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POSITION PAPER ON  
THE DOD POLICY ON HOMOSEXUALITY

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#### Author's Preface

The purpose in writing this paper is to help focus the current discussion on the issue of homosexuality and military service. It is not to be misconstrued as criticism or an attack on homosexual persons as individuals or a group. Personally, I know and care very much for persons who have confided in me that they have a homosexual orientation. I am pastorally aware of problems and challenges that they experience as a result of their orientation, and I pray that God may help them to experience a happy, healthy and full life.

While critics of the current DOD policy on homosexuality attempt to frame the discussion of this issue along the lines of sexual orientation, the fact is that many homosexuals are separated from the military because of their behavior. A change in the current policy may well result in more behavior problems in the area of homosexuality.

While the arguments contained in this paper in defense of the current DOD policy are not primarily religious, they are based upon the commonly accepted belief in American society that homosexual activity is not an acceptable alternative to marriage and family life. The issues of family values, heterosexual and homosexual rights lie at the heart of this matter. Hopefully, this paper will help stimulate a rational and profitable discussion of the issue.

## Current Question

Secretary of Defense Richard B. Cheney and other governmental and military leaders have been under pressure to change the current policy which excludes homosexuals from military service.<sup>1</sup> For example, The News Tribune of Tacoma, Washington published a story on 5 June 1992 concerning Seattle Mayor Norm Rice's criticism "equating the military's ban on homosexuals with racial segregation." In a written response to Mayor Rice, General Colin Powell perceptively distinguished between race as a "benign, non-behavioral" factor relating to personhood and homosexual behavior as a behavioral factor relating to conduct. General Powell wrote: "Skin color is a benign, non-behavioral characteristic.... Comparison of the two is a convenient but invalid statement."

The fundamental flaw found in the argumentation of allowing homosexuals to serve in the military is the failure to recognize link between "nonthreatening" sexual orientation and sexual behavior. Critics liken the policy to the past exclusion of blacks and women and call an end to the "discrimination." In advancing this argument, however, they fail to acknowledge that being black or a woman relates to personhood which is a non-behavioral trait quite distinct from homosexual behavior. Even if it may be shown that some homosexuals have an orientation which they have not chosen, it is fair to state that homosexual behavior is, in fact, a "choice", and one which most people do not view as normal conduct either for themselves or their sons and daughters in or out of the military.<sup>2</sup>

More frequently today, practicing homosexuals do not consider their orientation a private matter, but are inclined to seek public affirmation for their lifestyle. It can be argued that **the deliberate manifestation by word or deed of one's homosexual orientation marks the beginning of behavioral change because the announcement itself is the demand for a social infrastructure to support the behavior.**<sup>3</sup>

The military believes for a number of sound reasons that persons with a homosexual orientation would experience difficulty in controlling their behavior

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<sup>1</sup>Colbert I. King, "Debunking the Case Against Gays in the Military," The Washington Post, 7 July 1992, p. 19. The argument in this and so many other articles, attempts to define the DOD ban as primarily concerned with sexual orientation. The article cites presidential candidates who are swayed by this attempt to portray the military as preoccupied with orientation vice the negative affects that homosexual behavior would have upon military good order, morale and discipline: "Bill Clinton has already said....if denied the right [to serve in the military], it should be on the basis of *behavior*, not *status*." Given the high degree of sexual compulsion on the part of male homosexuals, the defective presumption is that people with a homosexual orientation (i.e. "status") will remain celibate on ships, in barracks, etc. and not actualize their orientation through homosexual behavior.

<sup>2</sup>Henry Robinson, "They Came to Reclaim Asheville," Asheville Citizen Times, 27 June 1992, p. 5B. When 1,500 people participated in a Gay Pride March, a counter demonstration in support of family life and values was organized the following week which drew over 20,000 marchers. Lawmakers sensitive to their constituents' feelings should take note that the current DOD policy mirrors the fact that most Americans strongly disapprove of homosexual behavior which they do not view as an acceptable alternative to marriage and family life.

<sup>3</sup>Steve Scott, "Gay church wants its clergy to be chaplains," Dallas Morning News, 3 July 1992, p. 36. This article demonstrates a provision for a "social infrastructure" in a religious body which does not perceive the behavior as morally or socially reprehensible.

in light of the unique circumstances of military life.<sup>4</sup> Unlike living conditions in most civilian circumstances, private moments are few, or nonexistent, on a ship or in a deployed status. As Secretary Cheney has noted on previous occasions, the line between public and private for those who wear the uniform is very small indeed.<sup>5</sup>

### Serious Questions to Consider

Critics of the current DOD policy question the validity of the arguments used by the military to justify the exclusion of homosexuals from its ranks. These same critics (most of whom are civilians) who downplay the behavioral aspects of homosexuality, should be prepared to answer some questions which might be raised by military personnel whose lives would be affected by a policy change.

1. It is ironic that some lawmakers who have been outspoken in regard to sexual harassment in the military also endorse homosexuals serving in those same armed forces. Would these lawmakers be comfortable having a 17 year old son billeted in a three-man barracks room with two homosexuals for a four year tour of duty? How might the son himself feel about this arrangement?

2. Given the uniquely close living conditions of military life, if heterosexuals are forced to compromise their privacy and be looked upon by some homosexuals as sex objects, how might this impact on recruitment and retention?

3. The military services, with its predominantly young male population, could pose a major challenge to gay men who might wish to arrest their behavior. On the other hand, could the military not be an attractive occupation for homosexuals who see no reason to restrict that same behavior?

4. In light of what some would argue is an "innate orientation," would it be wise for a liquor store manager to hire an alcoholic who does not see that condition as a problem and, therefore, is not working toward recovery?

5. How might we expect a heterosexual to behave if he/she occupied a small room with an attractive person of the opposite sex on a ship deployed at sea for

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<sup>4</sup>The numerous reasons for excluding homosexuals from military service are contained in DOD Directive 1332.14 H(1) which reads: "Homosexuality is incompatible with military service. The presence in the military environment of persons who engage in homosexual conduct, or who, by their statements, demonstrate a propensity to engage in homosexual conduct seriously impairs the accomplishment of the military mission. The presence of such members adversely affects the ability of the Military Services to maintain discipline, good order and morale; foster mutual trust and confidence among servicemembers; to ensure the integrity of the system of rank and command; to facilitate assignment and worldwide deployment of servicemembers who frequently must live and work under close conditions affording minimal privacy; to recruit and retain members of the Military Services; to maintain public acceptability of military service; and to prevent breaches of security."

<sup>5</sup>In *Steffan vs. Cheney*, the United States District Court for the District of Columbia ruled on 19 December 1991 in favor of the Secretary of Defense. The judge noted that "In the Military Establishment...the policy of separating men and women while sleeping, bathing and 'using the bathroom' seeks to maintain the privacy of officers and the enlisted while in certain cases of undress. The embarrassment of being naked as between the sexes is prevalent because sometimes the other is considered to be a sexual object. The quite rational assumption in the Navy is that with no one present who has a homosexual orientation, men and women alike can undress, sleep, bathe, and use the bathroom without fear or embarrassment that they are being viewed as sexual objects."

six months?

6. If homosexuals were allowed to serve in the military and occupy the same quarters, wouldn't it discriminatory for an unmarried heterosexual couple to be denied permission to share quarters in barracks, base housing, or even at sea?<sup>6</sup>

Unfortunately, these are but a few questions which opponents of the current DOD policy do not wish to consider.

### Statistics

The number of homosexuals in society is a debated question. Alfred Kinsey's 1948 publication of Sexual Behavior in the Human Male has led many people to believe that homosexuals make up 10% of the population. While Kinsey wrote that "10 percent of males are more or less exclusively homosexual for at least three years between the ages of 16 and 55," he also reported that "4 percent of white males are exclusively homosexual throughout their lives after adolescence." For political reasons, gay-rights activists prefer to quote the 10% over his 4% statistic. Since the publication of Kinsey's work, the accuracy of his survey has been questioned by many researchers.<sup>7</sup> A more recent survey of more than 10,000 persons by the National Center for Health Statistics indicates that homosexuals and bisexuals combined amount to less than 1.5 percent of the population.<sup>8</sup>

A recent GAO report, Defense Force Management: DOD's Policy on Homosexuality, noted statistics regarding the number of homosexuals that have been discharged from the military.<sup>9</sup> Opponents of the current DOD policy like to quote this report in regard to the amount of money reported to have been expended in discharging homosexuals. DOD critics give the impression that homosexuals are separated simply because of a discovered non-threatening orientation. However, many separation cases involve homosexual behavior which will only be increased if homosexuals are allowed to enlist. Consequently, the amount of money expended on separating people because of homosexual behavior would not decrease, but would increase if homosexuals were admitted. The GAO report should move those concerned with finances to think twice before endorsing a policy that would

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<sup>6</sup>Charles Moskos, "Why banning homosexuals still makes sense," Navy Times, 30 March 1992, p. 27. Rather than drawing an analogy between homosexuality and racism, the writer argues that the more correct analogy is between homosexuality and heterosexuality. He perceptively writes: "Anybody who wants to allow homosexuals into the military must make the same argument for breaking down the barrier between the sexes."

<sup>7</sup>Judith Reisman & Edward W. Eichel, Kinsey, Sex and Fraud: The Indoctrination of a People (Lafayette, LA: Huntington House Publishers, 1990), pp. 23-24.

<sup>8</sup>Deborah Dawson, "AIDS Knowledge and Attitudes for January-March, 1990, Provisional Data From the National Health Interview Survey"; Joseph F. Fittl and Marcie Cynamon, op. cit. for April-June 1990; Pamela F. Adams and Ann M. Hardy, op. cit. for July-September 1990, in Advance Data Nos. 193, 195, and 198, National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control, Public Health Service, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, p. 11 in all three documents.

<sup>9</sup>U.S. General Accounting Office. Defense Force Management: DOD's Policy on Homosexuality, (Washington, DC), 12 June 1992, pp. 16-26.

result in separation costs far greater than are currently expended.

There were a number of other statistics that the GAO report did not include. The following are but a few that should be considered in this current discussion:

1. Statistics give evidence of widespread sexual compulsion among homosexual men. A recent University of Chicago survey revealed that for the U.S. population as a whole, the estimated number of sex partners since age 18 is 7.15 (8.67 for those never married).<sup>10</sup> These numbers stand in striking contrast to the results of a major study by the Kinsey Institute which revealed that 43% of the homosexual men surveyed estimated that they had sex with 500 or more partners; 28% with 1,000 or more partners.<sup>11</sup> In the same study, 79% of the white male homosexuals surveyed said that more than half of their partners were strangers. 70% said more than half of their sexual partners were men with whom they had sex only once.<sup>12</sup>
2. Since the onset of AIDS, there does not appear to be a significant decrease in homosexual partnering behavior. In one study, the number of different partners allegedly fell from 70 to 50 per year; in another study, the number was allegedly reduced from 76 to 47 per year.<sup>13</sup>
3. Homosexual men are six times more likely to have attempted suicide than are heterosexual men.<sup>14</sup>
4. Studies indicate that between 25 and 33% of homosexual men and women are alcoholics.<sup>15</sup>
5. In a survey reported in the American Public Health Association, 78% of the gay respondents reported that they had been affected by a sexually transmitted disease at least one time.<sup>16</sup>
6. The latest figures available from the Centers for Disease Control show that two-thirds of all AIDS cases are directly attributable to homosexual conduct.<sup>17</sup> One does not need a medical degree to recognize that admitting homosexuals into

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<sup>10</sup>Smith, op. cit.

<sup>11</sup>Alan P. Bell and Martin S. Weinberg, Homosexualities: A Study of Diversity Among Men and Women, (New York, Simon and Schuster, 1978), p. 308.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., pp. 308-308.

<sup>13</sup>S. A. Stewart, USA Today, 21 November 1984; L. McKusick et al., "AIDS and Sexual Behavior Reported by Gay Men in San Francisco," American Journal of Public Health, 1985, pp. 493-496.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., Table 21.12.

<sup>15</sup>Robert J. Kus, "Alcoholics Anonymous and Gay American Men," Journal of Homosexuality, Volume 14, No. 2 (1987), p. 254.

<sup>16</sup>Enrique T. Rueda, The Homosexual Network, (Old Greenwich, Conn., The Devin Adair Company, 1982), p. 53.

<sup>17</sup>The HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report," Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control, National Center for Infectious Diseases, Division of HIV/AIDS, January, 1992, p. 9.

the military would bring about an increase in the number of AIDS cases and would put additional financial and personnel strains on military medicine which must contend with a declining military budget and the challenge of recruiting and retaining sufficient medical personnel.<sup>18</sup>

## Conclusion

American society is experiencing the contradictory phenomena of increasing sensitivity regarding human rights accompanied by growing rejection of sexual morality. The movement to approve homosexual conduct as an acceptable life style is not surprising in today's permissive society.

Military leaders influence the formation of attitudes in their subordinates, and not only their words but their example (lifestyle) can profoundly affect the direction and lives of those whom they lead. This fact was articulated by General Lejeune, the 13th Commandant of the Marine Corps, who noted that "a large portion of those enlisting are under twenty-one years of age" and "are in a very formative period of their lives. We owe it to them, to their parents, and to the nation, that when discharged from the services they should be far better physically, mentally, and morally than they were when they enlisted." Today when more militant and vocal homosexuals are advocating that homosexuality should be included in sex education courses as an acceptable alternative to marriage, military personnel themselves and parents of young service men and women cannot help but be concerned about this matter. Legislators and military leaders have a legitimate role to play in providing positive, acceptable role models, especially for young people whose minds and characters are in formative stages.

In summary, the DOD homosexual exclusion policy is designed to preserve, promote and protect legitimate military interests which include the personal privacy rights of servicemembers. Discussions with active duty personnel whose lives would be affected by a policy change give evidence that recruitment of avowed homosexuals could erode morale and have a negative impact on recruitment and retention. In so far as universities do not require women to compromise their privacy by forcing them to share rooms and showers in college dormitories with men, nor should heterosexual military personnel be forced to interface with homosexuals without recourse to other living arrangements available to most civilians. Just as the military excludes persons because of physical handicap or age for the good of the individuals themselves and those with whom they would serve, so too is the military justified in excluding homosexuals from its ranks. While opponents of the current DOD policy prefer to avoid behavioral aspects in favor of presenting homosexuality as a non-threatening orientation, the fact is that lifelong, or even career-long celibacy among those with a homosexual orientation is a rare exception rather than the rule. In this period of history when militant homosexuals not only reveal their liaisons and lifestyles, but actively and articulately promote the homosexual relationship as a morally acceptable alternative to marriage, legislation which would require the military to accept homosexuals would do much more to violate the rights of heterosexual military personnel than it would to promote the rights of homosexuals. Consequently, in light of the multiple reasons noted above, legislation which would reverse the current DOD homosexual exclusion policy should not be enacted.

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<sup>18</sup>Steffan vs. Cheney, *op. cit.*, p. 28. The health and welfare threat of AIDS was a factor in ruling in favor of the current DOD policy. The judge wrote: "There is another justification for the policy of excluding homosexuals from service in the United States Armed Forces...far and away the highest risk category for those who are HIV-positive, a population who will with a high degree of medical certainty one day contract AIDS, is homosexual men."