you said that the denial of the security clearance "was wrong, it was not a proper interpretation of CD 35."

My question, sir, is whether this applies to the three areas traditionally deemed by the federal government to be off-bounds for lesbians and gay men: External Affairs, the Armed Forces, and the RCMP (not, mind you, the civilian positions in the RCMP, but the "regular member" positions). Does the RCMP not bar lesbians and gay men from enrolling into the regular force? If not, when did this change occur? And is homosexuality not still a ground to deny Canadian diplomatic postings? As for the Armed Forces, it's quite clear that they do not allow lesbians and gay men to enroll, but does the RCMP co-operate with the Armed Forces, and pass on information it may have on a particular person's sexual orientation?

It wasn't clear, to me at least, whether your statement to the Senate committee revealed new government policy, or whether you were simply referring to the security clearances of people in other areas of the government than the RCMP and External Affairs.

I anxiously await a reply.

Sincerely,


Kevin Orr
Canadian News Department