



**National
Gay
Rights
Coalition**

**Coalition
Nationale pour les
Droits des
Homosexuels**

cc { MINISTRE
SOUS-MINISTRE
CHEF DE CABINET
D 3949
cc RCMP for info

NGRC/CNDH C.P. 2919, Succursale D, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1P 5W9 (613) 233-0152

Our File - N - Fed Govt

23 August 1977

Hon. Francis Fox
Solicitor General of Canada
OTTAWA, Ontario
K1A 0P8

Dear Mr. Fox:

We wish to respond to your letter of 3 August 1977 and to recent media reports concerning the RCMP and homosexuality. It is not our intention to carry on a running correspondence with your office, but I submit that your last letter does not respond to many of our concerns and is still too vague about Federal Government policy towards homosexuals. *AV*

Your first paragraph states clearly that sexual orientation is not a factor in employment in the Federal Government. However, whether or not being open about one's sexuality can influence the granting of a security clearance is not clear. If homosexuality is not a factor in obtaining a security clearance, is being a "closet" homosexual a factor? Will the RCMP grant a security clearance to someone who hides her or his homosexuality?

Though you state that homosexuality is not a factor in employment in the Federal Government, you go on to make an exception for the military side of the Armed Forces. Are the Armed Forces not part of the federal government? What about the RCMP? Will they hire an open homosexual? Will the civilian side of DND hire an open homosexual? We would like to have a statement from your government that categorically answers these questions.

We realize that there may be individuals in government whose prejudice might result in discrimination against homosexuals. The government could have taken a big step towards countering that prejudice had it agreed to include sexual orientation in the Canadian Human Rights Act. It was not included because four Liberals on the Justice Committee voted down an amendment supported by two other Members of Parliament, a New Democrat and a Conservative. We appreciate your forwarding us copies of the debate that took place on this amendment; we were, of course, present to hear the proceedings, especially as our request to appear formally before the Committee was denied.

Since your last letter, there have been further reports in the media about the RCMP's practice of categorizing homosexuality as a "character weakness". You

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have refused to respond to those portions of our letters which touch on this area and so we call on you again to explain why the RCMP continues to view homosexuality through 19th century glasses. On what basis does the RCMP consider homosexuality a "character weakness"? Which experts can it cite to defend this categorization?

The reports also refer to the RCMP's policy of keeping files on known homosexuals and to paying informers for information on homosexuals. We strongly object to this practice. It has "police state" written all over it. It is a complete waste of taxpayers' money -- homosexuals represent 10% of the taxpayers in Canada, but I think all Canadians would object to their money being used to keep track of who was homosexual. Nor is it a practice likely to inspire confidence in the government among the many gay public servants who may not be open about their sexual orientation precisely because they fear such strong-armed tactics on the part of Canada's national police force.

Again, we call for the federal government to make a CLEAR statement about its policy toward homosexuals and homosexuality.

Only when the government stops discriminating against homosexuals, says it will not discriminate, and is seen to be not discriminating can we then begin to tackle the prejudice that might still exist in individual managers and employers in the public service.

Just as women need laws to back their fight for equality, gay people need legislation and positive action to spearhead their drive for acceptance and justice.

Yours sincerely,


David Garmaise
Coordinating Office