

REPEALING "DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL": ADDRESSING THE RIPPLE EFFECTS

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL RAMONA PLEMMONS
United States Army

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U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5050

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REPEALING “DON’T ASK, DON’T TELL”: ADDRESSING THE RIPPLE EFFECTS

by

Lieutenant Colonel Ramona Plemmons
United States Army

Chaplain (Colonel) David Reese
Project Adviser

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U.S. Army War College
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

ABSTRACT

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On the campaign trail and within his first 100 days in office, President Obama made his intent clear – he will repeal the Don't Ask, Don't Tell Policy. Once Congress lifts the policy, there will be challenges the senior leaders will face with implementation, and there are several second and third order effects for consideration. Strong leadership and discipline can overcome the challenges of implementation, but it is important for the policy makers to understand the significance of the second and third order affects of repealing the policy. This paper first provides a historical perspective of homosexuality in the military. The paper also explores the challenges the military faced when integrating race and links these to the integration of homosexuals. The research will look at current societal opinions of allowing gays and lesbians to serve openly in the U.S. military. Furthermore, research will review studies from other organizations that implemented a similar change in order to address challenges of repealing the ban. Also, the study will examine the potential costs involved in lifting the ban. Finally, the paper will provide recommendations for strategic leaders on the implementation of the policy change.

REPEALING “DON’T ASK, DON’T TELL”: ADDRESSING THE RIPPLE EFFECTS

Homosexuals have served honorably in the U.S. military throughout its history, but they have not served openly. The existing policy, “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” (DADT), allows homosexuals to join and serve in the U.S. military, but they cannot publicly acknowledge their sexual orientation, nor can they engage in homosexual acts.¹ A violation of this policy, also known as the “ban” on homosexuals, may lead to separation from the service.

On the campaign trail and within his first 100 days in office, President Obama made his intent clear – he will repeal the DADT Policy. In a YouTube video posted in January 2009, the president’s spokesman Robert Gibbs addressed the issue and confirmed the president’s intent on lifting the ban.² Secretary of Defense Robert Gates announced on February 2, 2010 to the Senate Armed Services Committee that a high-level working group within the Department of Defense will conduct a review of all issues associated with properly implementing a repeal of the DADT policy.³ Repealing the DADT policy is just a matter of time, and policy makers, along with the military leadership, need to plan for the change now.

This paper suggests that strong leadership and discipline can overcome the challenges of implementation, but it is important for the policy makers to understand the significance of the second and third order affects of repealing the policy. This paper first provides a historical perspective of homosexuality policy in the military. The paper also explores the challenges the military faced when integrating race and links these to the integration of homosexuals. The research will look at current societal opinions of allowing gays and lesbians to serve openly in the U.S. military. Furthermore, research

will review studies from other organizations that implemented a similar change in order to address challenges of repealing the ban. Also, the study will examine the potential costs involved in lifting the ban. Finally, the paper will provide recommendations for strategic leaders on the implementation of the policy change.

History of Policy Regarding Homosexuality in the Military

The first explicit military policy to sanction “assault with intent to commit sodomy” was in the *Articles of War* of 1916, which made sodomy a criminal act and usually resulted in a court martial, imprisonment, and dishonorable discharge.⁴ The policy attacked the conduct of the individual, not their sexual identity. By 1942, the current interpretation believed homosexuality was a psychological illness and the military considered recruits and draftees with this “illness” unfit to serve in the military.⁵ The military discharged service members already in the service unless deemed “treatable” and then the commanders had the discretion to discharge the service member or “rehabilitate” to retain in service.⁶

During World War II, the regulations on homosexuality drew attention since it was critical to enlist all eligible men to support the war. During this time, the RAND Corporation documented that the Army policy alone on homosexuality changed twenty-four times between 1941 and 1945.⁷ This period initially put an increased emphasis on the conduct of homosexuals, as opposed to the status or identity of an individual. If the military discovered a service member committed sodomy, the military either barred the person from entering service or discharged him from service.⁸ By the end of the war, however, there was a shift in focus. There was growing policy support for discharging soldiers even if there was no sexual activity, but the person displayed a “homosexual personality.”⁹ After the war the number of discharges for homosexuality remained the

same, but for the much smaller post-war force the rate of discharge equated to approximately ten times greater than it had been during the war.¹⁰ Perhaps this was a result of the war ending and that the critical need to enlist men into the service no longer existed.

By the end of World War II, the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) replaced the various service policies and provided a single reference for all criminal acts among the services. Article 125 of the UCMJ prohibited sodomy with another person or animal. It did not matter whether the act was consensual, or whether the persons engaging in the act were the same or opposite gender, and penetration, however slight, was sufficient to complete the offense.¹¹ This meant even married couples engaging in this activity (oral or anal sex) were punishable under the article, although this rarely, if ever happened. This article still exists as a crime in the UCMJ today, and will require modification when Congress repeals the DADT policy.

The Cold War continued with the policy barring homosexuals from enlisting and discharging those discovered as homosexuals, regardless of gender. During this era there was a shift in the way the military and government viewed homosexuals. The Department of Defense (DoD) policy at this time was focused on homosexuals in the government and the military being security risks. The focus was on identification as a homosexual, not necessarily homosexual conduct. If a gay service member or government employee had a secret, then the government assumed he or she was vulnerable to blackmail by Communists or other “undesirables.”¹²

Although the DoD policy existed, each branch of service had its own branch specific policy, and each dealt with the issue of separation differently. At the end of the

Carter administration, DoD Directive 1332.14 removed the discretion commanders had in handling cases involving homosexuality. This policy stated homosexuality is incompatible with military service, as opposed to the previous policy that stated homosexuals are unfit for military duty.¹³ The rationale behind this was:

...the presence of such members adversely affects the ability of the armed forces to maintain discipline, good order and morale; to foster mutual trust and confidence among service members; to insure the integrity of the system of rank and command; to facilitate assignment and worldwide deployment of service members who frequently must live and work under close conditions affording minimal privacy; to recruit and retain members of the armed forces; to maintain the public acceptability of military service; and to prevent breaches of security.¹⁴

The new policy made discharge mandatory for those deemed homosexuals in the military. The previous policy gave the military more discretion, resulting in retention for some homosexuals and a discharge for others.¹⁵ The new DoD policy also did not require a misconduct discharge for homosexuality, which allowed the discharge to be under honorable conditions.¹⁶

The DoD policy, along with different branch regulations remained in place until the passage of the DADT policy in the Clinton administration. In October 1991, presidential candidate Bill Clinton promised to lift the ban on gays serving in the military.¹⁷ When he took office, he intended to follow through, but he did not realize the opposition he would face. Senator Sam Nunn, Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, and General Colin Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff fiercely argued against permitting homosexual conduct in the military.¹⁸

After much debate and two major studies on the impact of allowing homosexuals to serve openly, the debaters finally reached a compromise. The policy states that the military cannot ask applicants for military service about their sexual orientation.

However, if a military member makes a statement that he or she is homosexual, marries another person of the same sex, or engages in or demonstrates a propensity or intent to engage in homosexual conduct, he or she will be separated from the service. President Clinton signed the legislation for the new “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” Policy and it became effective in February, 1994.¹⁹ Military commanders implemented the policy through chain teaching. Chain teaching is a method of training where commanders at the senior levels receive instruction on the policy, and must then teach their subordinates. This chain of teaching continues until military members at the lowest levels receive the instruction. This ensured every organization under the Department of Defense understood the new policy.

Since the enactment of the DADT policy in 1994, the military has discharged 13,000 service members for homosexuality.²⁰ The average number of service members discharged per year has decreased since the enactment of DADT; however, the proportion of people discharged relative to the total number of people serving has remained fairly constant since 1980.²¹ This implies that the DADT policy did not make much of an impact in allowing homosexuals to serve in the military. The military was still discharging the same percentage of personnel for homosexuality as it was prior to the enactment of the DADT policy.

President Obama promised to repeal the policy, allowing homosexual men and women to serve openly. He stated that “preventing patriotic Americans from serving our country weakens our national security.”²² On October 10, 2009, at the annual dinner for the Human Rights Campaign, he reaffirmed his promise. On February 2, 2010, Defense Secretary Robert Gates announced the Pentagon will conduct a yearlong study to

determine the best approach that allows homosexuals to serve openly in the military “without causing a major upheaval.”²³ This is the first substantive action for the President’s administration. The intent of the study is to consider all the challenges the military will face upon repeal of the policy.

Lessons Learned from Race Integration

Implementing any culture change in the military is difficult and takes time, as was the case with race and gender integration. Many advocates relate the repeal of DADT to the change in integration policies of the 1950’s; however, applying the lessons learned from integrating blacks in the military to the implementation of the repeal of DADT is not an exact match. Unlike blacks, gays do not have obvious external traits such as skin color that make them easily identifiable. Gays can conceal their sexuality. Furthermore, there is no argument genetics is the reason for race, but there is argument as to why homosexuals are homosexual. Some argue homosexuality is a biologically (genetic) determined characteristic, while others argue homosexuality is a choice. Nevertheless, there are some similarities in the integration process which may provide insights concerning the military’s ability, as an institution, to adapt to change.

Minorities of any group constantly struggle to be part of an organization, especially when first introduced. Similar to the initial integration of race in the military, the most significant challenge military leaders will face is the initial implementation of lifting the ban. When the Armed Forces first integrated blacks, there was initial resistance based on discrimination.²⁴ Prior to the integration, whites opposed the policy with vehement hostility, and physical violence against blacks was a potential concern. In 1948, southern conservatives made an argument that allowing the integration of

blacks would cause a higher rate of rape and other crimes and blacks were a danger to the military.²⁵

Georgia Senator Richard Russell presented an amendment to the Senate that would guarantee enlistees the option of serving with members of their own race. He pointed to crime rates among blacks and debated discrimination as a means of protecting the “in-group” from rape.²⁶ The opinions and arguments used to prevent the integration of race were very similar to the opinions and arguments on allowing gays in the military today.²⁷ What made the difference and led to successful integration was the personal attention from the most senior leaders.

A key to transforming the integration process was the convergence of strong civilian and military leadership at the highest levels. It was President Franklin Roosevelt’s personal intervention that pressured the Army Air Forces, the Marine Corps, and the Navy to admit blacks into the service in the early 1940s.²⁸ It was President Harry S. Truman in 1948 who issued an executive order requiring “equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin.”²⁹ In 1961 President Kennedy and Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara initiated several measures to address discrimination and violence perpetrated against black service people by civilians.³⁰

The addition of senior military leadership, combined with civilian leadership, made even more progress. In 1944 the Secretary of the Navy, in tandem with the Chief of Naval Operations, experimented with racially integrating supply ships. The result was so successful that in February, 1946, the Chief of the Bureau of Naval Personnel

ordered the abolition of all racial restrictions in the assignment of sailors to general service positions.³¹

The Air Force had similar results. The Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Air Force, and the Air Force Chief of Staff worked together towards the integration of race. The military leadership played an important role in not only the formulation of the policy, but in the execution. Air Force Chief of Staff Hoyt Vandenberg made it clear that compliance with the policy was a command responsibility and although there would be resistance, personal attention and positive command control from commanders would minimize problems.³²

Despite the initial resistance, the integration of blacks into the military was a military success. The integration took place in three phases over the course of about 25 years, thus revealing that it takes time to change the culture within the military. This is not to say there are no issues with race in the military, but the problems encountered in the armed services are minimal compared with the problems that exist in other institutions, public and private.³³ Blacks occupy more management positions in the military than they do in business, education, journalism, government, or any other significant sector of American society.³⁴ Clearly, the military is ahead of most institutions on the integration of race.

Strong civilian and military involvement and the personal attention of leaders executing the policy were reasons race integration was successful. The same leadership and positive command will assist in the repeal of DADT. Strategic leaders can expect that their subordinates will watch the execution of the new policy very closely. The military has a hierarchy of leaders, and all personnel swear to follow the

orders of superiors when entering the military.³⁵ However, as a result in the change of opinions on homosexuals over the years, the transition, at least for the younger generations, will probably be easier than the more senior personnel in the military.

Societal Trends/Trends in the Military

Over the last 30 years, there has been a changing attitude towards gays and lesbians. There were gay and lesbian organizations forming in the 1970's and many, including military veterans, were openly and proudly identifying themselves as gays and lesbians.³⁶ By becoming a "group," homosexuals have identified themselves as a minority, similar to those following a particular religion or those that have a certain ethnic origin. By becoming a minority group, they can argue for fair treatment in the eyes of the law. The fact that so many gays and lesbians have served honorably in the military also strengthens their position that they should be regarded as a distinct minority group.

In 1993, an opinion poll indicated that forty percent of the American public supported allowing homosexuals to serve openly in the military services.³⁷ More recent polls, by at least five different polling organizations, showed between fifty-eight and seventy-nine percent of the public now supports homosexuals serving openly in the military services.³⁸ Although the trend of public opinion is moving in support of homosexuals serving openly in the military, it is the members of the military who will ultimately deal with the change.

The Los Angeles Times conducted a survey on the topic of homosexuals serving in the military and included 2,346 enlisted men and women using convenience sampling methods.³⁹ The question asked whether the military member approved of lifting the ban on homosexuals in the military. The results indicated that seventy-four percent

expressed disapproval of removing the ban and eighteen percent expressed approval of removing the ban.⁴⁰

In October 2006 Zogby International, a polling organization that tracks public opinion, conducted online interviews of 545 military members with experience in Iraq and/or Afghanistan. Surveyors asked whether the military member agreed that gays and lesbians should serve in the military. The survey indicated the respondents were closely split, with thirty-seven percent disagreeing with the idea and twenty-six percent agreeing homosexuals should serve in the military.⁴¹ These results indicate a shift in opinions towards homosexuals in the military.

Paul Rieckhoff, executive director of the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America and former Army platoon leader illustrated a point when he stated that similar to the general population, there is a generational shift of views within the military. The average eighteen year old has been around gay people, has seen gay people in popular culture, and they are not considered the “boogeyman” in the same way older generations see them.⁴² This “shift” of opinions may make integration of homosexuals easier for the implementation of a new policy.

This also opens the door for other potential “groups,” such as transgender individuals (those who have undergone treatment to change his or her anatomical sex). Society appears to view gays and lesbians as a minority group who are fighting against discrimination. Transgender individuals are considered a “group,” and although there does not appear to be any evidence to show this as an issue now, if DADT is repealed, this could be a potential ripple effect. Will the repeal of the DADT policy then allow transgender people to enter the military? There are several studies by the Palm Center

at the University of California in Santa Barbara on transgender people. One study stated transgender people in the military experience discrimination and that the Veteran's Administration denied assistance when approached by a transgender veteran on the subject of transgender transition.⁴³ Senior leadership within the military must consider the possibility of transgender people in the military as a possibility resulting from the appeal of DADT. This is not to state this "group" is unfit for the military, but policy makers must be aware repealing the DADT policy will potentially affect other groups having the desire to serve in the military.

Other Organizations' Integration of Homosexuals

Advocates in lifting the DADT ban cite that other countries' militaries that allow homosexuals to serve in their force experience no negative effects. A Government Accountability Office (GAO) study in 1993 showed that Canada, Germany, Israel and Sweden allow homosexuals to serve in the military.⁴⁴ However, during the initial implementation of the policy, Germany revoked security clearances for homosexuals and Israel did not allow homosexuals to serve in intelligence positions. Germany also imposes restrictions on homosexual volunteers; only homosexual conscripts may serve.

All four countries stated the presence of homosexuals in the military is not an issue and the officials also stated a key factor was that homosexuals are reluctant to openly admit their sexual orientation for a variety of reasons.⁴⁵ Furthermore, in all four countries, policies permitting homosexuals to serve in the military developed over time. As society showed increased acceptance of homosexuals, the military tended to follow.⁴⁶

In 1999, the Center for the Study of Sexual Minorities in the Military, an official unit of the Institute for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Research at the University

of California, Santa Barbara, conducted a study of Australia, Canada, Israel and Britain to determine the impact of allowing homosexuals to serve in the military.⁴⁷ The study chose Australia, Canada and Britain because of the similar cultures and Israel because they are among the most combat tested militaries in the world.⁴⁸ The study sought out experts on both sides of the argument (pro-gay and anti-gay) within each country and found 104 people to interview.⁴⁹

Each of the four countries lifted the ban for different reasons, but the lessons drawn from them are similar. Canada and Australia lifted the ban in 1992 and Israel lifted its ban in 1993.⁵⁰ The most recent country was Britain in 2000, after the European Court for Human Rights ruled Britain's gay ban violated the right to privacy guaranteed by the convention.⁵¹ The significance of the study is the similarity between the opinions of the military members of each country prior to integration of homosexuals with the current opinion of the U.S. military members. The results of the interviews revealed two conclusions about overall opinions of military members prior to the integration of homosexuals. First, lifting the ban would cause unit cohesion and morale to suffer; second, there would be a mass exodus of personnel unwilling to serve with homosexuals.⁵²

There are two types of cohesion in a unit or organization – social cohesion and task cohesion.⁵³ Social cohesion refers to the closeness and emotional bond between members of a group and task cohesion refers to the shared commitment of members to achieve a goal requiring their collective efforts.⁵⁴ Research revealed there is a clear correlation between task cohesion and unit performance, but little correlation with social cohesion and unit performance.⁵⁵

It is important to note this research also revealed that an open homosexual could affect the social cohesion of a unit, and potentially this could lead to ostracism or violence.⁵⁶ Sexual misconduct of any type can undermine unit cohesion and strict enforcement of regulations will help minimize disruption of unit cohesion.

In 1995, a Canadian internal report showed the change in policy had no effect on the day to day activities.⁵⁷ In Israel, military reports showed that homosexuals' presence, whether open or clandestine, had not impaired the morale, cohesion, readiness or security of any unit.⁵⁸ Britain and Australia had similar conclusions, and none of the countries experienced a mass exodus of personnel.

RAND conducted a study of the effect of the presence of homosexuals in police and fire departments in 1993. RAND chose domestic police and fire departments because they are the closest domestic analog to the U.S. military. These organizations have a hierarchical chain of command, function as teams that train for short, intense periods of hazardous activity, and have an inherent feature of the job - putting one's life at risk.⁵⁹

In some respects, the fire departments have more similarities than the police departments because firefighters live in close quarters when on duty. However, the match is not exact for either organization because at the end of the day (or few days in the case of fire fighters), the workers go home to their families and are not away from their families for extended periods of time.⁶⁰ This study cannot definitively answer how a change in policy affects cohesion, but the observations of the departments does shed light on the following: how many members publicly acknowledge their homosexuality when a policy change occurs, the factors that influence this, the behavior of

homosexuals under a policy that allows them to acknowledge their homosexuality, the concerns that heterosexuals express after (rather than before) such a change has occurred, the role of leadership and chain of command, and the natural evolution of policy implementation over time.⁶¹

The study revealed the following:

- Very few homosexuals acknowledge their sexual orientation.
- Acknowledged homosexuals very seldom challenge the norms and customs of their organizations.
- Anti-homosexual sentiment does not disappear, but heterosexuals' behavior toward homosexuals is more moderate than might be expected from their stated attitudes toward homosexuals.
- Effectiveness of the organization had not been diminished by the presence of homosexuals on the force.
- Recruitment and retention of personnel has not been affected by a policy of nondiscrimination.
- Implementation is most successful where the message is unambiguous, consistently delivered, and uniformly enforced. Leadership is critical in this regard.
- Training efforts that provide leaders with the information and skills needed to implement the policy were essential. Sensitivity training for the rank and file, however, tended to breed additional resentment. Training did not quickly alleviate concerns about AIDS.⁶²

According to the study, some of the initial concerns of integrating homosexuals proved wrong upon implementation of the policy in other organizations. The fact that there was no significant reaction to the integration in foreign militaries and similar-type organizations, despite the same opinions prior to the integration, suggests the U.S. military will experience the same results when implementing the repeal of DADT.

Defense of Marriage Act

One of the major concerns for lifting the DADT policy is the potential impact of gay marriages within the military. The Federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) adopted by Congress in 1996 defines marriage as a legal union between one man and

one woman for purposes of all federal laws, and provides that other states need not recognize a marriage from another state if it is between persons of the same sex.⁶³ This paper includes a brief discussion on this because when Congress repeals the DADT policy, one can logically conclude the military will eventually accept same sex marriages. The issue will become a States' rights issue very quickly. If the military, as a federal institution, acknowledges homosexuals in the military, then one of the next logical steps is to allow homosexuals to marry. Will this then force the states that do not currently recognize same sex marriages to now recognize them because the federal government has changed its policy in the military? Although President Obama is against gay marriage, he stated at the Human Rights Campaign's annual dinner on October 10, 2009, "We will see a time in which we as a nation finally recognize relationships between two men or two women as just as real and admirable as relationships between a man and a woman."⁶⁴

So far, thirty-seven states have their own Defense of Marriage Acts (DOMAs), and there are thirty states that have constitutional amendments protecting traditional marriage, including three states (Arizona, California, and Florida) that passed constitutional amendments in November 2008.⁶⁵ The federal government has left the decision of gay marriage to the individual states. By recognizing homosexuals in the military, the government will have to recognize "partners." Marriage is the next step. There is current legislation working through the House and Senate (addressed in next section) that may impact DOMA, but lifting the DADT policy will definitely bring more attention to the issue. If homosexuals can serve openly in the military, then they will likely also argue they should be able to marry their partner and receive benefits. Policy

makers must consider this as a potential outcome when they lift the DADT policy, because this will impact states' rights and cost taxpayers money.

Costs

There is difficulty in capturing the costs of the DADT policy, or even the previous policies requiring the discharge of homosexuals serving in the military. DoD does not maintain records of the costs associated with administering its policy; nor does it record the costs of investigating alleged cases of homosexuality in units.⁶⁶ However, in February 2005, the GAO released a report that estimated that the costs of discharging and replacing service members "fired" for homosexuality during the DADT policy's first ten years from 1994-2003 totaled at least \$190.5 million.⁶⁷ This did not include the cost of investigating alleged cases. Another report estimated the cost as high as \$364 million,⁶⁸ although the actual cost is probably somewhere in between the two estimates.

Although the costs of discharging homosexuals seems alarming, there may be a larger cost to allowing homosexuals to serve openly in the military. There is already legislation making its way through Congress for federal employees. The Congressional Budget Office said in its December 17, 2009 report that the House version of the Domestic Partnership Benefits and Obligations Act -- H.R. 2517, would cost taxpayers \$898 million over the next nine years.⁶⁹

H.R. 2517 would make same-sex domestic partners of certain federal employees (both current and retired) eligible to receive the same employment benefits as married spouses of federal employees. Those benefits include health insurance, survivor annuities, compensation for work-related injuries and travel and relocation benefits that affect the federal budget, as well as other benefits that do not have an impact on the budget, such as life insurance and vision and dental benefits.⁷⁰

The Congressional Budget Office assumed enactment of this legislation in the second half of 2010. They also assumed that about 0.33 percent of federal employees

would choose to register a same-sex domestic partnership if given the opportunity, based on research from other organizations that adopted similar programs.⁷¹ The Congressional Budget Office estimated an increase of 5,200 family coverage policies for same sex partners. For the military, 0.33 percent of active duty would add 4,620 policies for coverage, and adding in the reserves, a total of 7,920 policies would be necessary, costing taxpayers much more money.⁷² Repealing the DADT policy may potentially have similar results, and the policy makers cannot ignore the potential costs of providing the benefits to same sex partners in the military.

President Obama has indicated his support for the measure, which is still awaiting a vote in both the House and Senate. The Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee voted December 16, 2009 to forward the legislation on to the full Senate. The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee approved it in November 2009.⁷³ If this legislation passes for the federal government employees, homosexuals in the military can use the issue as a precedent to obtain the same benefits.

Other costs to consider for military members is separation pay (money paid to the spouse when the military member is involuntarily separated, such as in a deployment or hardship tour), housing benefits, college tuition for dependents and all the other benefits spouses enjoy as a result of marriage to a service member. Therefore, the actual costs could be significantly higher for military members compared to estimate for federal government workers. The policy makers and taxpayers need to realize the ripple effect of repealing the DADT policy before implementation. Not only

with the cost impact the taxpayers, but the cost will place more hardship on the rising deficit in a challenged economy.

Policy Implementation

Based on the research of race integration, along with the implementation of a similar policy change in other countries' militaries and other organizations similar to the military, there are a few recommendations which may assist in a smoother implementation.

First, when the policy changes to allow homosexuals to serve openly, the military must act promptly and with conviction. If there is a slow integration or experimentation, there will continue to be resistance.⁷⁴ However, even with a timely implementation, past experiences with race integration suggests the process may take as long as three decades.⁷⁵

Second, commanders at all levels must understand the guidelines for the policy. The policy must clearly articulate that there is no tolerance for discrimination. The policy must be specific and not leave too much discretion to commanders, since history showed this resulted in a disparity of punishments for violators. Too much discretion will lead to the same issues of the DADT policy, where some service members received a discharge while others received a reprimand. There will have to be careful oversight of the new policy to minimize disparities during initial implementation.

Third, the manner in which the senior leaders carry out the policy will have the largest impact on the success of lifting the ban.⁷⁶ Although several of the strategic leaders, such as the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense, have publicly stated their support to repealing the ban, there are some leaders, such as the commandant of the Marine Corps who do not support lifting the ban, specifically

while the military is fighting two wars.⁷⁷ As with all orders from Congress and the commander in chief, the military will obey and implement the policy once Congress lifts the ban. Perhaps a way to address this is if the military will allow those adamantly opposed to the change a period of time to leave/resign from service with no retribution. Those leaders that choose to stay will accept the new policy, making it clear to all subordinates that they support the decision and discrimination is not acceptable behavior. However, recent history of other foreign militaries shows there was no mass exodus of military personnel leaving the service as a result of lifting the ban.⁷⁸

Fourth, emphasis from the senior leaders must focus on the conduct of service members, not on teaching tolerance or sensitivity towards homosexuals.⁷⁹ Changing the behavior of individuals is a better approach than attempting to change attitudes.⁸⁰ For those who link religious and moral considerations to value judgments of homosexuality, overt attempts at changing their attitudes may make the situation worse.⁸¹ Leaders must realize the repeal of the DADT policy is an issue of an evolving professional ethic within the military, and in order to implement the policy properly, they must resolve the cognitive dissonance between personal morality and professional ethics.⁸²

Leaders must pay particular attention to off-duty conduct, since this is when leaders have the least influence over the behavior of service members. Leaders must address unacceptable behavior whether the service member is heterosexual or homosexual. The intent is to make it a "soldier policy," avoiding the impression there are separate rules that apply to either gay or straight personnel.⁸³ Misconduct of any kind is inappropriate and leaders must respond equally to the violations. The focus of

our military needs to remain on the tasks performed and the mission of the unit, not on the sexual orientation of individuals.

Finally, chain teaching the new policy is a good method to ensure all personnel receive the same information. However, the military needs to centrally collect data on the progress of the policy and share issues that arise with implementation. This will avoid disparity in implementation, address matters in a timely fashion, and avoid the same issues from one installation becoming a problem in another. The information may flow through command or legal channels, but the important piece is the issues are resolved with approval at the highest levels and the resolution disseminates down to the lowest levels. Uniformity in implementation is a critical factor.

Conclusion

It is only a matter of time before Congress repeals the DADT policy. President Obama pledged to lift the ban on gays in the military and he continues to confirm he will follow through on his promise. All research indicates that lifting the ban supports the trends of society, and although there will be initial resistance, the military as an organization will be able to adapt to the change in policy. The lessons learned from the integration of race suggest policy implementation will have fewer issues. An articulate policy executed in a timely manner by leadership with buy-in and commitment will also ensure the military will maintain unit morale and cohesion. During implementation of the policy, it is critical to gather data on issues that arise to address them at the highest levels and keep consistency in any actions taken. Furthermore, the data will provide commanders with information to prevent a repeat of the same issue.

Based on research, there is no question the military will successfully implement whatever policy Congress approves. The strategy for integration of homosexuals in the

military will be successful with strong leadership and discipline. Although it may take some time, the military will integrate homosexuals and continue to provide the Nation with a well trained force ready to defend our national interests.

However, crucial to creating this policy is the understanding by the policy makers that there are other potential effects of lifting the ban on homosexuals serving openly in the military. Once the military allows homosexuals to serve openly, other groups such as transgenders may demand the right to serve. There is also strong evidence that the repeal will impact DOMA. Are the States willing to give up their right to accept or deny same sex marriages? If the answer is yes, then are the taxpayers willing to pay the additional funds to allow the same benefits for the partners as in a heterosexual relationship? Congress must consider these second and third order effects prior to approving the new policy. As a minimum, Congress must address the impact on DOMA through action and acknowledge the costs associated with the repeal. These two issues are beyond the scope of the military, but will significantly impact implementation of repealing the DADT policy.

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