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PACE COMMENTS ON HOMOSEXUALITY SHOW OPENNESS TO CHANGE IN MILITARY POLICY

The Palm Center Responds

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Washington, DC - Aaron Belkin, director of the Michael D. Palm Center at the University of California at Santa Barbara, today issued the following statement in response to outgoing Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Peter Pace's comment before the Senate Appropriations Committee that he supports a "change" to the current ban on open gays in the military.

General Pace also said today that homosexual "activity" is "counter to God's law," a remark that echoed similar comments he made in March of this year. He later asserted that he was expressing only a personal view.

"General Pace said yesterday that he 'would be very willing and able and supportive of any description, whatever change to 'don't ask, don't tell' would continue to allow the homosexual community to contribute to the nation.' Although it is unclear what General Pace meant by changing the policy to 'continue' to let gays serve, this is the first time the top uniformed American has signaled support for changing the current policy.

"The Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman couldn't help repeating demoralizing remarks about America's gay and lesbian service members. His comment that homosexuality is 'not right' clearly illustrates that the ban on open gays is not about what's good for the military, but about using the military to enforce the intolerant moralisms of a minority of Americans. The majority of Americans recognizes that federal law does not exist to endorse what some people believe is 'God's law'. That's why most Americans support a policy of equality that treats people the same no matter what their sexual orientation.

"Many will view General Pace's comments this week as outright prejudice against gays, as he does not seek to ban the countless straight service members who, according to research, practice forms of sodomy and fornication, both condemned in the Bible. It's an enormous double standard."



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The Michael D. Palm Center, formerly the Center for the Study of Sexual Minorities in the Military, 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.org.