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**FORMER TOP GENERAL: BRASS WHO OPPOSE GAY SERVICE IGNORE EVIDENCE
Shalikashvili Concerned They May "Cause The Very Disruptions They Predict"**

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SANTA BARBARA, CA, June 19, 2009 -- Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff John Shalikashvili published an op-ed in today's Washington Post in which he questioned the evidence of more than 1,000 retired Generals and Admirals who signed a March, 2009 statement urging President Obama not to repeal "don't ask, don't tell."

General Shalikashvili cited a number of studies which, he said, demonstrate that there is "no evidence" to support the conclusion that allowing gay men and lesbians to serve openly would harm the military. He added that open gay service is inevitable, whether via executive order or legislative repeal of the "don't ask, don't tell" law.

Because, according to General Shalikashvili, a future policy of inclusion would require clear signals from leaders, the objections raised by the retired Generals and Admirals "could cause the very disruptions they predict." While welcoming debate from all sides, General Shalikashvili concluded "that people on all sides of the issue feel strongly about it is more reason, not less, to let the evidence do the talking."

Dr. Nathaniel Frank said that there is no evidence to support the idea that allowing open gay service will harm the military. "General Shalikashvili cites scholarly and military research. The others invoke emotion and speculation." Frank is author of "Unfriendly Fire: How the Gay Ban Undermines the Military and Weakens America" and senior research fellow at the Palm Center.

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The Palm Center is a think tank at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Since 1998, the Center has been a leader in commissioning and disseminating research in the areas of gender, sexuality, and the military.