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AIDE-MEMOIRE FOR THE CDS

SUBJECT: BRIEFING TO CONSERVATIVE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT  
WED 30 OCT 91

ISSUE

1. To assist the CDS in preparing for an appearance before meetings Tue 5 Nov.

BACKGROUND

2. MND, AMND, VCDS, CPRM and DGPP, accompanied by Mr John Tait, DM Department of Justice (DOJ), briefed Conservative members on 30 Oct 91. Approximately 25 members attended. MND provided a brief overview, followed by Mr Tait who spoke on the legal aspects of the case. Mr Tait's comments closely paralleled the arguments which have been provided to the CF in our DOJ counsel's assessments. Before VCDS was able to speak, Mr Domm, Peterborough, asked for an immediate adjournment since the short notice had precluded many members from attending. MND agreed to hold another caucus meeting week of 4 Nov after which Mr Domm departed.

CURRENT SITUATION

3. Many members who attended begrudgingly supported the policy change. Those included:

- a. Mr Arnold Malone, Crowfoot, Chairman of SCONDVA, who felt we should "get on with it". As a caveat, he felt no homosexuals should serve in submarines;
- b. Mr Jack Shields, Athabaska, supported the change, but not for the infantry;
- c. Mr Bill Kempling, Mr Bob Hicks, Mr Stan Darling, Mr John Bosely and most others supported the change, some obviously with reservations;
- d. Mr John Reimer, Kitchener, strongly objected and called into question DOJ advice that sexual orientation was covered under Sec 15 of the Charter. He asked Mr Tait to provide evidence that the Courts had made such a decision.

1/2

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He also spoke about Christian - Judeo morals and strongly opposed the notion that one's sexual orientation was anything but a question of choice. Mr Reimer was the member most strongly opposed to a change of policy.

- e. Mr Marc Ferland, Portneuf, also opposed the change and likened it to the change in the employment of women policy whereby unlimited liability to serve was invoked. It was difficult to make the connection.
- f. Mr Ross Reid, St. John's East, spoke strongly in favour of the policy change as providing fair and equal treatment to a minority group which had been traditionally discriminated against.
- g. Mr Peter McCreath, South Shore, NS, spoke forcefully and eloquently on the requirement to change the policy. He spoke on societal values and fair and equal treatment. He was "appalled that MPs around the table were supporting such a blatantly discriminatory practice". He noted that there were homosexuals in Parliament and in this caucus (!). Improper behaviour in the workplace must not be tolerated, but what people did in their own homes was their business. His was the only statement which received applause.

COMMENT

4. With the exception of two or three members polarized on the ends of the spectrum, most members who attended were willing to support the change.

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Date Prepared:

1 November 1991

2/2

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