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**CREATORS OF GAY BAN TELL AUTHOR IT WAS "BASED ON NOTHING"**

Definitive Book on "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" Out Tuesday; Speaking Tour Begins Today

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SANTA BARBARA, CA, March 2, 2009 – Military officials exaggerated the threat to unit cohesion and ignored research and data when formulating the current policy on gay troops, according to the much-anticipated new book, "Unfriendly Fire: How the Gay Ban Undermines the Military and Weakens America," out tomorrow.

The book, based on a decade of research and hundreds of interviews, was written by Dr. Nathaniel Frank, senior research fellow at the Palm Center, and one of the nation's most widely recognized authorities on gays in the military. Dr. Frank is appearing with Congresswoman Ellen Tauscher today at the Center for American Progress to discuss her proposed legislation to repeal the ban.

Publication of the book by St. Martin's Press falls on the 15th anniversary of "don't ask, don't tell." Frank spoke to key military and political architects of the policy, many of whom acknowledge in the book that it was "based on nothing" but "our own prejudices and our own fears."

General John Shalikashvili, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, tops the list of prominent leaders who have endorsed the "Unfriendly Fire," saying it "should be mandatory reading for anyone with an interest in the state of our society or the readiness of our military." Congressman Patrick J. Murphy, a member of the House Armed Services Committee and the only Iraq War veteran in Congress, said Frank's "timely book should put to rest any lingering doubt about whether 'don't ask, don't tell' is working—it's been a failure from day one and should finally be put behind us."

The Palm Center has launched "Send UNFRIENDLY FIRE to Congress!" which is an online campaign to put a book into the hands of every member of Congress by this spring.

Information about that campaign and about Frank's speaking tour that kicks off today to Washington, California, Chicago, Miami, Atlanta, New York and Philadelphia is available at [www.unfriendlyfire.org](http://www.unfriendlyfire.org).



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The Palm Center is a research institute at the University of California, Santa Barbara. The Center uses rigorous social science to inform public discussions of controversial social issues, enabling policy outcomes to be informed more by evidence than by emotion. Its data-driven approach is premised on the notion that the public makes wise choices on social issues when high-quality information is available. For more information, visit [www.palmcenter.ucsb.edu](http://www.palmcenter.ucsb.edu).