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PSYCHOANALYSTS CALL FOR OPEN GAY SERVICE

Pentagon, However, Continues to View Homosexuality as a Defect

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SANTA BARBARA, CA, January 29, 2009 – The American Psychoanalytic Association (APsaA) called for the repeal of "don't ask, don't tell" during its winter meetings in New York, January 14-18. APsaA joins a growing chorus of voices calling for repeal of the ban. In December 2008, a CNN poll found that 81 percent of the American public supports open gay service.

APsaA's announcement follows a June, 2006 initiative, organized by the Palm Center and involving nine members of Congress as well as the American Psychological Association and American Psychiatric Association, to ask the Pentagon to cease classifying homosexuality as a mental disorder. In response, the Pentagon re-classified it under "conditions, circumstances and defects."

Dr. Nathaniel Frank, senior research fellow at the Palm Center and author of *Unfriendly Fire: How the Gay Ban Undermines the Military and Weakens America*, says that APsaA's call for policy change casts doubt on the wisdom of the Pentagon's reclassification. "No expert believes that homosexuality is a defect," Frank said. "Scientists discredited that idea decades ago."

President Obama has promised to end "don't ask, don't tell" but it is unclear when and how, and even if, the new administration will carry out the pledge. In 1993, President Bill Clinton's domestic agenda was badgered when he failed in an early effort to lift the gay ban. The result was "don't ask, don't tell" which requires that gays and lesbians conceal their sexual orientation in order to serve.

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