



December 2, 2010

STATEMENT BY CURRENT AND FORMER MILITARY PROFESSORS

Combat Effectiveness

(1) Concerns that repeal would undermine combat effectiveness are inconsistent with available evidence. While it is true that many combat troops say that they think repeal would undermine combat effectiveness, a smaller percentage say that if they were going into a combat situation, fighting alongside gay troops would be a factor. Many troops in foreign militaries said, prior to repeal, that gays would undermine combat effectiveness. Subsequent to repeal, however, foreign militaries reported no decline in combat effectiveness. Statistical analysis by Dr. Laura Miller of the RAND Corporation and a colleague found that even though many troops think that repeal would undermine effectiveness, there is no statistical relationship between whether someone knows a gay peer and the reported cohesion or effectiveness of the unit. If gays actually undermined combat effectiveness, it would be hard to understand why gay discharges always decline during wartime.

Process

(2) Concerns that the Working Group did not ask the troops whether they support repeal are disingenuous. The troops vocally expressed opinions about whether DADT should be repealed in an on-line inbox that received 72,384 comments, in 95 face-to-face forums at 51 bases that included more than 24,000 troops, and in 140 smaller focus groups. These data were not solicited in a scientifically valid way, but the Working Group certainly took them into account and even acknowledged that a majority of comments opposed repeal.

(3) Concerns that we do not know what the troops would say if asked whether they support repeal are not based on evidence. Three different polls, by Annenberg, Zogby, and Military Times, found roughly the same result: approximately 40% of the troops oppose repeal, 30% favor repeal, and 30% don't know or don't care. Surveys included combat troops. The Zogby respondent pool, for example, consisted of 545 combat and combat support troops who were serving or who had served recently in the Middle East.

Survey Validity

(4) Concerns about the Survey's response rate, or that survey results are not reflective of the views of the overall force, are not correct: The 28% response rate is about average both for web-based surveys in general,



and for military surveys in particular. The response rate to the military's 2006 Workplace and Gender Relations Survey was 30% for Active Duty Members. Furthermore, response rates have nothing to do with the validity of a survey's results, as long as the sample size is large enough and sampling is done properly. In this case, the Working Group survey has a margin of error of plus or minus 1%, much better than most surveys.

Timing

(5) Concerns that repeal is being rushed are not based on the historical track-record. The authors of "don't ask, don't tell" referred to it as a temporary compromise when the policy was enacted 17 years ago. Generals Colin Powell and John Shalikashvili have changed their views over this time, and military and public opinion shifted dramatically as well. The roughly year-long Pentagon review process has been one of the most comprehensive reviews ever undertaken on any military personnel policy in the history of the U.S. armed forces. More than 20 studies have been conducted on whether gays harm the military.

Recruitment and Retention

(6) Concerns that recruitment will suffer are not based on evidence. In the British and Canadian militaries, approximately 2/3 of male troops said that they would not work with gays if bans were lifted. After the lifting of bans in those countries, there were only a handful of resignations, and no reported problems with recruitment or retention. The percent of troops in the U.S. military who say that they will not work with gays and lesbians is much lower.

Effectiveness of DADT

(7) The claim that DADT has been effective is inconsistent with the evidence. A U.S. District Court found that, according to all available research, DADT has harmed the military in several ways including wasting valuable talent and undermining cohesion and morale. A GAO report found that the policy has led to the discharge of a significant number of mission-critical specialists. No evidence has ever been provided to show that DADT promotes cohesion or is working in any way.

(8) The claim that DADT does not involve situations in which people are hounded day in and day out is inconsistent with available evidence. While it is true that the military has suspended witch hunts and that most DADT discharges follow statements by service members, the District Court found that gay and lesbian troops do have a constant sword hanging over their heads which undermines their ability to focus on their jobs.



Executive Order

(9) The claim that only Congress can provide President Obama with the latitude to sign an executive order is incorrect. Congress already has provided such latitude in the “stop-loss” statute, which allows the President to suspend any law related to military separations during national security emergencies.

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