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Prepared for the Commission for his  
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Bill C-157

Homosexuality per se is not now, nor has it in past  
ever been, an absolute bar to holding a security clearance.  
It is generally recognized, not only in Canada but in other  
Western democracies, that in some circumstances homosexuality  
can prove a risk to security. Those persons entrusted with  
the national security secrets of the government must be  
persons in whom the government can repose the fullest trust  
and confidence. As such, they must be persons who, in  
the course of living out their daily lives, do not place  
themselves in a position where they might be vulnerable  
to compromise or blackmail.

Persons who are sensitive or embarrassed about some  
aspect of their activities or character, have in the past,  
been placed in compromising positions by others working  
in a hostile way against the interests of Canada. This  
has particularly been so in respect to Canadians posted  
in countries where homosexuality per se remains a criminal  
offence. Many have come forward in these circumstances but  
others have not and, in consequence, damage has been caused  
to the national security.

In sum, how the person is to be employed in the public  
service and, most importantly, how he copes with homosexuality  
is the determining factor in whether he will be granted or  
permitted to hold a security clearance. This emphasis  
upon circumstances is reflected in current R.C.M.P.  
investigational policy.

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It is so that in the past the Force has not always been as sensitive to this distinction as it ought to have been. This is quite clearly and accurately reflected in the McDonald Commission Report, page 782, Second Report, Volume II. Whether this lack of sensitivity was based upon U.S. experience is a moot point, but more likely, it is an outgrowth of the very character of the Force itself. In the past, in what is now well recognized as an overly zealous approach to the Force's responsibility for security clearance investigations, homosexuality became a subject of inquiry in its own right. Many files were opened and lists created in anticipating that some time in the future they might become relevant in a security clearance context. This was an improper shortcut to the Force's investigational responsibilities. This practice has now been stopped and the files created in <sup>this</sup> ~~their~~ fashion~~s~~ have been marked for destruction.

In recognizing these problems of the past, it is also important to note that there was a thread of concern running through the 1960<sup>s</sup> and 1970<sup>s</sup> in respect to the posture the Force ought to adopt in this whole sensitive area. The Commissioner, as early as May 1960 asked for specific terms of reference and the matter was put under study in other areas of the government. One of the

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recommendations flowing from this study was to attempt to devise some sort of clinical or psychiatric testing for persons entering the public service in positions with access to classified information. Behind this, it seems, was the hope that if some sure means could be found to satisfy legitimate security concerns, the scope of investigations could be greatly narrowed. This initiative, in which the Force was involved in only a peripheral, passive way, subsequently became publicly characterized as the "fruit machine". It died a natural death and properly so.

The process of introspection continued, however, and, helped along by the recommendations of the McDonald Commission the Force has evolved to what I believe is a responsible and fair approach to its responsibilities in this terribly sensitive area. No longer is homosexuality characterized as a "character weakness", and the Force does not, in either its investigative practice or its own administrative policy, view homosexuality as a bar to employment. Each case is judged upon its own merits and in the context of its unique circumstances. While the standards appropriate to a peace officer will continue to be judged in terms of public acceptance on the whole, it is totally unfair to link the current attitude of the Force to the narrow, unreasoned and bizarre observation that, "one homosexual can pollute a government office".

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The matter of homosexuality as it relates to investigations and employment practices of the Force has been a subject of internal study and debate over the past couple of years. Policy has been revised and files marked for destruction. This process is ongoing. I am in full agreement that the mandate for investigation be limited to publicly justifiable national security concerns and that the analytical capabilities of persons involved in security work be improved. I am confident that this too is being accomplished.