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SECRET

June 19, 1989

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MEMORANDUM FOR PAUL TELLIER

From: Dan E. Goodleaf, Assistant Secretary to the Cabinet
(Social Development)

(Sexual Orientation)

At the June 13, 1989 Operations Ministers Meeting, the issue of amending the Canadian Human Rights Act to include sexual orientation as a prohibited ground of discrimination was discussed. Mr. Lewis requested the discussion to clarify what he could say at his appearance before the Standing Committee on Human Rights later that morning. Although the Minister set out a number of options, his preference was to be able to advise the Standing Committee that he recognized the need for legislation to implement the Government's 1986 commitment to ensure that sexual orientation was a prohibited ground of discrimination in relation to all areas of federal jurisdiction and that he would be bringing it forward as part of a larger package of amendments to the Canadian Human Rights Act. The Operations Committee gave him leave to so advise the Standing Committee.

Immediately following the Operations Committee and while Mr. Lewis was at the Standing Committee, the matter was again discussed at the Priorities and Planning Committee. During this discussion, the wisdom of not rushing to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act was recognized. It was felt that the ramifications of such a policy for the Department of National Defence should be fully understood before proceeding. Accordingly, Mr. Lewis and his Deputy were to consult with their counterparts at DND.

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Once this decision had been made, a message was dispatched to Mr. Lewis in the Standing Committee asking him not to say anything about the issue. Mr. Lewis was subjected to tough and persistent questioning at the Standing Committee by Mr. Swend Robinson in particular. (Transcript attached). He acknowledged that there were a number of proposed amendments to the Canadian Human Rights Act on the table including one relating to sexual orientation and he expressed his hope to be able to address them in 1990.

[REDACTED] I will
keep you advised as the matter unfolds.

C. Latimer