



NO STAND-ALONE AMENDMENT ON DON'T ASK DON'T TELL!

December 13, 2010

The Senate should reject any stand-alone amendment overturning the 1996 Congressional Law preventing homosexuals from serving in the military. Why?

- Because according to the much-touted Pentagon Survey, 67% of Marine Combat troops on the front lines...right now...have indicated it could interfere with unit effectiveness, readiness and cohesion. The Marine Corps Commandant, General James Amos, testified December 3rd before the Senate Armed Services Committee asking members NOT to change the policy and reporting that men in the field are saying “the potential exists for disruption to the successful execution of our current combat mission.”
- Because the same survey reports that 24% of our all-volunteer force have indicated they would leave the military early if the law were repealed. That is one half million fighting men and women potentially lost during a time of war.
- Because PFC Bradley Manning recently leaked the largest amount of classified information in history, putting fellow soldiers and his own country at risk because he was gay and angry with a former lover. As unpleasant as it is to ponder, that fact must be pondered before we open the floodgates to others whose sexual identity may define them more than the uniform they wear.
- Because a substantial number of the 3000 military chaplains who provide the spiritual strength to thousands of our men and women, giving them courage and determination to carry on, have serious objections. The Washington Post reported, “No group had such strong – or sharply divergent views...” One chaplain asked superiors what people of faith with problems of conscience on the issue should do if the policy were overturned. He was told by a high-ranking official in the presence of others that he should get out of the military. Chaplains who have an objection have been instructed to remain silent while the repeal is being considered. If the policy is such a good one, why can't it withstand debate? And why should we put our chaplains under this kind of threat without a careful consideration of the facts?
- Because exactly one year ago another major societal shift was being crammed down our throats at Christmas. We were told healthcare had to be passed quickly...before we could even read the bill. People objected loudly but the administration and Congressional leadership arrogantly ignored the American people and forced it through. We know, at least in part, the terrible results of that. Our military men and women don't have the same ability to make their voices heard against allowing open homosexuality in their ranks. They don't have newspapers or talk radio shows. But the provision that will alter their lives and our safety is being rammed down their throats in an unseemly urgency that should seem all too familiar. That alone should make Senators and Congressmen vote “no” on a hurried stand-alone bill.

- Because we have a Commander in Chief who knows nothing of commanding troops or serving in the U.S. Military. His priorities are strange and discomfoting. In a 2009 speech to the Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest homosexual advocacy group, he stated, "I'm working with the Pentagon, its leadership and the members of the House and Senate on ending this policy. Legislation has been introduced in the House to make this happen. I will end 'Don't ask, don't tell.' That's my commitment to you." Do we really want to radically interfere with the personal living conditions of the men and women serving us in time of war to help a president keep a campaign promise and please the 2-3% of the population who identify themselves as gay? Do we really want to risk losing more precious lives and the war itself to achieve the narrow goals of a few?

The President's appointee, Admiral Mike Mullen, said there would be "intense" training for combat troops on the matter. Senator James Webb asked him if a difference might be made for ground combat troops. Mullen responded that the training would certainly include ground combat troops and be intense enough to "achieve the outcome we want." Of troops surveyed by the Pentagon, 71% said they would not shower with open homosexuals. Mullen's response? "Should repeal occur, some soldier and Marines may want separate shower facilities. Some may ask for different berthing. Some may even quit the service. We'll deal with that. There is no gray area...we treat each other with respect or we find another place to work. Period."

Senators and Congressmen should listen carefully to what other seasoned military leaders are saying rather than political appointees. Consider the following:

"This is not the time to perturb the force that is, at the moment, stretched by demands in Iraq and Afghanistan and elsewhere without careful deliberation." **General Norton Schwartz, Air Force Chief of Staff.**

1667 distinguished retired generals and admirals, including 51 who have achieved four-star rank and two Medal of Honor winners signed the following statement:

Misguided predictions of certain success for an unprecedented social experiment in the American military are based on theories that disregard decades of military experience and what we know about human imperfection. They cannot be justified in terms of military necessity. The cumulative burden of predictable issues and problems requiring identification and 'mitigation' should current law be repealed, would be complicated and problematic for military commanders and personnel at all levels.

General George Casey, Army Chief of Staff expressed his own "serious concerns about the impact of repeal of the law on a force that's fully engaged in two wars and has been at war for eight-and-a-half years."

"There is nothing more intimate than young men and young women – and when you talk of infantry, we're talking our young men – laying out, sleeping alongside of one another and sharing death, fear and loss of brothers," added

Marine Four Star General Amos. "I don't know what the effect of that will be on cohesion. I mean, that's what we're looking at. It's unit cohesion. It's combat effectiveness."

Senators and Congressmen...please say "no" to the hurried repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." Our men and women are on the field of battle right now showing courage in the face of incredible odds. Can you not do the same?

