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Dear John,

I return the draft passage concerning policy on security clearances for possible inclusion in volume III of the history of the Department of External Affairs. You kindly asked me to comment on the draft.

What you have written seems fine. It occurs to me, however, that it might be helpful to readers to be given some idea of the rationale underlying the MacKenzie Commission's proposal to which your refer (page 36 of their report).

While I was in Ottawa when Max MacKenzie's report was in the course of preparation, having returned from Egypt in the Fall of 1967, I was not privy to their work and thus I am uncertain what may have prompted their comments on homosexuality. Obviously, however, the commission must have considered the matter within the context of the relatively harsh wording of Cabinet Directive 35 (approved 18 December 1963) - [see also p. 351 McDonald Commission's Second Report - Vol. 1].

The sensible amendment to the Canadian criminal code made in 1969 meant that homosexual relations between consenting adults no longer was a criminal offense in Canada and, on the face of it, appeared to remove the threat of blackmail. In a number of other countries, however, where homosexuality was still treated as a crime and punishable as such the threat remained. This meant that in countries like the Soviet Union members of our foreign service were open to blackmail attempts by

the KGB. This applied of course especially to those who did not enjoy diplomatic immunity (e.g. administrative staff such as cypher clerks).

These particular aspects aside, in more general terms, the threat of blackmail in Canada was *not* removed if the individuals involved actively sought to conceal their homosexual proclivities. Each case had to be considered on its merits and, in numerous such cases, individuals sought to conceal their homosexual activities from family and friends, rendering themselves open to blackmail.

Although it would involve using up valuable space in the book it occurs to me that you might draw more extensively from the 16 and 1/2 lines of paragraph 100 of the MacKenzie report which provides at least some kind of rationale for the commission's views on homosexuality.

As far as the RCMP Security Service was concerned it simply followed the instructions laid down in cabinet directive 35, bolstered by the lengthy discussions in the security panel following the amendment made to the criminal code in 1969. On this score, surely the minutes of the panel (possibly expurgated) would be available to you if you wished to consult them?

I think it fair to say that there *were* supporters in External Affairs and elsewhere (e.g., Bob Bryce) of the more rigid position taken by the MacKenzie Commission, particularly by those such as the undersecretary and others who had to deal with the unfortunate, often messy human tragedies created by the aggressive blackmail activities of various foreign intelligence services and especially the KGB.

[REDACTED]  
With kindest regards,  
[REDACTED]  
John Starnes  
[REDACTED]