Program Research Project

THE TIME IS NOW TO REMOVE THE BAN

BY

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This paper examines whether the United States is ready to allow homosexuals to serve openly. It addresses current U.S. social opinions, the experiences of U.S. allies when they changed their personnel policies and disputes the main arguments used by those opposed to removing the ban. Based on these factors, the paper recommends removal of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy.

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THE TIME IS NOW TO REMOVE THE BAN

On July 19, 1993, Secretary of Defense Les Aspin signed and directed the implementation of a new policy for homosexual conduct in the Armed Forces beginning October 1, 1993.[1] Updated research and changing social norms are proving that this policy known as Don't Ask, Don't Tell, Don't Pursue, Don't Harass (DADTDPDH) is ineffective and flawed. It does not keep homosexuals from military service nor does it allow the military to retain all of its best service members. The upcoming presidential election in 2008 provides renewed focus on the controversial topic of removing the ban on gays and lesbians to serve openly in the U.S. military. In addition, as the United States continues to fight the Long War against terrorism, the military faces a growing military personnel turnover and shortage.

The following examination of current policy and society's opinions, the policies and experiences of U.S. allies, and specific analysis and rebuttal to the policy's core rationale reveal a policy that bases its beliefs not on logic or fact, but rather fear and prejudice. History repeats itself by allowing flawed logic to continue. Personnel policies change due to a catalyst. What will be the catalyst for this policy change? How can the U.S. military change its policy most effectively and with the least negative incidents? When is the ideal time to implement change?

The Policy and Society's Opinions

The current policy states that a person's sexual orientation is a "personal and private matter…and is not a bar to service entry or continued service."[2] It acknowledges homosexuals have served in the military. The policy intends to do the following: stop the questioning of a member's sexual orientation, stop a member from declaring publicly

his orientation, stop witch-hunts and insubstantial investigations, and stop harassment of members believed to be homosexual.[3] The policy states that discharge of a member is due to homosexual conduct. This conduct is defined as one or all of these actions: Marriage, a homosexual physical act, or the statement that one is homosexual which lends to the presumption that the member will intend to commit homosexual acts. The policy presumes homosexual conduct "interferes with factors critical to combat effectiveness, including unit morale, unit cohesion, and individual privacy."[4]

Recent societal polls negate these assumptions. Zogby International conducted online interviews with veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan deployments that addressed their opinions concerning sexual minorities in the military. The findings illustrate that opinions are changing. The question about allowing homosexuals to serve in the military was 37% negative, 26% positive, 32% neutral, and 5% unsure. In contrast, the question concerning if they are comfortable around homosexuals was overwhelmingly positive at 78%. In addition, two-thirds of those who had knowledge of a homosexual in their unit indicated this did not affect their morale or the unit morale.[5]

In 2007, NEWSWEEK conducted a poll asking Americans if they believe gays and lesbians should be allowed to serve openly in the military; the results are 63% in favor.[6]

On January 2, 2007, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, retired General John Shalikashvili wrote an editorial in the New York Times stating he had changed his mind and is now an advocate for removing the ban.[7] In addition, on November 29, 2007, twenty-eight generals and admirals supporting General Shalikashvili's recommendation sent Congress a signed statement asking for the removal of the ban. They specifically comment, "As in the case in Britain, Israel, and other nations which allow gays and

lesbians to serve openly, our service members are professionals who are able to work together effectively despite differences in race, gender, religion, and sexuality. Such collaboration reflects the strength and the best traditions of our democracy."[8]

In June 2007, former Congressman Bob Barr wrote an editorial in the Wall Street Journal professing that, "He has become deeply impressed with the growing weight of military opinion that concludes that allowing gays to serve openly in the military does not pose insurmountable problems for good order and discipline. (Moreover) the ban is …hurting a military that is already stretched thin. He commented that there is little reason left to believe gays serving openly would break the armed forces."[9]

The Long War is costly in terms of both the need for retaining qualified service members and the overall cost of sustaining this mission. Analysis of the data compiled by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) in 2005 estimated the cost of discharging and replacing homosexual service members between 1994 through 2003 to be at least $190.5 million. In February 2006, The Blue Ribbon Commission, which replicates this analysis, discovered the GAO report vastly underestimated (by 91%) the cost. The commission found the cost to be a minimum of $363.8 million. In addition, the commission pointed out that the data is solely the cost resulting from known homosexuals leaving or being discharged. Capturing the true cost of homosexuals who decided to not reenlist or were discharged under other articles cannot be accurately assessed.[10] Former SGT Joseph M. Kraft exemplifies this fact referencing the GAO study in his editorial stating, "This number does not include those like myself who kept their sexuality a secret and simply decline to reenlist."[11] Former SGT Brian Fricke deployed with his Marine unit where many knew he was gay and did not care. He said,

“People want to know that you’ll be there for them in battle. Everything else just matters less. (And) “I was hiding less, but by then I didn’t want to hide at all.” He too chose not to reenlist.[12]

Findings by the 1993 Rand Institution study on sexual orientation and the U.S. military support questioned the logic of the ban. It summarized the research by advising the military that sexual identity is not relevant to military service or job performance. An interesting fact concerning public opinion allowing homosexuals to serve is that only 21% of those polled believed homosexuals should not serve under any conditions. This statistic is significantly less than the 61% of the public who were against racially integrating the services in the 1950’s.[13]

Is this waste of personnel and funds justified? Democratic Representative Marty Meehan and 40 other members of Congress challenge this logic. Focusing on a specific military occupation, Arabic linguists, they wrote a May 2007 letter to the chairperson of the House Armed Services Committee asking to justify how in this time of need, the removal of 58 linguists, regardless of the fact that they are homosexual, supports U.S. national security.[14]

In February 2007, Representative Meehan introduced a bill called the Military Readiness Enhancement Act that removes the Don’t Ask Don’t Tell policy and replaces it with a policy of nondiscrimination. This bill has been sent forward to the House of Representatives.[15]

Policies and Experiences of U.S. Allies

In 1993, Senator John Warner requested a study on foreign countries’ policies for the issue of homosexuals in military service. Of the twenty-five countries selected,

Canada, Israel, Germany and Sweden were studied in further detail. "Military officials in all four countries said the presence of homosexuals in the military is not an issue and has not created problems in the function of military units." [16] In fact, "…on the basis of their experience, the inclusion of homosexuals in their militaries has not adversely affected unit readiness, effectiveness, cohesion, or morale."[17] Interestingly, Canada which had revoked their ban against homosexuals less than 8 months prior to Warner's requested study, had expected major problems such as "mass resignations, lower recruitment, morale and cohesiveness problems, gay bashing incidents and more open displays of homosexual behavior" none of which occurred.[18] The ban in Canada was removed after Canadian courts deemed there was no statistical evidence or research data that could substantiate the military concerns regarding security, health, morale, unit cohesion, privacy, recruitment, and discipline.

Great Britain, the United State's closest foreign ally, also excluded homosexuals from serving openly in the military until their policy change in 2001. Before Great Britain lifts its ban, US opposition used Great Britain's exclusion of homosexuals as additional "proof" that the US was correct in their stance. Now that Great Britain has changed its policy, the opposition claims the U.S. and Great Britain have substantially different cultures. Therefore, Great Britain's experiences have no merit on how the US military would fare if it too lifted its ban. The experience of Great Britain immediately after lifting its band is very similar to Canada. "The U.K. Ministry of Defense noted a "Marked lack of reaction" and hailed the new policy as a "solid achievement" ….as "there were no mass resignations, no major reports of gay-bashing or harassment, no perceived effect on morale, unit cohesion, or operational effectiveness."[19] The prior bans and

oppositions' platforms formerly used by both Canada and Great Britain are eerily familiar, as they reflect current U.S. military leadership opinions and assumptions.

Current U.S. opposition argues that homosexuality is against the Christian-Judeo cultures. Even though their religion does not recognize homosexuality as acceptable, Israel does not discriminate against homosexuals openly serving. In fact, since they lifted their ban in 1993, Israeli experience has been similar to that of other allies. Israel's experience is important as it operates at a high state of military preparedness similar to the US military. It has reported, "There is no evidence that long-standing inclusion of homosexuals in the IDF (Israel Defense Forces) has harmed operational effectiveness, combat readiness, unit cohesion, or morale."[20] If homosexual military members are not affecting Israeli readiness and cohesiveness in battle, then why does the U.S. military leadership assume it will negatively affect its military effectiveness?

In 1993, of the 25 countries studied for Senator Warner, 10 allowed homosexuals to serve, three had no policy, two had dual policies depending whether the military member was a volunteer or conscript, and 10 banned the inclusion of homosexuals serving. Of the 15 countries that had no policy or had a ban, two have now lifted their bans – United Kingdom and Germany. The remaining eight countries from the report that continue to exclude homosexuals are Brazil, Chile, Columbia, Greece, Peru, Romania, Turkey, and Venezuela.

In fact, research in 2003 by The Center for the Study of Sexual Minorities in the Military (CSSMM) found the following 24 countries allow homosexuals to serve openly: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New

Zealand, Norway, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. Many of the 24 countries that do include homosexuals in their military services are our closet allies. Presently, the U.S., Turkey and Portugal are the only three NATO countries, which do not allow homosexuals to serve in the armed forces.[21]

US military members currently serve with open homosexuals during tours or missions with NATO, NORAD, and coalition forces. A 2004 study on multinational military units disputed the premise that heterosexual U.S. service members will have problems serving with homosexuals. Four out of five case studies of homosexual foreign military members acknowledged that they had no problem serving with U.S. military personnel and stated they experienced no hostility, morale or unit cohesion problems. The fifth case was not open about his sexual orientation as he presumed there would be a negative reaction by American service members to his homosexuality.

As one foreign naval officer stressed, "focusing on common goals helped sailors negotiate cultural differences." No U.S. military members complained or had any concerns with his homosexuality. He states, "We're in different navies, but we are here to do the same job. So it's not an issue, and it shouldn't be an issue." The conclusion of the study was that knowledge of an open homosexual service member does not negatively affect unit cohesion or military effectiveness.[22]

Historical Similarities and the Ban on Homosexual Platform

Most disturbing in this section are the parallels to racial integration. Although General Colin Powell disputed the similarities to the homosexual discrimination, nevertheless, detailed review of the platforms is nearly identical. The main reasons for the exclusions are fear and prejudice. These same two emotions were evident in the

past policy debates regarding African Americans and women. Past civilian and military leadership justified the segregation of races with these same reasons.

History provides the ability to review the invalid and unsubstantiated, but widely held assumptions and beliefs regarding these two groups' abilities or behaviors during their period of disputed integration and acceptance within the US military. Review of past military leaders' failure to require specific, statistical, analytical data and research to support their discriminatory policy against African Americans and women warrant this review today. This same failure repeats itself. Military lawyer, Major Melissa Wells-Petry supports this discrimination against homosexuals by saying it is "the result of applying common sense and experience to discernable characteristics of homosexuals in general and to their conduct and then making a *judgment call*."[23]

These judgment calls, when observed in the context of comparing past policies to the current homosexual policy, point not to a necessity but bigotry and homophobia. The mere fact that these two emotions enable leadership to discriminate against U.S. citizens unfairly who wish to serve is ironic. History reveals the platforms of the policies against women and African Americans as erroneous and false. The concerns comprising the platform supporting the homosexual ban are equally as flawed as past race and gender arguments. This is a primary reason the ban warrants more diligent and logical analysis.

As an example, the studies conducted concerning racial integration in the 1950's find:

> Enlistment for general service implies that the individual be sent anywhere – to any ship or station where he is needed. Men on board ship live in particular close association; in their messes, one man sits beside another; their hammocks or bunks close together; in their common tasks they work side by side; and in

> particular tasks such as those of a gun's crew, they form a closely knit, highly coordinated team. How many white men would choose, of their own accord that their closets associates in sleeping quarters, at mess, and in a gun's crew should be of another race? How many would accept such conditions, if required to do so, without resentment and just as a matter of course? The general Board believes that the answer is "Few, if any," and further believes that if the issue were forced, there would be a lowering of contentment, teamwork, and discipline in the service."[24]

The five assumptions below are the basis on which many misperceptions, deemed as facts, exist. These same "facts" were employed against African Americans before racial integration. Past racial claims will be included to show the mirroring evident in this flawed platform. All are apparent as "cultural myths and false stereotypes." [25]

The first assumption is allowing homosexuals to serve openly increases incidents of crime because of the belief that homosexuals have hidden agendas and prey upon the innocent heterosexuals due to their increased sexual appetites and predatory nature. This same fear was associated with African Americans, as they "have been cast as sexually promiscuous and/or as sexual predators by white society."[26] Both groups are deemed as having a higher probability toward the crime of rape. "A convenient way to exclude an unwanted group is to maintain that they pose a physical threat, and any discrimination is simply self-defense."[27]

A second assumption is an increase in AIDS and venereal diseases. Homosexuals are pinpointed as being 23 times more likely to contract sexually transmitted diseases than heterosexuals are. This assumption may be partially true for male homosexuals, but the argument concerning disease fails to mention that the group with the lowest incident of sexually transmitted disease is lesbians. This fact supports one colonel's recommendation that "homosexuals would have to be specially identified to ensure their blood not be used as a protection to other soldiers." This thought totally

disregards the policy that military routinely tests all members for HIV. Similarly, in World War II, “the Red Cross – with no scientific justification – maintained racially segregated blood banks at the demand of the armed forces. The incidence of syphilis, gonorrhea, chancre, and all other venereal diseases is appalling higher among the members of the Negro race than among members of the white race…”[28]

The third popular belief and assumption insists known homosexuals severely affect morale. The fragility of morale by the opposition considers the presence of known homosexuals very detrimental. Allowing homosexuals to serve openly is so bad in fact, Vietnam veteran David H. Hackworth states, “I cannot think of a better way to destroy fighting spirit and gut U.S. combat effectiveness.”[29] New York Times military editor, Hanson W. Baldwin, “One of the surest ways to break down morale of the Army and to destroy efficiency is to integrate the races”, forewarned this same sentiment 44 years earlier in August 1944.[30]

General Omar Bradley was against the integration of races. He believed “a system of complete integration might seriously affect morale and thus battle efficiency. …A unit has high morale when the men have confidence in themselves, confidence in the fellow-members of their unit and confidence in the leaders. If we try to force integration in the Army before the country is ready to accept these customs, we may have difficulty attaining high morale.” [31]

Morale is also assumed to be lost if a leader is homosexual, as this would undermine his or her ability to command. In addition, referencing back to the falsely assumed predator nature of homosexuals, the rise of sexual harassment cases due to the abuse of command position are assumed to be more prevalent.

The fourth assumption is the fear that the military image will be tarnished resulting in lowered recruiting and retention of military personnel. In the 1940s, Captain F.E.M. Whiting, U.S.N., testified, "The minute the negro is introduced into general service…the high type of man that we have been getting for the last twenty years will go elsewhere and we will get the type of man who will lie in bed with a negro."[32] General Norman Schwarzkopf echoed the same sentiment:

> The impact on the Army's public image would also endanger recruitment and retention, by causing potential service members to hesitate to enlist, making parents of potential service members reluctant to recommend or approve the enlistment of the sons and daughters in an organization in which they would be forced to live and work with known homosexuals, and causing members of the Army to hesitate to reenlist.[33]

Last, the often-touted privacy issue assumes that it is against the rights of heterosexual soldiers to have to sleep, work, shower and use the same latrines as homosexuals. Complaints by senior military leaders and congressional representatives in the 1940s voice concern about African American servicemen and the fact "white boys are being forced to sleep with these negros."[34] Since it is a known fact that there are homosexuals currently serving in the military, statistically speaking chances are probable that a heterosexual service member may already be "sharing private facilities together, the bedroom, the barracks, the latrines, the showers".[35]

<u>Contradictions in Practice to the Policy's Platform of Concerns</u>

This section highlights various practices, which contradict the reasoning used to justify the policy's platform. This section is an unveiling of the double standards currently prevalent.

If the case of decreased morale and unit cohesion is true as opponents for removing the ban would like society to believe, and known homosexuals in the military

reduce combat effectiveness, then it would be deemed proper and necessary to remove a homosexual as soon as possible before further damage was wrought upon the unit. Coincidently, historical data has shown that during times of war, as witnessed in World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Gulf War and today, discharges for homosexuality drop dramatically.

Navy homosexual discharges in the late 1940's were about 1,000 per year. By the 1950s during the Korean War, discharges were down 50%. Present discharge rates are the same – down 50%, in 2006 there were about 600 compared to about 1,200 in 2001.[36] Similarly, during Desert Storm, "many active-duty personnel and reservists who hoped to test the gay ban "came out" to their commanding officers …and were told that they would not be discharged at this time and should prepare to be shipped to the Persian Gulf. Many were also told that they were likely to be discharged when the war was over."[37]

This decrease is not due to a newfound acceptance of homosexuality and its presumed affects concerning morale or any of the other issues but rather, as shown in current circumstances, the desperate need due to manpower shortages and multiple deployments. Many commanders are overlooking or ignoring this policy. Unfortunately, when the conflicts cease, so does the selective enforcement or blind eye of enforcing the policy.[38]

Deploying known openly homosexual soldiers is contradictory as it is in direct conflict with one basic tenant of the opposition's platform. If homosexuality is such a detriment to military effectiveness, why would they be allowed to remain and continue service during the most difficult and important aspect of military service? Quite simply,

the increased deployments necessary to fight wars in both OIF and OEF have necessitated the military to keep all available soldiers. It cannot allow service members to try to leave service by merely having them state that they are "gay." Therefore, it chooses to turn a blind eye and use their service – even though it is in direct violation to their key assumption. Homosexual military members have served and continue to serve proving their patriotism, despite the fear of discovery and challenges of discrimination.

Army Sergeant Darren Manzella is a perfect example of this phenomenon. He is an openly gay soldier who made national news by coming out on "60 Minutes" during the December 16, 2007 episode. There he discussed how he informed his command of his homosexuality and their response was that they could not find any proof he was gay. He has deployed to both Kuwait and Iraq in the past in six years. He reports the response to his news has been 99% supportive. According to Victor Maldonado of the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network,"With recruiting being so difficult fighting two wars, we're finding the trend is turning toward cases like Darren's and the 500 service members. A good soldier is a good soldier, and a good soldier in a time of war is a valuable soldier. We're finding willingness on the part of units and commands to retain quality soldiers regardless of their sexuality."[39]

Another issue for the opposition is that the presence of a homosexual service member causes decreased unit cohesion, which will negatively effect mission accomplishment. Studies have found that, there are two types of cohesion, Task and Social. Social cohesion is when members of a group like each other. Task cohesion relies on members of the group to work together and share the same goals. These are

not the same issue. Social cohesion is not necessary for mission accomplishment, as it has not been found to correlate with performance and in fact can have a negative consequence, as in the Group Think effect. Military members work successfully in the context of task cohesion where the group has common mission and shared goals.[40]

Privacy, as discussed above, is a concern. Although, deploying with known homosexuals and living in the close quarters required of combat tours is not discussed. Privacy for many service members has improved in the past few years as barracks have improved. Therefore, the fear of using the same shower as a homosexual is significantly reduced. Most importantly, to point out, the Don't Ask Don't Tell policy does not guarantee privacy.

Homosexuals are invisible, which means individuals who are homophobic or fear homosexuals are just in a cloud of denial and ignorance. More important to point out is not the fear of taking a shower or using the latrine near a homosexual person, it is the fear based on no scientific fact that homosexuals cannot control their sexual urges, causing anyone to be a victim to their desires. Former Secretary of State Lawrence Korb testified to this by stating, "There's a body of evidence that shows that not every gay man is attracted to every other man or the same for women. That's really what we are talking about here. That somehow or another there's a feeling that just because you are a homosexual, you're attracted to everyone who happens to be your same sex."[41] Therefore, privacy is not the true concern; it is the fear that homosexuals will rape others.

Is the cost of losing highly skilled and trained service members simply due to their sexual orientation worth it? A Military Occupational Skill (MOS) that has received

recent media attention has been that of Arab Linguists. In 1995, a military officer notes, "The ban on homosexuals in the military does not deprive the armed forces of a valuable manpower resource. Currently there is not military necessity that warrants accepting everyone who applies. (In addition) the US Army's professional; all volunteer status can afford to select only the best-qualified recruits to maintain combat effectiveness."[42]

Current military personnel issues dispute this opinion. The language specialty is only one of many specialties straining their capacity and capabilities by multiple deployments. The military cannot afford to lose its trained and senior leaders. Alan Belkin, director of the Michael D. Palmer Center appropriately said, "There is simply no commonsense reason for the military to fire Arab linguists in the midst of a dire shortage of translators. Translating Al-Qaeda cables is [sic] more important than making sure that the military is free of gays."[43] Again, if homosexuals are a negative element in the military – then remove them immediately rather than allowing them to serve for deployments. Does this action serve the best interests of the US and its national security? No. These actions waste valuable resources of personnel, time and training dollars. Representative Meehan said," At a time when our military is stretched to the limit and our cultural knowledge of the Middle East is dangerously deficient; I just can't believe that kicking out able, competent Arab linguists is making our country any safer."[44]

How can it be true that homosexuals are weak in character when history proves repeatedly the bravery of these soldiers? A perfect modern-day example of this bravery is Staff Sergeant Eric Alva, the first Marine wounded in Iraq. He was awarded the

Purple Heart. Both President George W. Bush and the Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld visited him in the hospital while he was recuperating. Alva was the symbol of the American military hero. In 2007 he decided to speak the truth and announced on Good Morning America that he was gay. As a former Marine who served 13 years of honorable service, he testified before Congress in support of the Military Readiness Enhancement Act. He is not alone – he just refuses to remain silent any longer.[45]

The "Social Experiments" that have been the arguments concerning the integration of women and race have proven to be unfounded. Neither "experiment" has lowered the combat readiness nor efficiency of the military forces despite the many opinions and fears raised by military experts at the time. This again raises the question, should beliefs fueled by fear and bigotry, serve as the justification for discrimination against a minority? History has shown that answer to be "No".

Lastly, questions remain as to what would constitute an appropriate time to review and reassess the current policy. Some discussion emphasizes that the timing was not right during President Clinton's attempt at removing the ban because the U.S. was downsizing and it was the beginning of a new peaceful era.[46] Moreover, others have attributed the success of President Truman in desegregating the military in large part to the military desperately needing additional manpower and that during the Korean War, views regarding the issue of race were less important than winning the war.[47] If both these statements are correct, then timing is perfect to remove the ban. The US is not in a peacetime mode but rather engaged in a Long War against Terrorism. Like the Korean War, the Long War requires additional able-bodied personnel to serve within US military ranks.

Recommendations to Facilitate a Smooth Policy Change

As evidenced by the successful transition by the foreign militaries mentioned earlier, policy change does not have to be detrimental. By capitalizing on their foreign allies' experiences, the U.S. military can implement their best practices to ensure a successful transition. There are four main tenets.

First, and foremost, successful removal of the ban must emphasize strong leadership that supports the change both verbally and through actions to correct discrimination. The highest levels of leadership must be committed to accomplishing and implementing the change.[48] The adoption of any policy change needs implementation by utilizing a top-down approach.

Second, since some view homosexuality as an immoral act, the issue will not be to approve of homosexuality but rather that individuals must change their behavior towards homosexuals. Stressing behavior versus attitude is essential. It is also important to employ strict enforcement and be prepared to administer quick and timely punishment for noncompliance.[49] Since homosexuals are currently serving, instead of focusing on acceptance, the behavior to promote should be recognition and tolerance.

Third, the military must treat homosexuals no differently than other military members. No differences made in work assignments, housing allowance, deployments or promotions. Military service continues its basis on performance. In fact, previous research including the Crittenden Report of 1957, the PERSEREC/Sarbin-Karols study of 1988 and a PERSEREC/McDaniel study in 1989 all found homosexuality to be unrelated to job performance.[50]

Lastly, if the Zogby polls are correct, 66% of the military has knowledge or experience of homosexual military members. Therefore, a psychological event is

already occurring called Contact Hypothesis. This is when an individual reduces prejudice against a minority due to personal exposure and positive experiences. People are more likely to have a positive attitude and less likely to continue to foster prejudices over prolonged exposure to an individual as they come to recognize the individual as a person and not a "disliked social Category."[51] General Shalikashvili admitted part of the reason he changed his viewpoint concerning homosexuals was due to his conversation and discussion with a homosexual sailor. This exposure removes the abstract fear of the predatory homosexual and replaces it with concrete experience with an individual that is a professional, military member first and homosexual second.[52]

Effective policy change acknowledges and employs certain steps. The four tenets above are a proposed method the U.S. may utilize to facilitate this change. Like the experience noted by its allies, when the U.S. changes its policy, there may not be much fanfare or incident.

Conclusion

Based on the information presented and the official military studies cited, the paper recommends the removal of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy. As this paper shows, U.S. society has changed in the last 15 years; the increased military deployments have resulted in the policy being selectively ignored or suspended as known homosexuals are serving in combat to no detriment to their units or military mission. In addition, the success of the U.S.'s allies implementing their policies of nondiscrimination without any impairment to their military effectiveness, morale or readiness provides a pathway to success.

More importantly, this paper identifies the true reason for excluding homosexuals: lack of understanding that leads to fear and prejudice. Can the U.S. learn from its past? This paper suggests focusing on job-performance and tolerance versus approval as the basis of methods to assist in the successful removal. As so eloquently stated by former Senator Barry Goldwater, "There is no valid reason for keeping the ban on gays (and that it is time) to pull the curtains on this charade of policy. You don't need to be "straight" to fight and die for your country. You just need to shoot straight."[53] Therefore, the time is now to remove the ban and stop the hypocrisy.

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