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ARCHITECT OF "DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL" FAVORS ENDING GAY BAN IF DRAFT RETURNS

SANTA BARBARA, CA, January 3, 2003 - Northwestern University Professor Charles Moskos, the primary author of the current U.S. policy on gay and lesbian soldiers, said this week that he supports allowing known gays to serve in the military if the nation reinstates the draft. Moskos, an influential military sociologist who has been widely consulted by policy-makers on military personnel issues, offered his remarks two days ago to researchers at the Center for the Study of Sexual Minorities in the Military (CSSMM), an official research unit of the University of California, Santa Barbara.

"If an open gay said, 'I want to go into the army,' it would be his prerogative," Moskos said. "Of course, there would be problems with that, there would be hassles, but they probably could be overcome." Moskos, who has been criticized by colleagues and civil rights advocates for his defense of the military's anti-gay policy, acknowledged that his support for drafting gays might appear to undermine the rationale for banning openly gay soldiers. But he said the draft was a "higher virtue" than the privacy rights of straight soldiers, which he has frequently cited in his opposition to letting gays serve openly with straights. He added that instituting the draft would require ending all forms of the gay ban. "You can't use a gay ban with a draft because that would make it too easy for people to get out," he said.

A 1999 study by Armando Estrada, currently a professor at the Naval Postgraduate School, found that 47% of male combat marines believe that if the draft is re-instated, gays and lesbians should be included just like everyone else. According to Geoffrey Bateman, Assistant Director of the CSSMM, "Including gays and lesbians in the military would reflect this country's tradition of tolerance and diversity that have sustained our democracy for so long."

The Center for the Study of Sexual Minorities in the Military is an official research unit of the University of California, Santa Barbara. The Center is governed by a distinguished board of advisors including the Honorable Lawrence J. Korb of the Council on Foreign Relations, Honorable Coit Blacker of Stanford University and Professor Janet Halley of Harvard Law School. Its mission is to promote the study of gays, lesbians, and other sexual minorities in the armed forces.