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The Honourable Jake Epp, P.C., M.P.
Room 256, Confederation Building
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Dear Colleague:

This is in response to correspondence of August 7, 1986 from Mr. Brian Derrah, Senior Assistant for Manitoba, to my Chief of Staff, Mr. Bruce Fountain, requesting information on Royal Canadian Mounted Police policy as it relates to admittance of homosexuals into the RCMP. I regret the delay in providing this information to you.

I am informed by the Commissioner of the RCMP that all applicants who meet the basic selection standards are subject to a complete investigation and evaluation of their suitability to perform the duties of a peace officer. In addition, their reliability/security status is also assessed. Behavioural traits, including sexual behaviour, may be an issue in any general evaluation of a candidate's suitability for employment. Sexual orientation, in and of itself, is not a ground for disqualification.

As for the related issue of the continued employment of a homosexual member serving in the Force, the RCMP Act currently provides for a range of sanctions against behaviour or actions considered service offences. The Commissioner may dismiss or discharge a member of the Force (other than an officer) who has been found guilty of conduct of a scandalous, infamous, disgraceful, profane or immoral nature.

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I should add that recent amendments to the RCMP Act will also provide for a Code of Conduct for the RCMP. The Code of Conduct, which will come into effect with the proclamation of the amended RCMP Act, will continue to demand a high standard of personal conduct of members of the Force at all times. Any conduct which might bring discredit to the member or the Force could, under the Code, be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the Force.

The foregoing policies are consistent with the position taken by the Federal Government in "Towards Equality" that one's sexual orientation is irrelevant to whether one could perform a job or use a service or facility. What is determining is an individual's conduct or suitability.

I hope this information will be of assistance to Mr. Derrah.

Yours sincerely,

James Kelleher