

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE SERVICE OF GAYS AND LESBIANS IN ALLIED MILITARIES

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PARTICIPANTS:

**Welcome and Introduction:**

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PANEL 1: MINISTERIAL POLICY EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS LEARNED:

**Moderator:**

AARON BELKIN  
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**Panelists:**

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER CRAIG JONES  
Royal Navy (ret.)  
United Kingdom

MR. ORI KAPARA  
Research Specialist, Center for Behavioral  
Sciences  
Israel Defense Forces

MAJOR GENERAL WALTER SEMIANIW  
Chief of Military Personnel  
Canadian Forces

MAJOR GENERAL SIMON VI. WILLIS  
Former Head Defense Personnel Executive  
Australian Army (ret.)

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## PROCEEDINGS

MR. SINGER: I'm Peter Singer, I direct the 21st Century Defense Initiative here at Brookings, and it's my great honor to welcome all of you to Brookings. I'd also in particular like to thank our partners at The Palm Center who have helped put this together, as well as Chip McLean and Heather Massera, who've really rode hard over this topic for us, we're really pleased by this.

But most importantly, I want to thank all of you for joining us, both the audience, but also the speakers, many of whom have traveled great distances. It's an honor for us to host this and we're very much looking forward to this, and I think by the turn out, you can see the great interest in this topic.

What I thought would be important to do is actually, at the start, to speak to the how and why of this, in particular this event. Our goal in hosting this event is to do something scary and dangerous for our Washington policy debate, actually try to inject some information into it, that is, Congress and the Pentagon have been engaged in a review of the controversial "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, weighing the potential future open service of gays and lesbians in the U.S. military. At the same time, several nations that are allied with the United States have already implemented inclusive policies that allow such individuals to serve openly. Thus, amid all the heated political debate, there's actually underneath it a key policy research question that would be both informative and useful to answer; how were the policies of the other nations implemented and what lessons can be drawn from their experiences?

That is, our goal in this event is not to push one agenda or another, it's not to open with the answers rather than the questions, it's not to host another debate between proponents and opponents that would simply highlight the extremes all over again, it's rather to inform the discussion by learning from our allies who bring in a diversity of experiences.

That is, the goal of this event is to be a forum in which we can discuss both the challenges and the lessons learned by allied militaries on a more practical and operational level.

Now, the way that we've structured this event is through a series of discussion panels that are designed to provide insight at all levels of such military personnel policies, from the

personal experience all the way up to the ministerial level of decision. Now, the course of the panels is designed to engage on what you will see in your packet is a pretty comprehensive list of questions that are pre-planned. And if you haven't picked up one of those, again, they're outside of the table.

These questions are drawn from the key questions that Congress was focusing on back in the prior debate in 1993 and other aspects that we think haven't been explored enough in terms of the public discourse about this topic yet.

Now, you'll notice that there are a great number of these questions and a great number of panelists, and so we've tried to organize the event in a way that's designed to make full use of their time with us.

So what's going to happen is, for each panel, after they're introduced by the moderator, each panelist is going to give an opening statement of their views for about two minutes. After they've spoken, the moderator is then going to engage them on those questions, and again, is going to ask that their answers be crisp, keeping them to around two minutes. After that we're going to open up each panel to a discussion with the wider audience, to you, the participants. When you have a question, what will play out, you'll be called by the moderator, and then we'll ask you to do three things, one, wait for the microphone to arrive, because as you'll notice, there's cameras in the back there, this is being taped both for a webcast, but also various media including CNN; second, introduce yourself and where you're from, the institution you're from; and then third, most importantly, we have a very strange policy here, questions end with a question mark, so please, we, again, have people who have traveled great distances, a lot of views out here, so we don't want to use up time for the variety of speeches and the like, we really want to dig into the facts.

And so with that, it's my honor to introduce our partner in this, Aaron Belkin, who's actually going to give us sort of a scene setter of where the debate stands right now. Thank you again.

MR. BELKIN: Thank you so much, Peter, and thank you to all of you. It's a big honor for The Palm Center to have such distinguished colleagues at Brookings among the panelists and in the audience, and it's a pleasure to be able to contribute to the policy discourse in some small measure. I, as Peter said, would like to briefly frame the debate in terms of where things stand in the

United States and how this conference plugs into the conversation that is now going on in the Congress, in the White House, in the Pentagon, and amongst the public.

As most of you know, the law of the land in the United States has been don't ask, don't tell for about the past 17 years. And the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy is justified quite explicitly in congressional statutes and federal case law by something known as the unit cohesion rationale, which is the idea that if gays were to serve openly and were allowed to acknowledge their sexual orientation while in uniform, then unit cohesion and military readiness and morale and other indicators of military performance would suffer.

As part of this debate, going back to the very inception of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," there's been a conversation about whether or not the unit cohesion rationale and other questions surrounding gays in the military in this country could be studied and assessed and analyzed in the context of foreign military experiences.

On one side of the debate, people in favor of open gay service have made the claim that we can look to foreign militaries and see what lessons they have learned and try to apply those lessons in this country; and then on the other side of the debate, people have said, well, the U.S. military is different than foreign militaries, and regardless of the impact of open gay service in other countries, that might be less instructive for what happens in the United States.

At this point, at least 25 foreign militaries have decided to allow gays and lesbians to serve openly. The oldest is the Dutch case in 1974, and the most recent was Uruguay last year.

President Obama, of course, during the campaign has pledged to repeal "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and to allow gays and lesbians to serve openly, but there has been opposition from the service chiefs and among some members of the Senate. And so as a compromise measure, the administration has set out this year as a year in which the Pentagon is studying the policy and is trying to figure out if the policy is lifted, what repeal would look like, what the implementation of an open policy would look like, and that is exactly where our conference ties into the question that the Pentagon is studying.

And I would suggest that there are no fewer than three questions that we could think about in order to structure today's conversations. So I'll do it on the one hand and on the other hand.

On the one hand, here are the three questions. First of all, what impact, if any, has open gay service had in countries that have allowed it? Second of all, what lessons, in particular, what implementation lessons have experts in other countries found after they transitioned to a policy of open service? And finally, third, to what extent are those lessons relative for the American case?

Now, I said I would do it on the one hand, on the other hand, so having listed those three questions, I would say, on the other hand, and as Peter mentioned, our hope today is to dig even deeper and get even more sophisticated and not just ask simplistic questions about whether or not open gay service has undermined cohesion, although we will ask that, but to really get down into the details and look at all kinds of questions surrounding privacy, partnership benefits, equal opportunity, and on and on, all the issues you have mentioned in your list of questions.

With no further ado, it is my great pleasure to introduce the first panel. And I would ask the panelists to come up at this point for the ministerial panel, so we're going to start right now. You have full biographical statements in your packets, so I will only introduce each panelist very briefly and you can refer to your packets for the more complete bios. But starting on my furthest right is Lieutenant Commander Craig Jones, who was awarded the Member of the Order of British Empire by Queen Elizabeth in 2006 for his distinguished work on behalf of sexual minorities in the military. Commander Jones recently retired from the British Navy, where he was an officer for over 20 years.

Seated next to him is Mr. Ori Kapara, who's traveled from Israel, is currently a social science researcher in the Israel Defense Forces at the Behavioral Sciences Center, is one of the people most responsible for social science research about gays and lesbians in the Israeli military. But I do want to note that Mr. Kapara's views are his own and do not represent the IDF.

Seated next to him is Major General Walter Semianiw. From February until August, 2005, he was responsible for all Canadian Forces operations in Afghanistan as Commander of the Task Force Kabul, and is currently the chief of military personnel in the Canadian Forces. Thank you so much for coming here.

And finally, seated next to me is Major General Simon Willis, who retired in October, 2004 with more than 38 years of service. And a career highlight included something very relevant to today's conference; he was the head of personnel for the Australian Defense Forces.

So I would ask each panelist to begin with a brief statement and then we will have a conversation. Craig.

CDR. JONES: Terrific, thanks, Aaron. I think the UK case is very interesting in this debate, because in the UK, the lifting of the gay ban was born in a complete firestorm, in a firestorm that lasted for a number of years.

And I remember sitting in the officer's mess in our flagship carrier, Invisible, in '98, and reading on the front page of a national newspaper an open letter from the head of the Naval Service in which he said he believed that unit cohesion and the -- of that service would be irreparably damaged if gays served in the military, and that was a difficult thing to read.

And the Ministry Defense in the UK campaigned in a bitter campaign through all of the UK courts, and finally the European Courts of Justice in 1998 and the European Courts of Human Rights in the summer of '99 just stopped the ban being lifted, and that's something that's sometimes forgotten. The ban was not lifted through altruism or a belief that it was necessarily the right thing to do, however, it was lifted. And I think, in observation, despite those challenges, it was lifted very quietly and has been a very quiet success.

A couple of observations about the lifting of that ban and the firestorm that went before it, first of all, it was a huge distraction for the military service and the Ministry of Defense and the political organization in the UK.

I'm not sure what we talked about in the military before we lifted the gay ban, but life afterwards became really, really dull, and we started talking about whether we should have more aircraft carriers and better equipment to deal with on the front line. And I'm not quite sure why we had senior military leaders taking up the space on the front page to talk about something which was really not so consequential, in my opinion.

I'd also say that, in my personal experience, and I've served with -- in NATO organizations and coalition organizations for the majority of my career, I'm a principal warfare officer, and therefore, have spent most of my time on the front line. I see the U.S. military as very close cousins, and I'd say that the UK is a good comparator to what the experience here might be. And finally, I'd make an observation about my colleagues, and that's the fact that it's my belief that my

colleagues would rather serve with a man or a woman who had unfailingly good judgment and who believed in equality and freedom and the protection of those things than with a homophobe, a racist or a bigot, because at times good judgment is really important.

MR. KAPARA: Well, as Aaron kindly mentioned, I'm here not representing the IDF, so I'll base most of my knowledge on the academic research done. Well, generally the issue of gays in the IDF has not been as problematized as in the U.S. or Great Britain, it has never been hotly debated for long periods of time, that's more than a very few months. Still, there has been a few changes, I'll discuss them. I'll stick mainly to policy, though, practice is, I believe as a researcher, is very much interesting.

Well, we are talking about a conscript model, military, that means that there's a very powerful -- of universal conscription. So it is generally perceived that the exclusion of any group would do harm to the IDF more than the inclusion that the general discourse surrounding the issue of gays, whenever it comes up. All right. A bit about policy. The first command regarding homosexuality in the IDF was introduced in '83. It was perceived as a big -- as recognition of gay identity at the time, but it did exclude gays from certain intelligence roles within the military.

That was all changed in '93, very much in sync with what was going in the U.S. And perhaps most interesting about the Israeli case is a complete removal of that command in '98. So today, at this day and time, there is no command dealing with homosexuality in the IDF. However, we can learn a bit from the IDF spokesperson -- and we can say that generally, whenever this issue comes up, it is said that the service member's sexual orientation is not an issue, and so the IDF is not -- this at all. That's a very powerful saying I find.

However, from a researcher's point of view, and I'm probably crossing my two-minute time limit, I think that this is a bit of a laconic statement since we are seeing a lot of changes, especially in the last couple of years in practice, but maybe we can discuss those later. Thank you.

MR. BELKIN: Thank you. General.

GEN. SEMIANIW: Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. As you can see, from a Canadian military perspective, we're very much here in force with each of the panels with representatives from our services. In particular the group that I brought, the leaders that I brought

are those who have deep operational experience and who have had experience on this particular issue.

My remarks are very much framed within fact and true military fashion to provide you with three lessons that we've learned from a Canadian perspective on this particular issue.

It was in the fall of 1992 that the chief of Defense Staff, that's our top soldier, issued an order to the men and women of the Canadian military. The order was very clear that the Canadian Forces policy with respect to homosexuality was hereby revoked immediately.

In short, a new policy would ensure that sexual orientation, in particular, homosexuality, would no longer be considered an item for a career restriction, which we'll talk about a little bit later, within Canada's military. The policy in place since 1986 on this issue stated that Canada's military neither recruited nor retained practicing homosexuals. In 1988, however, the policy was amended to retain practicing homosexuals, but with career restrictions. They could not be promoted; they could not go on career courses. The reasons for these policies were many and very, but included discipline, security, health, privacy, and finally, operational effectiveness.

The order of 1992 would remove all restrictions for employment and recruitment of homosexuals in and to Canada's military. In the order, very clear, the chief of Defense Staff went on to state that he and the commanders of Canada's military expected all men and women of the Canadian military to accept and to support the changes, knowing that there were men and women in Canada's military who would find the policy change difficult to accept.

Following almost two decades of a new policy with respect to homosexuality and service in Canada's military, the Canadian Forces finds itself in a different battle space on this issue, one where sexual orientation is not considered, in most parts, as an issue for men and women in uniform, a view that is grounded on a sense of duty and fairness and one focused on a soldier's contribution to the nation rather than his or her sexual orientation. Lessons learned over the past decades from a Canadian perspective, I've highlighted us three. First, as pedestrian as it sounds, it's all about leadership. As in all things human resources or personal management, I do that, I command 17,000 men and women in uniform to run this HR system. Leaders set the direction, they set the tone and ensure that policy is, indeed, respected and practiced.

To ensure that policy is useful, remember, it has to be enforced and it has to be seen to be enforced, that is the role of leadership, one of the key pieces that we learned from that experience.

Second, and I state this unequivocally here, there is no negative impact on operational effectiveness. There has been no impact to reflect on operational effectiveness by having men and women of any sexual orientation fighting together, be it in Afghanistan, from what we've seen, be it in Iraq, be it on many key peacekeeping missions over the many, many years.

And finally, our view is that we are stronger together by having a very inclusive military. By allowing men and women in uniform of any sexual orientation to be part of Canada's military, the same men and women in uniform who die for the nation, Canada's military is stronger and more unified, a fighting force that is grounded in the views as a sense of duty, a sense of fairness, and inclusiveness, something which our Canadian military is happy and proud to export around the world. Thank you very much.

GEN. WILLIS: Thank you, Aaron. The Australian Defense Force does not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation, it has not since 1992, however, the conditions of service that go along with that lack of discrimination did not follow on immediately and continued to be discriminatory for some time. These filings have been largely remedied, but there are still some outstanding issues.

I must say the lifting of the homosexual ban in the IDF was a bit like the Y2K issue. There's a lot of bluster and screaming and yelling and plans, and everyone had an opinion about it, but it came and went, and that was it, nothing more was heard about it. It was a non-event and it continues to be a non-event in Australia.

Why was it a non-event? Firstly, our concern was based around inappropriate behavior, not about sexual orientation. It wasn't about groups of people, it was about behavior. We kept it simple. Secondly, there was an informal acceptance of homosexual service anyway. Pre-'86, 1986, there was no policy banning homosexual activity in the Australian Defense Force; it was only when state law started to change that we had to make a policy change that lasted for six years only.

Thirdly, why was it a non-event? Because there's a culture in Australian military

and probably abroad about the fair go, and the importance of leadership, education, and training cannot be understated, and it was seen more as a human rights and equal opportunity activity rather than an operational concern.

The benefits, clearly morale, we were one big team and continued to be that. Operational readiness, Craig mentioned, we spent time on important things, not writing briefs for ministers and setting up meetings and having all sorts of distractions.

If you get ideas from 10 people, you get much better ideas from 10,000, so the more inclusive and the more diverse your base, the better you are. Diversity brings strength.

Because we were in the lead in this in some respects in Australia, we became an employer of choice, and therefore, it became an advantage for the Australian Defense Force. It felt good to be on a team that was leading. Finally, we've only got a couple of outstanding issues, and one is the recognition of partnerships, how we recognize partners, and probably some gender identity issues that we're working through at the moment in relation to transgender, but other than that, we're all one team. Thank you.

MR. BELKIN: Thank you so much. I'm going to direct questions to individuals, but then any and all of you should free to weigh in on any issue. General Willis, you said that a key to success in Australia was the focus on inappropriate conduct as opposed to sexual orientation. But with a policy that was only entrenched for six years, isn't that different than the situation in the United States?

We've been banning gays and lesbians since World War II and we've banned sodomy since 1919. We could have a military ball here, and two gay men could show up at the ball, they're partners, and they start dancing together, and that's not inappropriate conduct because the straight people are dancing together, but that would culturally be very difficult for our force to assimilate, so how do you wrap your mind around that?

GEN. WILLIS: My answer to that would be not to wrap your mind around the individual activities, would be to concentrate on the values, and concentrate on the values of the people. And I'm sure the values of the U.S. military are very similar to the Australian military of honesty, integrity, loyalty, courage, et cetera, and you can concentrate on that, and that's basically

what we did.

And our records show that there is far more inappropriate behavior with man on woman or woman on woman or whatever, you spread out whichever way you want to go, than there is with man on man. So I shouldn't have said woman on woman there, but you get the drift. You get the drift that it's -- the inappropriate behavior is the key, and we found that the case.

You talk about dances, et cetera, I've got adult children, and I've been to weddings, et cetera, I haven't seen anyone dancing together for about 15 years. They all sort of migrate to the floor, move around each other, and move off the floor, so -- and I suspect that it's not different in officers' messes and soldiers' canteens and dances like that these days, but if it is, that's a unit issue. It was always dealt with at unit level and it was dealt with as counseling appropriate behavior, like if a soldier drank far too much or was acting inappropriately, it was seen as inappropriate behavior and dealt with that way.

MR. BELKIN: But surely there must be a question of sexual tension. General Semianiw, when you have service members in the same unit in Afghanistan and they're having a relationship with each other, a homosexual relationship, that must cause some problem with cohesion or tension or jealousy or something like that?

GEN. SEMIANIW: And I'd come back and say, you know, as we sit here, we have to answer or ask a question with a question mark coming back to you, but in what way would you say that? For those that I've served with, not just in Afghanistan, but in other parts of the world, in Canada, like some of my panelists have said, it's not an issue. No one sits there and thinks of it.

I think this is really an issue probably more for Washington and for Ottawa than it actually is for troops at the grassroots level. In the end, they get on with the job, as we have found, regardless of their sexual orientation.

Yes, they do know who each other are, what they are, but it doesn't or hasn't seemed to be an issue for those that are serving at unit level. As the chief of military personnel, having a broad view of the Canadian Forces, in the last three years I have not seen one case at my level where an issue has come up where individuals did not get along. To echo the comments of my Australian friend here, more issues are between men and women, not between men and men, when

it comes down to it. So there has not been, we haven't seen it, a negative impact on operational effectiveness.

It's interesting as we moved into the new policy; there was a view that said perhaps there was a large group of those in the Canadian Forces who would disagree with the way ahead. Remember, the Canadian Forces is a volunteer force.

There were very few, if any, people who left the Canadian Forces after the new policy came in. So perhaps we didn't have it right, perhaps it never really was such a big issue for folks at the grassroots level, at the unit level who have to do the tough fighting. Perhaps it is just, throw it up perhaps a little glibly, a Washington issue, it's not a grassroots issue.

MR. BELKIN: Commander Jones, people here worry that there's a question of a line in the sand, and you lift the gay ban tomorrow, and the next day, polygamists are going to demand their rights, transgender service members are going to demand their rights. So how does the British military deal with transgender service, and isn't this a question of, you know, come one, come all, and all of a sudden everyone gets to serve in the military?

CDR. JONES: Well, I think the question is which pieces and freedoms do you want to protect, and I think the reality is that you protect all of those that fit in with -- structure of your political system. Transgender service was affected a little earlier than the lifting of the gay ban, because in the UK, that's considered to be a medical issue rather than a social issue. But the reality is that today, whether you are LGB or T, then you're allowed the same opportunities to develop your career in the service and are required to behave according to the same social conduct and to the same rules.

A couple of things to pick up on Major General Willis' comments, in my 20-year career, I've seen some quite exciting conduct. It's a reality of life amongst people, and especially when you mix in a wine party, but I have never seen exciting conduct between two gay men, and it's an interesting point. I think among service personnel, we recruit from a particular pool of the wider population, people who have an understanding or at least develop an understanding of the services which we serve in. And you develop an eighth sense of what's appropriate and what's right and what's wrong.

I went to my first military ball on the 24th of January, 2000, which was about nine days after the lifting of the UK gay ban, and there was a degree of chaos amongst my colleagues, and particularly senior officers, who wondered what on earth might happen. And the reality was that we went to the ball, we had a few drinks and enjoyed a very pleasant evening with colleagues.

And did we dance in the middle of the floor? No. I'm a military officer and I've got two left feet. And it wouldn't have been right for me, my partner, or my colleagues, and I think that that moves above the issues of the Code of Conduct. It's who you are as a military officer and what feels appropriate.

MR. BELKIN: But then in that case you're asking for the Pentagon to allow discretion to gay and lesbian officers and service members to not use the policy as a test case to advance rights, and what if someone comes in and is just trying to make a political statement or get media coverage?

CDR. JONES: I think that's fair and likely. There were concerns in the late 1990's about officers and men walking across the gangways of ships in feather boas and high heels, that's just not the reality of the people that serve in our military. And I don't think that -- I'm saying that the ethos and the ideals of people leads them towards behaviors that are appropriate. Those behaviors or those processes are underpinned by reasonably clear rules of what's right and wrong.

MR. BELKIN: Mr. Kapara, how do you deal with the question of partnership benefits? In this country we have a defensive marriage act that prohibits federal recognition of gay and lesbian marriages. If the military were to lift its ban, there would be an obvious discrepancy between the spousal benefits that straight service members receive and the spousal benefits that gay/lesbian service members receive. How do you deal with that in Israel, and what policies does the IDF have to deal with gay spouses or partners?

MR. KAPARA: Well, as I said earlier, there is no policy dealing with gays and lesbians, so it is generally understood that there is absolutely no difference, and it doesn't matter what your partner's sex is. But since -- in the Israeli case, gay marriage is not recognized. The question is not so much in the center of debate, so I have not heard of -- a lot about that issue. Generally it's -- there is no difference generally.

MR. BELKIN: Could the other panelists address that, how you deal with any discrepancies, or whether there are discrepancies, and if so, do those undermine moral, lead to a sense of a lack of fairness, or what do you do about partners at the policy level?

GEN. WILLIS: The second part first, no, it doesn't undermine moral or anything like that. At this stage of the game, except for a couple of areas I mentioned early on, there's no discrepancy. Interestingly enough, in Australia, federal and state laws restrict same sex marriage, and they haven't been lifted, that is marriage, but legislation under the Sex Discrimination Act provides that partners must receive the same benefits as spouses.

So as far as that goes, in the Australian Defense Force, partners receive the same benefits these days as spouses, and have for some time. It was slow in being introduced, but it is not perceived to be an issue at this time.

GEN. SEMIANIW: I echo the same comments, and the answer would be, no, there is no perceived inequity in any way, because it comes back to you use the word "partner," what does "partner" mean? What is the definition of "partner?" I have a very broad view of partner, of spouse, of family, and as such, it's broad enough that most, if not all, can actually fit into that to receive the benefits that they're entitled to. It has not been an issue. I haven't seen it in the forces over the last many years, any years.

CDR. JONES: From the UK point of view, there's an interesting point in transition. So at the time of the lifting of the gay ban in 2000, there was no Civil Partnership Act in the UK, and there was a really interesting solidarity between gay couples and straight couples who were not married. And both of those groups did not have rights, if you'd like, to things like military quarters and the particular room and ration benefits that go with being married.

With the Civil Partnership Act in 2004, the Ministry of Defense did something quite unusual in this debate actually. They immediately declared 12 months in advance of the Civil Partnership Act that gay couples in the military would have full benefits as married couples. It was a great reassurance and gave a really clear indication of the fact that the Ministry Defense saw this policy as sustainable and going definitely in the right direction, so quite interesting to see actually.

And just a final point, I think the most important thing here is about the military family

and about looking after the military family. We send our men and women to quite challenging situations, and it worries me that we send, or that the U.S. sends its gay service men and women in the line of fire without affording their partners appropriate protections.

MR. BELKIN: I want to ask two more questions to the group and then throw the conversation open to the audience and people who are sending in questions from the live stream feed. But my second to the last question, for General Semianiw, surely you must have had chaplains for whom the question of homosexuality is a matter of conscience and who did not feel that they could continue to minister to the troops after the lifting of the ban. How did you deal with either denominations for whom this was a difficult issue or just individual chaplains who didn't feel that they could continue to minister in the same way? Did you design special policies or how did you do that?

GEN. SEMIANIW: At the time, I can't tell you if there were any chaplains who left the Canadian military. Again, since it's a volunteer force, there was nothing publicized that any left, so my assumption is, having talked to a number on this, no one did leave at the time. So it didn't happen, what you're assuming.

Secondly, if you look at our chaplaincy, our chaplaincy is very, very progressive in Canada. We have imams; we have rabbis in our chaplaincy, very, very broad. So it is a very inclusive, not exclusive, an inclusive approach to a chaplaincy, who serve, who provide support to any man or woman and soldier regardless of sexual orientation, race, creed, color, whatever it might be.

The key is providing support to someone who needs it, and it has not been an issue, haven't seen it. Chaplaincy in the Canadian military works for me, from an administrative point of view, not from a religious point of view, it works to a much higher authority, but in the end, never been an issue. It comes back to -- and I think it's a theme that, hopefully, the audience is starting to hear. And I would say probably on behalf of all four of us, this is not an issue for our countries, it's just not an issue. You ask if I have a policy on homosexuals in the Canadian military, I don't because it's not an issue. They serve in the military, as does everyone who wants to join the Canadian Forces and serve their nation, it is not an issue. So it's difficult perhaps not to find some of the facts, but looking out ahead, it has proved to be a more unified approach, especially with the chaplaincy.

Very recently we brought in rabbis, we brought in imams, who one would think perhaps had very little in common. They have probably a lot more in common than they have not in common they realized, but they support -- they deliver support to a very inclusive group across the forces.

MR. BELKIN: I'm going to ask one more question to the panel and then open things up. Do you have recommendations about timing and implementation? In this country, there are some who say that we need to, to the extent that "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" is repealed, we need to slow roll the implementation process over time and allow the military perhaps up to a year to adjust. There are other people who warn that if you slow roll implementation, you open yourself up to potential obstruction, and that you should just snap your fingers and announce the new policy of inclusion if it gets to that point politically. Do you have any lessons that you'd like to convey to the U.S. in terms of timing and implementation? And by the way, at the end of the panel, we'll come back for closing statements.

GEN. SEMIANIW: Yeah, if I can just quickly address that, what I did, I brought with me a number of the directives at the time, and it's very clear viewing these that it was done very quickly. There was a little bit of, you know, there's not a view of kind of waiting over a year, but just to get the thing out in the street, which we believe, in hindsight, was the right approach.

Secondly, as they say, if you want to change culture, you need leadership and communication, very, very heavy on the communication side. When you read the directive here from my counterpart so many years ago, he demanded that leaders across the Canadian Forces explain the rationale behind the change, sat down, as my counterpart here said from Australia, communicated, talked about it from an educational training point of view, which led to not a need for a longer term implementation, but something happened very quickly, which in hindsight we believe was the right approach.

MR. BELKIN: Why was it important to do quickly?

GEN. SEMIANIW: Important to do quickly, because I come back to what you said, that if you were to drag it on, perhaps there are issues of obstruction over the year. In the end, I come back to what the leadership is all about or the military is all about leadership, making decisions,

even if it's not about everybody or for everyone, it's just to get on with it. In hindsight, there was little, if any, obstruction. People didn't leave the Canadian military; they just got on with the new policy.

MR. BELKIN: Anyone else want to weigh in on this before we -- yeah, please.

MR. KAPARAZ: I'll make this very quick. It's quite similar in the Israeli case, it was done with haste, as I said before, and more interestingly, the cancellation of the command in '98 was actually done silently, so there was absolutely no public debate, it's just the policy shifted overnight.

CDR. JONES: I think it's certainly fair that -- I believe it needs to be done swiftly. In the UK, in August, '99, the ban was suspended, and it took about six months after that for the Armed Forces Code of Social Conduct to be implemented. We got away with that. But I think in the way that the military does its business, it's normal to make the decision and then implement it sharply, to make sure it's a total success. And I think it's very important that senior officers have the opportunity to take ownership of this policy and drive it ahead, because anything else really wouldn't fit with our leadership model.

GEN. WILLIS: There's not much more I can add, other than to say equal means equal, and in my view, if you're looking for equality, you should do it as quickly as you can no matter what circumstances. And I believe in the Australian circumstance, the rapid nature of it was one of the reasons why it was so successful.

I think people underestimate sometimes the ability of a soldier, a sailor, or airman to salute the flag and get on with it under good leadership, and I think good leadership, as Craig points out and the other members point out, is key to it all. So that's what I would say.

The only thing I would comment on in relation to it would be that we were probably a little slow in getting our conditions of service up and running to support the change in policy. And I would recommend that if you're going to change the policy, make sure that it's closer to a concise package than we managed to achieve.

MR. BELKIN: So what does that mean, you had to get your conditions of service up? Where there specific rules or what?

GEN. WILLIS: Well, yes. For instance, travel, in the first instance, partners weren't given travel. For instance, if a gay couple was coming to America on posting, only the serving

person or the primary postee -- they might both have been posted -- got the allowances and the travel, the others had to pay their own way. Initially we didn't give them married quarters as you would give a couple, so we worked our way through that, all the way through the whole system of conditions of service.

It probably took a little bit longer than we would have liked, but we're there, and I would just recommend that it be done more quickly than we did it.

MR. BELKIN: But maybe the slow route is better because it allows people time to adjust.

GEN. WILLIS: Having been head of personnel and seeing the amount of briefs coming across my desk that weren't related to homosexual service, but related to married quarters, leave, postings, sickness benefits, all those sorts of things that I could, quite frankly, have done without, I would recommend that the key decision is whether or not you're going to go that way and the rest of it is just support to it. And if you can get the support wrapped up in it more quickly, I think it's much better.

MR. BELKIN: Thank you so much. We'll come back for closing statements, but we'd like to open things up to the audience. And do we have a roving microphone? Okay. And if you could announce your name and then a reminder to ask a question.

MR. CRAIG: Hi, I'm John Craig. I'm a clinical social worker and addictions counselor at INOVA Hospital in Arlington, in Fairfax, Virginia, and I work with military veterans and others. I also have been a volunteer for SLDN, Service members Legal Defense Network, in their efforts to go to Capital Hill and repeal "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." My question, please, is for Commander Jones.

Most psychologists feel that most individuals experience some kind of same sex attractions early in their lives, especially in adolescents, even if their primary attractions later in life are for the opposite sex. So this may be a passing thing in adolescents for many males. And you mentioned the firestorm of controversy that erupted in the UK around this issue that that surprised you because you felt this was somewhat of an inconsequential issue in many ways. I'm just wondering, do you think the memory of these same sex attractions in many members of the military

are a reason for this kind of firestorm that erupts in these debates in the U.S. and elsewhere?

CDR. JONES: That's a very challenging question, and as a simple sailor, I feel slightly ill-equipped to answer it. I think that there was an unreasonable wish to protect the ethos of the service in a slightly alpha male, rugby club type of organization, which sometimes the militaries can be. It's great to see that in the last 10 years, the services have gravitated away from that. If you ask me if it's to do with earlier misgivings about same sex attraction, I'm not so sure; I couldn't see that necessarily as being likely.

MR. ROSTKER: Bernie Rostker from the Rand Corporation. One could get an image of a rapid change in policy, all the homosexuals came out and everything was fine, but at least our reading, when we last looked at this in 1993, was that coming out was a long process and that most of the homosexuals in service did not come out. In Canada, we were there six months after, and no one had come out. So the policy may change quickly, but the reality is, there is this process, which my hypothesis would be self-adjusting, people come out in environments they are comfortable with, and so the policy may change quickly, but the reality is not that the situations change quickly.

So to put a question mark on that, could you comment from your points of view about the coming out process, and even today, do you have any sense of what part of -- how much of the gay community that is serving has, in fact, made that known to their units or to the institution?

GEN. WILLIS: I'll take that to start with. Quite frankly, I would just like to say that from my perspective, and from a lot of my peers' perspective, I joined the Army in 1967, we all knew that there were probably homosexuals in the Army and we couldn't care less, quite frankly, as long as they did their job, and that was all that was important.

A couple of decades later, the rules changed a bit and they went on, so I think that had some part to play. It's just not relevant on the line essentially. I was an infantryman in Vietnam, and I'm -- I don't know that there were homosexuals there because people never put their hand up, but if I had to make a judgment call, I suggest that there were, and they served just as gallantly and as bravely and as effectively as everyone else. Yes, they -- when we removed the ban, no one came out, and I think it was quite some time before people put their hand up, but I think the Australian soldier, you know, didn't expect anything different, any different at all, it was just the way it

was, and I don't think you should expect anything much different, in my view.

GEN. SEMIANIW: On the question, I kind of look at it from two parts, the what and the how, and the when. If I look at the what and the how, I think there's perhaps a myth there of what coming out is all about. And I think it's across much of the globe, because we haven't seen -- if you consider coming out, as mentioned by a number of the panelists here, as people all of a sudden yelling from the top of some steeple, you know, that they're homosexual, they're gay, it just doesn't happen.

Secondly, the one piece I would agree with you, we even see it today, but that just doesn't apply, I would throw back, not just for homosexuals, but in the Canadian military, no one has any right to know what my sexual orientation is. Heterosexual or homosexual, gay, lesbian, whatever it is, we have a privacy law in Canada that protects that. Granted, you have a law, but at the same time, I come back to it, for soldiers, what we found, it really doesn't matter -- with the comments here -- it's all about what can you do, what are your abilities all about, can you do the duty on the line. It's not about what is it that you represent at the end of it, can you actually be a section mate that can do his part to get rounds down range.

MR. KAPARA: Well, with the idea from a ministry point of view, this question has not been researched very much. However, I will try to supply you with some more direct answers also from my experience doing research with a youth group that's also relevant for -- with the Israeli youth; it's also relevant for the IDF since that's a conscription model military.

We do see the general age of youth coming out in Israel is decreasing. I actually have an exact average number if you'll be interested. Back in 2000, there was, age 22, on average, Israelis would come out; today that's more like 16, 10 years later. So we have seen sort of a revolution, but that's, again, mainly deals with practice and is not dealt with from a military point of view.

CDR. JONES: I think, from the UK perspective, on the day that the ban was lifted, there was a deadly quiet in most matters across the UK, and tumbleweed blowing across the policy desks in the Ministry of Defense, apart from in HMS Fearless where there was a degree of chaos when I was the operations officer. But it was very quiet for three or four years.

I would draw one distinction, though, in that the U.S. Armed Forces have taken a significant step forward, and some of the coming out process amongst individuals I suspect is a bridge that's being crossed.

I'm quite sure that there are lots of gay service men and women in the U.S. Armed Forces who have confided in their colleagues and have, therefore, gone through -- broken down some of the mental barriers about the fact that they will eventually come out. And therefore, I don't think it will be three or four years before you start to see larger numbers of gay men and women. It may be three or four months perhaps, or a little longer than that, so it's interesting.

I think the question also involved numbers. The UK has a network group for gay service men and women, it has over 1,000 members. It's the largest LGBT employee-based network group in Europe and a remarkable advocate of the business case for inclusion. Five or six years ago, the UK military had a very significant number of personnel gaps at the front line. There is no doubt about it, that the lifting of the gay ban has reduced that number of personnel gaps, and therefore, we are operationally more effective for it.

MR. BELKIN: Can I get a sense of how many questions there are? Maybe we should bundle the questions if the panelists can kind of hold the questions so we can hear from more of you. So we'll take two or three questions at once and then we'll get answers.

MS. MAJAWNY: Shanaz Majawny, United States Air Force. I had a question. If there was going to be -- if you saw an increase in violent crime against gays in the militaries after the ban was lifted?

MR. BELKIN: A question about harassment and violence. Actually, let's just hold and get the other questions in the back.

MR. SHAUGHNESSY: Larry Shaughnessy with CNN. I'm not sure if this is true for all your countries, but I think most, if not all your countries, serve alongside some place in the world or another with the United States troops. Do you guys know of any incident where U.S. troops and troops from your country have had untorrid actions between each other over the issues of homosexuality?

MR. BELKIN: There was a hand or two -- yeah, go ahead.

MR. SI: Thank you, good morning. My name is Christian Si and I work for Congressman Alcee Hastings of Florida, here in Washington, D.C. And I must say, as a congressional staffer and a gay American, it's very heartening and encouraging to hear all of your testimonies and how relatively quickly and quietly these policy changes were implemented.

But as you may know, here in the United States, "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" is codified, you know, in our laws, and it will take an act of Congress or judicial action to repeal the law. My question is, what role, if any, have your parliaments played in that transition, as well as your executives, and, you know, grassroots organizations?

Thank you.

MR. BELKIN: And let's take -- there was one more hand, yeah.

MR. JIVITZ: Chris Jivitz, RAND Corporation. I was just curious if there have been any studies in your own countries that look at the outcome of the change in policy, any kind of polls or other kind of statistical or other studies that we might be able to look at to support the very positive statements that you've made.

MR. BELKIN: So we have 12 minutes left. I'm going to take moderator's discretion and make a brief comment and then open it up to everyone to give a closing statement and/or answer some of the questions that have just been asked. So, hopefully, you can just hold one more comment and then we'll just go down the row and hear closing statements from all of you.

But I have to say, I've heard at least five differences that separate out your countries from the United States that make me wonder about the relevance of the lessons from your countries for what's going to happen here and makes me think maybe we really are a unit case.

Our tradition of banning gays seems to be much more long standing. We have a very litigious society, and so we could have gay service members trying to use the policy to make statements. We're not going to have equality of partnership benefits any time soon because of defensive marriage. We have a very conservative chaplain's corps, and our NCOs are not on board at all with change, so there is a leadership question. So I guess, and maybe this is something just to discuss throughout the day, whether, given those differences, we really can move forward here in a way that protects readiness.

Okay. That was a lot. Let's go down the row starting with Major General Willis.

And we have now 11 minutes left, so you can divide the time.

GEN. WILLIS: In answer to the question on violence and harassment, no, none that we're aware of. Incidents over homosexuality between national groups or groups, none that I'm aware of. As far as legislation, yes, there was legislation through parliament to enable the policies, but that was quite straight forward.

And as far as polls and studies go, no, because we don't know, we don't ask people if they're gay or lesbian, so -- and we don't intend to. We don't see it relevant unless they stick their head up or some incident occurs. But we -- as far as I'm aware, there have been a few incidents, but they were, in the percentage term, they were probably 1 percent of 100 percent of inappropriate behavior incidents and gender on gender incidents, gender on different gender incidents still weighing about the top of the ladder, on top of the league. So the answer to your question is no.

GEN. SEMIANIW: In answering the first question, the answer is no, we did not see an increase in violence, particularly against homosexuals or issues that kind of drew from that. I remember what we did have is, we brought in harassment policy, not just for homosexuals, but for all men and women in uniform, so it became the tool in the toolbox for commanders to pull from to ensure that they could apply the policy in a fair and equitable way.

Having fought in Afghanistan alongside many different nations, particularly with Americans, the answer is no, I haven't heard about it. Given the position I'm in, given the meetings I'm party to, I have never heard once of an issue between American soldiers, Canadian soldiers over homosexuality within the military at all.

On the codification side, remember what we did have which drove us, fair to look at from a Canadian perspective was the Charter of Human Rights. And if you look at the Charter very much, it was something that was pushed by government at the time, and it was, in essence, it said everyone needs to be treated fairly and equally regardless of who they are or what they are. And it was a little bit more complex than that, but this is the infanteer talking in very simple soldier terms, and it ensured that as we drove this through, it opened many eyes to the issue I come back to of fairness and back to a sense of duty and being able to do what you can do.

Studies, outcomes -- common here, no, because we don't even ask. I couldn't tell you with any certainty what percentage of men and women in uniform in the Canadian military are either homosexuals or lesbians or even heterosexuals, or even many different forms of heterosexualism that exists out there, none of our business, I really don't care. For me, it's about operational effect.

And I come back and actually make a statement here, I would say not allowing men and women in uniform who are homosexuals or lesbians to not just practice what they do, but be open about it, leads to a force that is less than operationally effective. The force is more operationally effective if you have them with you and they can actually be open and talk about it, because they are who they are, and that is a part of the issue I throw back. "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" for me is a challenge, not about having gays and lesbians, but allowing people to actually state who they really are, when at the end of the day they're prepared to lay their lives down for the nation, for me, that's a challenge.

MR. BELKIN: What about the relevance to the U.S. case, though, and all the differences that --

GEN. SEMIANIW: Here's what I would say, I think in some part, scope, or scale, given that we're geographically very close to the United States, but we are very different than the United States, I would submit from all of my readings that these were issues, thoughts, ideas that did come up as part of our transition that look what's going to happen. We have deep-rooted traditions and cultures and all of this. Because on your first one, the deep-rooted kind of views of culture, we're shared south of the border and north of the border for a long time together, so I would say it was. It didn't turn into an issue.

Litigious, I come back and tell you I do this every day. I write policy. If you write policy for the one-offs, you'll never be writing policy. Policy is for the group, for the majority, not the army of one, it's the army of many. So we do have those in the Canadian military who fight us on a variety of issues in different ways, and we don't write policy for them, we write policy because it's the right thing to do. And again, I come back to the last two, we had NCOs, as well, and in every case we probably had more NCOs in military leave our military when we moved our bases from one

location to another than over this issue, because it really isn't an issue.

Perhaps there was people resistant to change, but it came back to, and I speak to it, communicating, leaders sitting down with men and women in uniform saying this is what we're going to do; this is why we're doing it. I come back to what some of the panelists said, and just getting on with it, because that's what soldiers do.

MR. BELKIN: Mr. Kapara.

MR. KAPARA: Well, regarding the first question about violence, no, I have not heard of an increase in any violent event. Well, regarding the involvement of the government, yes, it's actually Prime Minister Rabin who was very involved in the '93 change. He was also, to the best of my knowledge, involved with Bill Clinton at the time. So as I previously said, this change was very much in sync with the U.S. No research has been done trying to evaluate the success of the change. And regarding the question of similarity, I do believe both organizations have a lot in common, primarily Navy and most tragically the constant involvement in fighting, a constant fighting in very hostile conditions. So I do think much can be drawn from the early case that is relevant to the U.S.

Thank you.

CDR. JONES: In terms of violent crime, I'd have to agree, no, although I would add that I have greater confidence today that incidents of intimidation or harassment, bullying, and victimization would be reported because the ban has been lifted, and that's very important. And, therefore, I believe our op sec, our operational security, has benefited from the lifting of the gay ban, because people were vulnerable before then.

U.S. troops, no, there's been no incidents of fraca, if you like, between UK and U.S. troops. But I would say -- I've been in UK/U.S. roles for the last 10 years of my career, and I would say that U.S. troops seem to enjoy the opportunity to lift the taboo on this subject when I was in their company.

And I've had some really interesting evenings in the bar, in circumstances whereby the colleagues around me or U.S. colleagues around me enjoyed the opportunity to talk over the issues in a mature and sensible way. What role did our parliament have? No helpful role, unfortunately.

(Laughter) And I note that it should say retired on there, so I'm not subject to the whip, which is great. In fact, on lifting the ban on the 13th of January, 2000, our Secretary of State said in the House of Commons that there are many in the military and in this parliament who would wish to see this ban remain in place, but the law is the law and we can't pick and choose the laws that we wish to implement.

But I'm delighted to say that when the ban was reviewed twice in June 2000 and June 2002, I think the word "non-event" was actually written into the review. And I remember a statement by Vice Admiral Sir James Burnell-Nugent, then head of naval personnel, in which he said, in an interesting statement, that the integration of gay men and women in the military had been far less of an event than taking women to the front line of operations, which is interesting. And that's also been a successful policy, which is terrific.

MR. BELKIN: For those of you who are interested, The Palm Center has conducted, I believe, nine studies of gays and lesbians in foreign militaries, the most recent of which was by my colleague, Dr. Nathaniel Frank, a 151-page global primer, 2010, of the status of gay and lesbian troops around the world, and we have summaries of all the research out in the lobby.

This has been a very illuminating discussion. We have distinguished guests from all over the world. Thank you so much for flying to Washington for this conversation.

We're going to break now for 15 minutes and we'll be back for our panel on scholarly studies and lessons learned at 11:00. Thank you. (Applause)

(Recess)

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE SERVICE OF GAYS AND LESBIANS IN ALLIED MILITARIES

Washington, D.C.  
Wednesday, May 19, 2010

PANEL 2: SCHOLARLY STUDIES AND LESSONS LEARNED:

**Moderator:**

NATHANIEL FRANK  
Senior Fellow, The Palm Center  
University of California, Santa Barbara

**Panelists:**

VICTORIA BASHAM  
Assistant Professor  
Exeter College, United Kingdom

DANNY KAPLAN  
Professor  
Bar Ilan University, Israel

ALAN OKROS  
Professor  
Canadian Forces College

KAROL WENEK  
Director General  
Canadian Military Personnel

\* \* \* \* \*

## PROCEEDINGS

MR. FRANK: I'm Nathaniel Frank of the Palm Center. I'm happy to begin the second panel this morning. If anyone cannot hear me or anyone else, just raise your hand or do the ear sign.

A couple of very quick announcements. This is -- there is a live feed for those of you who are interested, although you're all here, but if you want to tweet, or something like that, it's [http://bit -- that's b-i-t.ly -- bit.ly/DADTforum](http://bit.ly/DADTforum), as one word.

Please remember to turn off all of your phones again, including the panelists up here on the stage with me. And a quick reminder that there's plenty of information if it's still there out on the table, some of the research that we'll be referring to that's been very, very useful for this discourse. And if there isn't enough out there, there's plenty of us that you can contact or speak to briefly to get copies or get web links, et cetera.

So I'm very honored to be here and to introduce the next panel. Again, there are details about their biographies in the handouts that you have, but I will just say a few of them starting at the very end.

Dr. Victoria Basham is an assistant professor in politics at the University of Exeter and a research associate of the Center for International and Security Studies at York University, Toronto. She is also a co-author of the *Gays and Foreign Militaries 2010* that I worked on with the Palm Center, and I was happy to have her help. She's currently writing a book entitled *War, Identity, and the Liberal State* to be published next year by Routledge.

Next to her is Dr. Danny Kaplan, an Israeli anthropologist and psychologist. He is the author of *Brothers and Others in Arms: The Making of Love and War in Israeli Combat Units*, and also of *The Men We Love: Male Friendship and Nationalism in Israeli Culture*. And he has the masculinity track of the gender studies program at Bar Ilan University, and is a captain in reserve duty in the IDF, Israel Defense Forces.

Next to him is Dr. Alan Okros. Dr. Okros is deputy chair of the Department of Command Leadership and Management at the Canadian Forces College in Toronto. He, too, was a co-author of the *Gays and Foreign Military Studies from 2010*, and he served in the Canadian Forces

from 1971 to 2004, retiring at the rank of captain.

And to my right is Mr. Karol Wenek. Mr. Wenek, is the director general, military personnel, for the Canadian Department of National Defense responsible for developing strategic personnel generation and personnel support concepts. He is also the deputy human rights coordinator for the Canadian Forces and author of *Canadian Forces Leadership Doctrine*. He wrote conceptual foundations paper, papers for the Defense Ethics Program.

He also played a very important role as an author of the CF Charter Task Force established in 1985 to review evidence relating to what was then the exclusionary policy on gays and lesbians in the Canadian Forces. And he was senior policy analyst for human rights and oversaw production of several of the policies introduced pursuant to the 1992 change.

I'm going to allow each of the panelists to make some opening remarks, and then we'll follow a similar format to have my colleague, Aaron Belkin, ably ran the last panel. So we will begin in reverse order with Mr. Wenek.

MR. WENEK: Thank you, Nathaniel. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. It's a pleasure to be here. I'm going to cover the period 1985 to 1995, when I was most actively involved in this file. In the context of lessons learned, let me just say a few words about how the Canadian Forces manage policy change, and I'd be happy to elaborate on later.

First, the change was implemented quickly.

Second, the change was unequivocally supported by senior leadership.

Third, the change process was low key and explicitly communicated an expectation of normality in the work environment.

Fourth, commanders at all levels were engaged in communicating the rationale for the change and encouraging its acceptance, and they were also provided with information to assist them in responding to the personal concerns of some CF members.

Fifth, the communications package affirmed the principle that military personnel should be judged on their ability and not their demographic or social identities.

And finally, clear uniform policies applicable to both heterosexuals and homosexuals were promulgated to regulate military behavior, specifically policies on sexual conduct,

harassment, and interpersonal relationships. No attempt was made to change beliefs or attitudes.

As a final comment, I think there's one other idea worth mentioning that should inform policy choices on this issue. And that has to do with differing conceptualizations of the military institution. So what kind of military are we going to have?

For many years Canada implicitly subscribed to the classical view articulated by Huntington that the professional military is an institution set apart from society, is granted special license and exceptions, is relatively homogeneous in its makeup, and has rigid social and professional conditions for membership.

In the alternative view advocated, for example, by Sarkesian, profile by David Segal in his book on the postmodern military, a professional military in a democracy should or is fully integrated with its parent society, is imbued with the values that it defends, is diverse in its makeup, and has permeable boundaries. So I think a fundamental question for liberal democracies is, do we want a military along the lines of Praetorian Guard, or a military that encourages the participation of all citizens who are qualified and willing to serve?

Thank you.

MR. FRANK: Thank you. Dr. Okros?

DR. OKROS: The Canadian military has continued to evolve policies and practices and experiences as is being highlighted by my colleague, Karol Wenek, as well as by General Semianiw. I'd like to just highlight a couple of things of where things have gone and then raise some broad questions that I think need to be thought about.

The Canadian military continues to understand the benefits of diversity, has really reached out to include the gay communities. For example, members in uniform are now participating in Pride Parades, and there are both gay and straight members of the Canadian Forces that take a lot of self-satisfaction of being able to reach out to these sorts of communities. So there's an active involvement and an interest in bringing members of the gay community into the military.

You've heard about a number of the other things that have changed in terms of policies and programs on support, et cetera. So the CF continues to evolve, and that reflects evolution from the perspective of gay members of the military. One of the individuals who was

responsible for one of the landmark cases, Michelle Douglas, who was quoted by Aaron, a few years ago made the statement that gay members of the military did not want to be really, really out; they just wanted to be safe from being fired.

The update that I would provide is that with the evolution over time, the expectation has changed from gay members that are serving in the Canadian Forces. They expect to be judged one thing and one thing only which is their performance. That -- it is now a clear expectation, and that's part of why you've heard these comments that this is not a big deal.

And so let me talk to, briefly, to three things that I think are important. Lot's of discussion around cohesion. Cohesion is important in the military. Militaries have known for about 3,000 years how to generate high levels of cohesion amongst groups of people that come from very, very different backgrounds. Anybody that wants to say that a military's cohesion is going to be affected by having open service of gays is making a public statement of a failure of leadership. It's as simple as that. It's a leadership issue, and militaries know exactly how to do this stuff.

The privacy issue gets raised from time to time. I would argue privacy is somewhere on the scale of importance with creature comforts, regular working hours, and overtime. Okay? It's a bit of a pedicures , okay, but it's not a big issue. If you're going to join the military, you're going to serve under certain circumstances, certain conditions. You're going expected to do very difficult, arduous work in very complex situations. If privacy is something that is really, really important to you, you probably don't belong to the club.

So I think those are the lessons that I would suggest that the CF has learned over time that could be inculcated by others.

Thanks.

MR. FRANK: Thank you, Dr. Okros. Now, to Dr. Kaplan.

DR. KAPLAN: Thank you. I would like to go directly to the issue of social cohesion or unit cohesion. Following the survey that I did in collaboration with Aaron Belkin -- Aaron Belkin of Palm Center -- in 2002, a survey of 420 combat and noncombat soldiers, and as opposed to most studies that have been asking specific attitudes of military personnels, what's your attitudes about gays in the military, this survey had only one question about gays. It was, do you know a gay service

member?

And it had many other questions about interpersonal measures of social cohesion, and I would just briefly say -- and by the way, there was a handout up at the reception desk of the findings, so if anybody has these colorful charts, you can look at them now, and maybe I can extend it around. But basically the findings were that 80 percent of respondents reported knowing gay soldiers in their units.

Interestingly, the same number is exactly under "Don't Ask Don't Tell" in two surveys that were conducted in the U.S. And no significant differences were found in knowledge of gay peers between soldiers in noncombat or combat soldiers. And really the main finding, the men in our case were asking -- and this is the second chart -- whether knowledge of gay peers and combat position, each separately and together, have significant effect on social cohesion. And so we found that soldiers in combat positions scored higher in measures of social cohesion than the soldiers in noncombat positions, and that would be expected. You expect more cohesion in combat units, particularly in Israel and the concern about that there. But the main issue is that there was no correlation between knowledge of a gay peer and social cohesion.

So soldiers who knew they had gay peers in the unit, those 80 percent, had no effect on their experience of social cohesion. We're talking about IDF in 2000. Maybe I can respond to other issues later on.

MR. FRANK: Thank you. And Dr. Basham.

DR. BASHAM: I've been researching personal issues in the British Armed Forces for the best part of about eight years, thus far anyhow. And in that time, I've closely examined policy debates pertaining to the service of gays and lesbians in the British military. I've spoken to a number of the key players, as it were, in the transition from a policy of excluding sexual minorities from military service to include England.

In addition, I carried out extensive qualitative research into the attitudes of serving members of the UK military towards issues and policies pertaining to gender, to race, to sexuality, in their institution between 2003 and 2006. Now, as this research was carried out only a few years into the new policy on sexuality as a private matter in the British Forces, one of my primary

considerations was to elicit in-depth accounts of how service personnel had negotiated a policy shift, and how I felt about the prospects, or the reality of working alongside gay, lesbian, and bisexual personnel.

What I found was the Ministry of Defense's claims the policy change was a nonissue for operational readiness and effectiveness was supported very much by my data. This isn't to say that all of my interviewees were happy with the policy change in Toto. All of the gay personnel that I spoke to had found it completely unproblematic to disclose their sexuality to their peers, which I can say more about later if need be.

But the policy has really had no discernable impact on military functions. The key point, I think, here to reemphasize and reiterate some of the things that have already been said, is of the overwhelming body of literature on cohesion suggests soldiers in the UK Armed Forces bond through shared commitments to tasks and to shared practices, not because of the interpersonal relationships.

So, in shorts, the British military's post-2000 measures on sexual orientation have been successful because they prioritize the need to address the impassive behavior on military effectiveness and not assumptions about what impact the presence of sexual minorities in the military could or might have.

In line with how it is if you like on-the-ground, British military policy now judges all soldiers on their behavior, on the commitment to unit tasks to priorities and discipline irrespective of their sexual orientation. Thank you.

MR. FRANK: Thank you so much. Thank you all for keeping your attention to the time.

In graduate school, we learned that the easiest way to tear down someone's book was to basically tell them they should have written a different book, maybe easiest but not necessarily fair. Nevertheless it's kind of fun. So I'm going to sort of do that.

Dr. Basham, you mentioned a qualitative research, and I think some people have sometimes a concern or skepticism about whether amidst all of the research that many of us have found showing that lifting bans in various countries is a nonevent, and suggesting that the likely

impact on cohesion readiness, recruitment, retention, et cetera, that the Pentagon is now assessing will be nil or will be negligible or manageable. But even with all of that research, sometimes what's really being measured is more compliance than cohesion and impact on cohesion. Is there a control group? Is there some way of actually assessing cohesion with a control group, or some way of giving real confidence to the extensive research that suggests no impact or low impact?

And so my question is, how convincing, how deep is the research that you've done - - starting with you, and then we'll come this way -- how persuasive, how deep is it, is there qualitative research? And what do you say to skeptics who suggest that while you haven't found problems, have we really done controlled experiments and really measured in empirical ways the impact, if any, on cohesion?

DR. BASHAM: Hmm, interesting. I guess perhaps the best way for me to respond to that is just talk about, I think, some of the strengths of my research, if you like, or in defense of my colleagues who do qualitative research. So I think that prioritizing the accounts of military personnel themselves, as told in their own words, qualitative research is able to provide a good sense of how, if you like the realities, the -- of scholars and policymakers envisage, actually relate to the realities of soldiers themselves.

And so although qualitative research can't be generalized in the same way as quantitative research can in terms of statistics, these findings can be evaluated in terms of their sort of plausibility given existing knowledge on the issue, the topic under consideration. And they can also be assessed for the sort of theoretical applicability.

So I think the strength of those kinds of studies, and perhaps Dr. Kaplan might have more to say on this, too, given he's on so much important ethnographic and qualitative research as well as quantitative studies, if that they compliment our knowledge from -- of quantitative sources and build on what we -- the knowledge we have. So I think all of these things are important.

We've also been talking quite a bit about culture and about how service personnel relate to these issues on emotional and personal levels and so forth. So that, I think, is the value of drawing in some of this research.

I don't know if that addresses your question adequately.

MR. FRANK: Yes, thank you. I think we'll pass it to Dr. Kaplan. Now, you've done some specific research, and I wanted to give you the opportunity to elaborate on that with the same framework in mind.

DR. KAPLAN: Okay. Yes, I'm all in favor for qualitative research as an anthropologist, but as a social psychologist, sometimes I have to do quantitative research. And this is what I've done here. And the thing is there's a very important distinction that's been done by Robert McCoon and others differentiating between task cohesion and social cohesion. And much of the literature shows that what is really important for effectiveness is actually task cohesion.

On the other hand, "Don't Ask Don't Tell" has many fears in its code. And one of the fears is that it's also the interpersonal attraction in itself, which is social cohesion that would be an unacceptable risk, not just effectiveness but also what people feel. If they feel bad about having gays in their unit, that emotion in itself is an unacceptable risk. This is how I read the reality, or the real rationale behind "Don't Ask Don't Tell", not combat effectiveness, what people feel in their units.

And since my focus is on emotions, again what I did in this survey is an inventory of emotions, interpersonal emotions like intimacy, love, affection. These are the words that were offered for the respondents, and at first you could tell that combat units in Israel, (inaudible) combat soldiers think they feel much more affection to their fellow soldiers than the noncombat soldiers, so you have here kind of a validation that this measures what they feel toward the soldiers, and in combat units they showed much more affectionate, intimate, and other words that I picked up from my qualitative work, to their peers.

And again, having said that, you see that if you ask them in the same questionnaire but you don't make a big fuss out of it, just ask them, do you know a gay soldier, that was the only question about homosexuality in that survey. It was about 18 percent in both combat and noncombat soldiers, and, most importantly, there was no difference. Knowing a gay soldier did not affect these measures of social cohesion. So you knew all the gay soldiers, it doesn't mean you are less intimate with your fellow soldiers. That's really the main issue here.

What's even more interesting, and I mentioned that very briefly, that those figures of 18 percent -- I call it the magic 20 percent because I looked then surveys of -- I know of only two

surveys that's been done on this in the United States: one by in 2000 by Beakler and the naval officers, and recently in the Zogby survey in 2006. And the numbers were more or less the same, 20 percent.

So under totally different polities, totally different military, in Zogby it was surveying Iraqi and Afghanistan soldiers that just came back from the war. And so it was totally different conditions of those 3 surveys, and still the average answer was about 80 percent of respondents know of a gay or lesbian soldier in the unit, which shows that policies are very -- and this is really my main point and more as an anthropologist than a psychologist -- policies don't matter so much in military life.

From my work in my book, I noticed that the interviews that I interviewed the gay veterans, some were before 1993, which is when the ban was lifted in Israel, some were after. They didn't even know what was happening with the policy. I'm talking about the gay veterans, not even the straight veterans that I worked with later on.

So what matters is what happens on the ground. And it goes back to things that have been (inaudible) here earlier about leadership. If you have an officer or even an NCO, or even -- I don't know if there's anything listed on NCO in terms of leadership, that is homophobic, the climate in that particular unit will be homophobic and nobody's going to get out. Nobody's going to come out. And it's all about leadership, and so policies high up I don't think go -- well, eventually, they have some effects, but not that quickly, and I don't think they will have that dramatic effect as some people might imagine.

MR. FRANK: I want to ask you a quick follow-up, and the distinction between task and social cohesion bears, I think, dwelling on for a minute. The idea here is that while cohesion matters to performance, there are different kinds of cohesion, and social cohesion is a matter of affection, emotion, and how people feel about one another. That seems to matter less, and in fact no research has tied measure of social cohesion to performance at all that I've ever encountered.

But task cohesion, by contrast, is the cohesion that develops around a common mission, and you don't have to like one another in order to develop that kind of cohesion which does have a bearing or may have a bearing. I'm not saying that the presence of gays disrupts task

cohesion, but that there are correlations between task cohesion, right, and performance.

But you're saying in the charts here that nevertheless, social cohesion seems to matter. Is that because it matters to the political debate? Or can you state again why, why are you looking at social cohesion if the research finds that it has no bearing on performance?

DR. KAPLAN: Because of the way I read the rationale of "Don't Ask Don't Tell" is not about performance; it's about values. And it's about values of what I feel toward the fellow members.

I don't want to go into the whole discussion of homosociality, but I just say the military is a homosocial institution, which means it's not a homosexual institution, but it also is -- it's a big contradiction in that it's really a whole different kind of discussion. But because of those values I think it's the emotions that are more important. I don't think those values were -- don't come up in "Don't Ask Don't Tell" very explicitly, but I think they do come up implicitly. And that's why it thought it was better to target that issue of social cohesion because even if you show that in social cohesion those things don't matter, gay soldiers do not affect it, then obviously in task cohesion, which is what you're referring to, which has been shown to be less influenced by social emotions, then obviously in task cohesion it even matters less.

So I was trying to pick up the thing where it's like the most stringent case and expand from that.

MR. FRANK: And in some sense how it has a bearing on the discourse that we're having today, politically.

DR. KAPLAN: Right, yeah.

MR. FRANK: Thank you. So moving to Dr. Okros, I want to pick up on that question of leadership. Clearly, from the research and from asking anyone who's been in the military in a leadership position or non, leadership is essential and is essential to making a transition like this, it's essential to the entire military operation.

There seems to be a sense among those who are reluctant to lift the ban or have it imposed upon them that, sure, leadership matters, they recognize that. But I think there's a concern that among either civilians or progressives, or those who are pushing more toward repeal, that the

idea that leadership could be a panacea is a little bit naive. The idea of that, you know, either because leaders aren't behind this, or because it's not fair to put all of this on the plate of junior officers or those who will have to do the leading.

So I'm wondering if you can dig a little deeper about what we know about leadership and whether there are answers to those concerns about how leadership really can make the difference in this kind of a transition.

DR. OKROS: Certainly, leadership -- it's very clear from any of the academic models and any of the academic research in terms of the power of effective leadership in the military context. Again, the military goes out of its way to generate both the position based on the personal power that individuals use to be very effective as leaders.

Having said that -- and I'll go back to General Willis' comments that he had made in terms of the importance of making sure that you have got all of the supporting policies and programs in place when you make the change. Leaders need to be armed with an appropriate toolkit. They need to have clear statements of principle, which is what they base their leadership behavior on. They need a clear, simple narrative. They need to be able to explain this to their troops in very simple, straightforward terms: What are the first principles? What are the objectives? What does this mean? So leadership is critical, but leaders need to be supported with that.

The other comment that I would make is, then, there needs to be very clear statements in terms of emphasizing this as a leadership issue. I'll use one very brief example from the gender integration experience in the Canadian Forces.

The first time that we had women that were going to serve in the support occupation on board of one of our supply ships, briefing was being given to the CO and the senior leadership team of the ship about what the change meant. And halfway through it, one of the senior chief petty officers stood up and did the -- turned to the CO and said, come on, sir, you know, we know this is all social engineering. We know that this is not -- you know. This is not going to work out, this is not what we want.

To which the CO turned over to the executive officer and said, Chief So-and-So has just declared he's unfit to lead in today's Navy. He is to be ashore in four hours. Is there anybody

else who is willing to declare that you're unfit to lead?

I mean, you need clearer statements, and on occasions there may need to be clear decisions and clear actions like that to prove that this is a leadership responsibility, and that's what people are expected to do.

So give them the tools, give them the knowledge, give them the effective clear policies and programs and then hold them accountable. And it works very effectively.

MR. FRANK: Mr. Wenek, there seems to be some concern about what may end up being a kind of sensitivity training. There are a lot of slippery slope fears about this change in the U.S. I think some of that is political, some of it is grandstanding, some of it is a tactic to make this seem more complicated than it is by asking about sort of all the doomsday scenarios that may be just over the horizon.

But some of these concerns I think are genuine. And you mentioned something about that it's important not to change or to focus on changing attitudes but on behaviors. How, if there is virulent antigay sentiment in at least some pockets of the U.S. military, can this be achieved successfully without those fears coming true of violence or undiscipline, or problems with order and cohesion? Could this transition be made successfully without addressing those attitudes? And is addressing behavior sufficient, and can you sort of reassure people that we really aren't after sensitivity training here?

MR. WENEK: Thanks for the easy question.

Let me say up front that I think in part our approach was premised on the notion and well explained by Gregory Herrick in some of the work that he's done, that according to the functional theory of attitudes, attitudes serve different motivational purposes so that for some individuals an attitude towards an individual or group is a way of organizing knowledge or beliefs about a group or individual. It's a way of organizing knowledge or belief about an individual, and in other cases attitudes serve a value-expressive function. In other words, they're intimately related to deeply held core beliefs.

So I think what you tend to find, then, and certainly we found in our research in the mid-'80s, that for those who held sort of strong views about -- based on religion or moral views that

homosexuality was wrong or bad or evil, it seemed to be directly related to those core values and beliefs.

And those are the kinds of attitudes that are the most difficult to change, quite frankly, because it's intimately related to who you are as a person, the person who holds that value belief. Those that are more changeable are those that are based on perhaps perceptions picked up in the media or stereotypical information that circulates here and there, and over time those are more susceptible to change.

So to give you an analogous kind of situation, think of the debate on abortion, for example, and there are two opposing camps on that. But I think as a society you have to make a decision as to whether you're going to live under the rule of law. And if the rule of law says, you know, abortion is okay, or the service of homosexuality is okay, then you comply with the law.

And so that's one way, I think, of approaching the issue. And I have to admit up front here that when we changed our policy, this was not an exercise in objective and rational policy decision-making. The law was the instrument of social change in our case under the Human Rights. Under our Human Rights code, we were told we were in violation of the law, and, therefore, we had to change. So that's one issue.

And I guess the other thing that I would throw back to you is, well, is that, you know, the U.S. Armed Services had had lots of experience with this kind of issue where there has been deeply-held negative attitudes towards various minority groups. To African Americans in the past and, more recently, I guess I have to think of how well you're doing in terms of some of the negative attitudes towards Muslims that emerged after 9-11, and particularly after the Fort Hood killings.

So if you can manage that, I don't see it so difficult to manage attitudes towards homosexuals and to really focus on the regulation of behavior and really implementing a policy which says we're going to have zero tolerance for gay-bashing, we're going to have zero tolerance for crimes of violence against gays.

MR. FRANK: Thank you. I'm going to ask one more set of questions which I'm going to bundle and throw up somewhat more informally to the panel, and then we'll turn it over to the audience. And this bundle of questions somewhat overlaps with the questions that were asked

in the last panel, but because we're looking at this from a scholarly and research perspective, and we'll build on what we've just been discussing, it is potentially very helpful to discuss what the research says about the specifics of this kind of a change.

So I'll throw out a few of the questions that I think have been a big part of this discourse and see if there's further research that you want to elaborate on to address them.

One is the question of relevance, and that may be a question that is equally or better addressed by U.S. scholars studying the American situation. But as we heard before, some people say that the U.S. military and our culture are in a class by themselves. We have the most powerful military in the world. We have a more conservative culture than some of our allies, so the question there is what does the research say, if anything about how relevant these lessons are from other nations, how relevant they would be to ours, as well as how the change was imposed. Does it matter if the change comes from the military itself? If it comes from legislative or court decision, executive, et cetera, does that matter?

Second is the time when this happens, either during a war or not during a war, or whether this happens quickly or over the slow roll, is there research specifically that addresses that as opposed to simply experiential lessons?

And then the third one is the question of privacy, how important is privacy, and how important are attitudes given what we've just been saying. For instance, one concern has often been that recruitment and retention could suffer, and that even, if you show that the impact and cohesion is likely to be small, that people in the U.S. in particular, where there is a potentially a more conservative military subculture, could leave in droves.

And in Canada and Britain there were polls done before the bans were lifted that suggested that large majorities of people would refuse to serve with open gays and would actually leave. And yet when the bans were actually lifted, the number of people who left as a result of that could be counted on one hand in each of those countries as opposed to the thousands that had been predicted by those polls. So what, if anything, does the research tell us to help explain that?

So with apologies for the barrel of questions, I wanted to speed things along by asking them all at once, turning that over to any of you, and then we'll open it up to the audience.

DR. BASHAM: I'll take the one on privacy, I think. I think perhaps the key distinction that can be made here is between concerns and actual problems. I think that's kind of what I take from the kind of British concerns.

In 2002, when the MAD reviewed its policy change for the second time, the issue of showering and sharing accommodation with gay personnel was raised as an ongoing concern among some, at least some members of the UK Forces. So it didn't just go away. But I think that there are a number of kind of reasons why those sort of concerns that were spoken about didn't actually translate into significant problems -- headlines, you know, and so on -- and reports of difficulties in the military itself.

Firstly, for better or worse if you like, the number of personnel who disclosed their sexuality at that time so their peers was relatively small, and I think that, you know, coming out, if you like, is a very complex process, and we need to not kind of oversimplify that, and perhaps it warrants a little bit more attention from us as researchers.

But I think, you know, assessing the climate of your units is very important in undertaking that decision. So that would have been an interesting kind of thing to consider for individuals.

Secondly, in 2002, so around the same time of this review was carried out, MAD launched the single-living accommodation modernization project in the UK, in recognition that privacy is something that pretty much everyone these days regardless of their sexuality tends to value, and that single people should perhaps have similar rights to married couples in terms of having their own space, and that this could be an important issue for retention.

So alleviating concerns around privacy and sexual orientation may have been a byproduct. It wasn't the intention of a policy, but it may have been a byproduct of that very practical change.

And then, finally, I think that the absence of any major incidents around kind of privacy issues means that military personnel in the British military are perhaps more likely to trust the message that sexual orientation is not the same as sexual misconduct, as emphasized by the British social code of conduct. So I think that message is getting through.

DR. KAPLAN: I'll try to comment then to two things: First maybe, and the most important thing, implementation, the idea of getting to any implementation. There was a policy that was changed in 1993. As I said, nobody even knew about it, it wasn't such a big issue in the media either. The officers on the ground didn't know about it. And in 1998, as far as I could tell from a scholar who got a message from the IDF speaker, I think, just written in the Knesset, but to this day now we have simply no policy at all. So there wasn't an issue of implementation.

The only thing I can actually say, and I don't think it's even recorded anywhere, but I did get that from soldiers on the ground is that -- and that goes to the privacy issue -- is that a soldier, especially in basic training or in settings where they have to shower like very fast and sometimes together in the same barracks or showers, a soldier can ask, can address the social worker -- I think that's the term, the closest that I know; I don't know what's the military term -- in his unit and ask her, if she is a woman, to get showers, you know, in his private time, like to have his private seven minutes of the shower. That's the only kind of implementation that I had managed to figure out from what I hear on the ground or from military personnels.

And again, the message that comes from the IDF, basically, is that -- and we hear that all over the board are area panel that simply they don't deal with sexual orientation. It's not something that they deal with. I'm not sure that it's even something that they want to research in any way.

And I think I should say that there are advantages and there are drawbacks for that, because the advantage is, of course -- well, the drawbacks maybe first is that if soldiers have a problem, as a gay soldier, it's, well, they might have someone to approach, but they wouldn't know about it because nobody tells them that they have any special issues with the gay soldiers.

The advantage, though, is that unlike other minority groups in the IDF which are dealt with as a special group, first and foremost women, which there's a whole bunch of things done about women in the military, but also in new immigrants, so unlike those kind of minorities, getting no special treatment means that they're not -- gays and lesbians are not, you know, marked in any way as a special group. And I think marking can help you sometimes, but it's -- usually what it does, of course, is it can advance prejudices.

So that's the fact that there is no treatment, there is no temptation, there is just seems as business as usual, I think is beneficial for the gay and lesbian individuals.

DR. OKROS: A couple of quick comments. The U.S. is a unique military. Yeah, the U.S. has got kit that nobody else has got. There's no two ways about it. But the core of a military is people, and the social functioning, internally, within the military is identical from across huge numbers of militaries. We've done lots of comparative international research looking at the people part of it, leadership cohesion, these kinds of issues, they're very, very similar.

The other part that I would suggest with regards to what is being unique about the U.S. Services, during the Cold War, yes, the purpose of the U.S. military was to project force in accomplishment of national interests. I think the dialogue is changing in the U.S. It certainly has changed elsewhere. I think increasingly our citizens, including American citizens, are expecting their military to project values. And it's pretty hard to stand on the moral high ground, trying to go into other countries and help them establish peaceful working democracies if, at home, you're not living up to the kind of value statements that you're trying to promote elsewhere.

So I think increasingly people are going to be looking at the U.S. military, both domestically and internationally, in terms of the exemplar of what kind of values are you promoting?

Let me turn briefly to the question of the recruitment retention. Most militaries have the basis statement: You recruit the individual, you retain the family. We know that. We all know that. When we are denying that a certain number of members of the military do not have a family, they cannot talk about the family. That's going to be a real significant issue with regards to reenlistment and sustaining them.

And there's a deeper issue that I think we should also be paying attention to which has to do with psychological trauma. We've all recognized increasingly the amount of psychological pressure that we put on troops when we deploy them, the kinds of missions that we're putting them into. The research is very clear: Individuals who are socially isolated in their units are at increased risk for things like PTSD. Individuals that are not able to bring their loved ones, their families into providing social support are in increased difficulty in recovering from these sorts of issues. The U.S. Services are paying huge attention to this. This has become a big issue.

So I think it's important to think about what are the implications and consequences of putting people in -- they're volunteering to serve their country in uniform, putting them in harm's way, and then forcing them to deny who they are and forcing them to be somewhat differentiated and segregated, what is the risk that we're placing those individuals at? I think that's another broad question we need to be thinking about.

DR. OKROS: I'd just like to pursue the issue of relevance a little bit. One, first of all saying that I think it's a false argument to treat any culture as a monolithic, homogeneous entity. If you look across countries, usually there's more variability within any national culture than there is between cultures. And so I'm going to give you two kinds of arguments, I think, against the American exceptionalist argument.

One has to do with, I think, military practicality, and it's simply this: Is that if the U.S. military is so different from the Brits, from the Australians, from the Canadians, what are we doing together in coalition operations? If the cohesion in our unit is so fragile as to risk our operational effectiveness, then surely we must be unreliable partners.

The second point is really, I guess, an appeal to your better natures in the sense that from a sociocultural perspective, many countries still view America as it was imagined and is still yet to be as the promise of the Enlightenment. Remember that period? Thought, consideration for others, and so on. And in that respect I did a quick check on the Internet before I came here and looked at which countries allowed and which countries disallowed the service of homosexuals. So here, very briefly, the countries that disallow homosexuals for military service, either openly or otherwise: Cuba, China, Egypt, Greece, Iran, Jamaica, North Korea, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Singapore, South Korea, Syria, Turkey, Venezuela, Yemen. Is that really the club you want to belong to?

MR. FRANK: Thank you. We have about 15 minutes for Q&A. Please keep in mind the ground rules which are to wait for the mic, to identify yourself, and to be brief and ask a question.

Yes?

LTC. McLEAN: Lieutenant Colonel "Chip" McLean, United States Marine Corps.

I'm a fellow here at Brookings.

My quick question is, is that the secretary of defense has initiated a study group review here in the United States. And one of the things that's going to be done is a survey of both the troops and their families. And so I was wondering, with all of your experience, what would you offer as, if you were going to conduct a survey, what things should be looked at? What would be the most beneficial way to approach that survey so that you get the most benefit out of the time you're going to take to do the survey? What types of questions, or how should the questions be approached, et cetera?

DR. KAPLAN: Well, of course, you can ask many questions. One thing I recommend not to do, not to write a survey on which the title is "Homosexuality in the American Military," which is what almost all services have done. If you really want to do a survey that has some kind of validity, you have to see how the relation to homosexuality is compared to many other, let's say, minority issues. That's one way of doing it.

Another way of doing it is, for instance, doing what I've done in this survey is again asking think-questions about what's your thoughts about social cohesion and then also ask, do you know a black soldier in your know? Do you know a gay soldier in your unit? Do you know different kind of minorities? And, you know, this is what I've done in this survey. And there you have a better kind of sense if there's any meaning to knowing a gay soldier in that unit.

So I guess I would start with those kind of surveys. But it's a survey that you don't put on the title, you know, we're trying to ask about policies, implementations, what to do, what not to do, because this is just begging the question. It's really asking them, are you against or are you for it? Or of a question inside that kind of -- those average surveys really wouldn't matter so much.

MR. WENEK: And I'll extend on that with a couple of things. First of all, the U.S. Services, and I'd say compared to the '93 work which some of the RAND colleagues here were involved in, the U.S. Services now as period of time of a policy of "Don't Ask Don't Tell," but you generally kind of know. So, I mean, I think it's important to start asking people.

I mean, I have been talking to some of my American service colleagues, and, you know, yes, that are individuals saying, "I didn't know, but I was pretty certain," you know. So what

has that experience led to? What is it -- what have people seen? What has been the implication on that?

The other part is, again to go back to this, this is not about attitudes. This is about the issue of if there is a clear policy direction that comes down, are you prepared to live in accordance with it, and are you prepared to support it? I mean, those are the questions that need to be asked, you know. And I think that, then, provides us with the real interesting difference between, for example, in the Canadian context, the '86 research that didn't ask those sorts of questions, why people predicted there were going to be huge problems, and they didn't happen.

We asked the wrong question. You know, the question really was one of saying, you know, if there is clear policy that is stated, are you going to continue serving in uniform, or are you going to live in accordance with that policy? That's the key question to ask. And I would suggest you're going to find the vast majority of individuals are going to say, I'm here to serve my nation, and I'll serve my nation under whatever policy regime is put in place as long as it's clearly explained to me.

I think that's the kind of research we need to be thinking about.

DR. BASHAM: Can I -- I'd just like to kind of yet reemphasize that I think that's very similar to the British case, the 1996 report by the homosexuality policy assessment team had, you know, some very, very negative survey data and also some qualitative data around attitudes toward gay, lesbian, bisexual service personnel. But as we've heard, you know, what happened in 2000, you know, non-issue, non-event and so on. Well, what accounts for that gap, I think asking the right questions is vitally important. What are we fundamentally interested in? Are we interested in military readiness, military effectiveness? I think so.

That is the bottom line, and I think if those are the things that are concentrated on and focused in on in surveys in terms of, you know, how closely soldiers invest in core values and standards and ideas around, you know, behavior rather than attitudes, and I think that is the way to go. That's the way forward.

MR. FRANK: More questions? Yes, please wait for the mic and identify yourself.

MR. SHAUGHNESSY: Larry Shaughnessy, CNN.

Dr. Okros, you mentioned about the problem of people who feel ostracized in a unit, off by themselves, tend to be at higher risk for PTSD. How would a change in "Don't Ask Don't Tell" remove the ostracism, them being ostracized if a new policy can't force members of their unit to suddenly become more open-minded about homosexuality?

DR. OKROS: My comment is not so much that the other members of the unit, it's the gay member of the unit is the particular. That's where I'd start. I mean, I think we need to think about what are the consequences to somebody when they are in a group setting and, I mean, we know the military is a very much a group environment. You're in a group setting, and you're constantly, constantly have to engaging in self-censorship, and you cannot open up and talk about who you are and what's important to you. We need to understand what the psychological consequences are to individuals having to do that kind of thing.

The other part, though, and a colleague of mine, a military anthropologist, did some research looking at diversity in rifle company in combat in Afghanistan. She deployed with them and lived with them for a period of several months. And what she pointed out in her research is, the kind of diversity variables that we use just really don't count. It isn't about age, it isn't about gender, it isn't about race, it isn't about religion. The things that count are when it comes -- when there's tough stuff to be done, do you pitch in, you know? Are you a hard worker or are you a slacker?

The second one she pointed out is, are you a joiner versus a loner?

And the third one, which most of us know from deployments, when the goodie package comes from home, are you a sharer or are you a hoarder? Okay? And these are the things that really matter to soldiers, to troops, to units, Army, Navy, Air Force.

So the issue is that "Don't Ask Don't Tell" forces people to be loners. It forces people not to be accepted and seen as much of a joiner in the group as if they were able to talk more openly about who they are. If they can just bring personal relationships into the casual conversation the way the straight person can talk about their wife and their kids, for them to be able to talk about their partner allows them to bring a bit of their personal life into that domain and join in. By forcing them to have to constantly censor themselves, to regulate their behavior, to pretend to be somebody they're not is putting people at risk in a workday setting, let alone with the kind of stuff that we're

exposing folks to in the deployments they're on right now.

So I think we need to understand it from a psychological perspective of the individual who's trying to fit in, who's trying to serve, and is trying to succeed. So that's where I come at from that.

MR. FRANK: A quick addition to that I think terrific answer, using moderator's discussion, is we did a study at Palm Center that's on our website called "Gays and Lesbians at War," which assessed dozens of gay and lesbian service members who served in Iraq or Afghanistan in which they demonstrate, and they clearly explain how this policy forced them to isolate themselves. And, you know, if you're a hoarder or a sharer, that also goes for information, not just actual goodies.

And to keep in mind that this is a policy that imposes that kind of isolation from on high, even when at the unit level among young people today, it often matters much less than those policymakers who are imposing this isolation. And so people are trying to get around it in funny ways that are consistent with the policy.

And then, finally, in terms of diagnosis of PTSD and that sort of thing, there are severely constrained forms of access to, for gay and lesbian service members, to doctors and psychologists and even chaplains because, rightly or wrongly, people are concerned that those professionals may out them. And so these are some of the consequences that are spelled out in that "Gays and Lesbians at War."

Further questions? In the back. There's the microphone in the aisle.

MR. LLOYD: Good morning. I'm Mr. Lloyd from the Maryland State Department of Education.

We consider the military as a very important fabric of our democratic society, so with the religious sector, the academic sector, the political sector and business sector, and all of the sectors, then why is it, what do you think are the reasons, why is the military only the focus of this LGB issue, "Don't Ask Don't Tell?" Why are these things not plaguing the academic sector or other sectors? As I said earlier, why is the focus only on the military?

Thank you.

MR. WENEK: Okay, I'll risk an answer. One of the things that we've been talking around but haven't really quite put our finger on yet is the issue of trust within units. I mean, I can as a former military officer that one of the things you do very quickly in a unit is, as you form, develop, train, and so on, is you -- one of the questions, though, that's uppermost in your mind is, who can I trust? Who can I trust to get the job done? Who do I go to when I've got a difficult task and I know this person will see it through to the end?

So I think the same kind of dynamic is relevant to this discussion. Trust is critical to the effectiveness of military organization in terms of trust between peers, trust in leadership, trust in support elements. I mean, it is the glue that really holds the unit together and makes it work.

So out of the slow and progressive development of trust, then that opens the door to self-disclosure. Some of you may have had the experience of sitting in an airplane beside somebody who tells you all the embarrassing details of his or her life in the first five minutes. And it's a little awkward. You know, who is this person? I mean, that's not the norm, it does happen, but for most people, I think, it's the other way around, is that you only disclose personal intimate details when you have developed a trust relationship with that person.

So when the trust is there, then there will be a tendency for people to disclose, and the disclosure will assist in relieving the kind of problems that Alan's just been talking about, but at the bottom of it, in terms of why it's so big for the military is again, trust is important to effectiveness.

MR. FRANK: We're going to have to figure out a way to wrap this up in three minutes or so. The panelists, raise your finger if you have something to say as a final -- okay, it looks like we do. Okay. So, unfortunately, we won't do more questions, and what we'll just give each of the remaining three panelists some very quick closing time.

DR. BASHAM: I just wanted to pick up on that question and how I think it makes the British case. I mean, I've argued that one of the kind of ongoing issues in the British military is that although the overwhelming evidence points to task cohesion, in a lot of the doctrine and kind of directives in the British military, there is a sense of that the British military clings to somewhat unreflexive claims about its identity that are more social cohesion-based. And I think have got tremendous attempts to plant equality and diversity policies, including those pertaining to sexuality.

So in spite of this evidence on task cohesion, I think British military doctrine still emphasizes social cohesion as normative framework for its institutional identity. I think that the UK military has long seen itself as a heterosexual institution regardless of the realities on the ground, as it were, and it continues to reinforce this identity through various rituals and practices. And, as a result, this might mean that some within the forces may feel that there is a need to guards against such non-heterosexuality to preserve tradition, if you like.

And this may happen in parts on the decisions of gay and lesbian personnel on coming out and so on, and negotiating their role in the (inaudible) Armed Forces. And this is why, as has already been said, leadership, firm leadership, firm directives on the policy are vital, and they cannot be, I think, understated.

MR. FRANK: Dr. Okros, do you want to take a minute or so? Either or is fine.

DR. OKROS: The choice is to kind of restate something I already said, but I think it comes up from all of the two panels that we had just now. Maybe it's too late, because it's already this kind of working group starting to do some kind of project of checking the intimidation issues. But I think the key here is not to make it as a special treatment issue and just to change the legal status of this policy and let the military figure out how it's doing it, like all those other seven cases that we're hearing have been doing it, and not making it into the doctrine of how we change, because there is no doctrine. That's it.

MR. WENEK: The two -- I think it's important to pay attention to two of the broad academic discussions around this. Carol referred to one earlier. This is the sixth -- the 50-year discussion of the Huntington versus Janowitz model, and which kind of model does the U.S. military wish to be? Clearly, in the U.S. case, it's still somewhat up for discussion. It's not in most other cases, and then the Canadian Forces has clearly adopted the Janowitzian approach that's been reflected in doctrine, it's been reflected in practice on the ground. I think that literature is important to think about and pay attention to.

The other one which we haven't really -- which we talked around as well is part of the warrior identity in many militaries is it comes across as the combat male warrior. Militaries do tend to be hypermasculine. This has implications for those that do not fit into that narrow stereotype.

We're increasingly recognizing it is about brains, not brawn. It is about the individual's ability to exercise judgment and discretion. It is about changing the parameters within which people operate.

That are as many issues with regards to how feminine women can be in the military as there are how often can gays be, so we need to be putting it in a proper context.

And the last thing I'd say is we should put this one in the real perspective. I understand the concerns with regards to roots, the things that could happen between gays and straights when gays serve openly. I've heard the discussions about the fact that straights may be subject to all sorts of unwanted sexual attention from gays. The minute that anybody can assure me that there isn't a single woman serving in uniform that's subject to unwanted attention from her male colleagues, then start worrying about the gays picking on the straights.

I mean, let's put it in context. Let's pay attention to where the real issues and priorities are. Thanks.

MR. FRANK: Thank you. We are going to break now for lunch and reconvene at 1:30 for the third panel, which is "Command Experiences and Lessons Learned." Please give thanks, great thanks to our panelists for coming and sharing information. (Applause)

(Recess)

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE SERVICE OF GAYS AND LESBIANS IN ALLIED MILITARIES

Washington, D.C.  
Wednesday, May 19, 2010

PANEL 3: COMMAND EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS LEARNED:

PARTICIPANTS:

**Moderator:**

LIEUTENANT COLONEL CHARLES McLEAN  
USMC Federal Executive Fellow  
21st Century Defense Initiative  
The Brookings Institution

**Panelists:**

COMMANDER LUC CASSIVI  
Canadian Forces

LIEUTENANT COLONEL NICK GRIMSHAW  
Canadian Forces

LIEUTENANT COLONEL MICK KING  
Australian Army

COLONEL KEES MATTHIJSEN  
Royal Netherlands Army

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## PROCEEDINGS

LTC. McLEAN: Okay, good afternoon, everybody, and welcome back from lunch, and welcome to those of you who may just be joining us.

We're going to continue our discussions here, but, now, we're going to move to a totally different level. What I'd like to say at this point is that what we've discussed here this morning previously was we've talked at the policy level, we've talked at the Department of Defense or the Ministry of Defense level, as it were. And then, after that, we talked at the scholarly level, at the studies from the academics who have been studying and researching in this area for quite some time. But what we thought was important to do today and specifically now was to go and talk where you take the policy and theory and the studies and you actually have to apply those things to lead men and women into combat. And, so, we decided to have a commander's panel here.

As many of you may know, command is extremely difficult to task, but I wouldn't really call it so much a "task" as those of us, I think, in command, at times, look at it as a privilege and an honor to go ahead and do that. but it can be a daunting duty. You have to balance a lot of things: You have to balance the mission and you have to balance morale and the welfare of your people and their families. And, so, that task can, at times, be difficult when you have to translate the policies that come from on high and make them work down among the men and the women.

So, what we want to bring out here today is we've talked at that level, we want to now talk about the nuts and bolts, how it's worked.

I would argue sometimes that a lot of what the Ministry says, it's been no impact, no issue, et cetera. I don't discount that, but what I would say is that a lot of those issues, if they're there, get headed off at the company, at the battalion level, and at the regimental level, and they never reach their way up into the MOD. They may not get reported. Unless there is something particularly heinous or horrible, you're probably not going to hear about them because men and women, commanders, staff NCOs, NCOs, take care of the situation as is appropriate, and those are the guys who really have to balance personal issues with accomplishing the mission.

So, today, we have the privilege of hosting four distinguished senior unit leaders who have vast experience doing the things about which I just talked. Combined, these officers here

before you have over 100 years of experience of leading men and women in the defense of their nations to include the recent conflicts. What is more important, I think, actually, is the majority of that time, that 100 years of service, their countries have had inclusive policies. So, I don't think that they come from any position where they can't say that they're had experience in dealing with these issues. Whether or not it has come up is an issue. It may also be a point that they'll bring out, but, also, the fact is that they may have had experience.

So, with that 100 years of service, we'd like to go ahead and do some introductions, if I may. They're in your handouts there, but real briefly, I want to go ahead and bring out a couple of highlights from each of these men's careers.

Our first panelist is Commander Luc Cassivi, has tremendous experience. Again, when I looked in how this panel was filling out, I was in awe because these men have incredible track records, and that's coming obviously from a Marine officer. I'm looking at these and going wow, you guys really have some tremendous experience.

Luc Cassivi has commanded men at both three submarines as well as a submarine division and a sea training group, and he's presently the commanding officer of 225 men of the Halifax Class Frigate, the HMCS Ville De Quebec.

Next, Lieutenant Colonel Nick Grimshaw is a decorated infantry man from the prestigious Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry Regiment. He has both combat command experience in Afghanistan, as well as extensive training in the art and science of military leadership, and is currently the J5 at the Canadian Special Operations Force Command.

Next to him is Lieutenant Colonel Mick King, who joins us today from the Australian Embassy after a long arduous walk down the street -- (Laughter) -- where he is responsible for joint personnel and logistics. He is an experienced logistics officer with 28 years of service who has commanded soldiers deployed to both East Timor and the Middle East.

And we are pleased to have Colonel Kees Matthijssen here today. Colonel Matthijssen has extensive operational command experience leading Dutch infantry men during peacekeeping and Bosnia Herzegovina and combat in both Iraq and Afghanistan. He is currently attending the U.S. Army War College as challenging strategic level residence course, due to

graduate here in a few short weeks.

Just to reiterate our rules, please keep your remarks and the follow-on responses succinct, preferably no more than two minutes so we can cover as much ground as possible, and then I will open it up to the audience once we've concluded some moderator questions.

Indifference to his rank and experience, I'd like to start with Colonel Matthijssen.

COL. MATTHIJSEN: Thank you very much for this great introduction. I think you set the standard pretty high after lunch.

Before I start my introductory remarks, I would like to ask you a question, and you don't have to answer it, but just think of it: What did you do in 1974? 1974 was the year that the ban was lifted in the Netherlands, and Aaron mentioned it in his introduction. I think we were the first one on that. But I will not stick too much in history; I will look towards my command experience and what I think is important in a command job to make it all happen.

Before I do that, I want to mention a few things out of the last survey that has been done in the Dutch Armed Forces, and that was in 2006, and, if I'm right, in 2010, so, this year, we will have a new survey. The results of the 2006 survey were that the majority of defense personnel, being 90 percent, believes that gays and lesbians should be free to live their own life. And, within that survey, also, gays and lesbians were interviewed in the Dutch Armed Forces, and they reported that the working environment in the Armed Forces in the Netherlands is benign for homosexuals. Although open discrimination is rare, there are experiences that are not exclusively positive, but these are kind of the minor things, so to say, more at the individual level. So, average, the outcome is very positive.

And the last remark on that, 25 percent of the homosexuals in armed forces are not open at work about their homosexuality, but 75 percent are, which is quite a high number, I would say.

Now, what do I think as a commander is important. I think what really counts down at the grassroots level is that the working climate and the atmosphere within a unit is the most important. What I always say is that you have to give your soldiers two things: That is a challenging mission and that is a good atmosphere and a good climate within the unit to be able for them to fulfill

that mission. And it is the profession that counts. It's the behavior and the profession of the soldiers that counts and not his sexual preference or whatever diversity.

Within that, it's also important to act normal, I always say. Be who you are and accept others the way they are. And within that climate, so, have the room to discuss any issue that there might be and hold your soldiers accountable on their behavior and on their profession and not any other things because, in the end, every man or woman that joins the Army is motivated to do a job, is motivated to serve his or her nation and to pay, in the end, if deployed, the highest possible price on that.

I think that's the bottom line. I think within that atmosphere, that climate, I think there is a good and a safe working environment for homosexuals, as well. I'll leave it at that.

LTC. McLEAN: Thank you.

LTC. KING: Well, thank you very much for allowing me to be here to speak with you today about my command experiences. As General Willis said, this is a strange very much of a principle of our believing in a (inaudible). And, for us, it's about a respect and a strong focus on your ability to do your job. It's not about your sexual orientation, your color, or your creed. It's about you doing a job and literally pulling your weight as part of a team.

The policy was implemented in Australia when I was a junior officer. (inaudible) some gnashing of teeth by some individuals, for the most part, the policy came and it went. And everyone just got on, and there's no discernable change that anybody could see, and I was at the junior level as I looked in at that stage.

Certainly, for commanding at a battalion level and below, it's about unit cohesiveness and delivering operational effectiveness. And I'll speak about some (inaudible) later on, but, from my experience, sexual orientation just doesn't matter. All groups need to pull together to be able to deliver a result and to deliver on the mission, and that's simply what it is, but it's about all groups, not a group, it's about all groups. And no group being treated any different from any other. It's quite a fundamental part of all of that.

In terms of small groups, as been alluded to earlier this morning, most people in a small group know who is who. They know who's good, who's bad, who does particular things that

they shouldn't and things that they should. So, it's no surprise to people out there, generally, who's orientated a particular way or not. But what people do concern themselves with is whether they pull together as part of a team, and that can isolate people.

The (inaudible) is leadership. You have to believe in it, you have to establish an organizational climate which has trust. People have to trust commanders, but the point for that is commanders need to be given the resources, the policy, and the authority to be able to make decisions in a flexible way, as well.

Thank you.

SPEAKER: Good afternoon. Thank you very much. I don't want to sound like a broken record, but I'm afraid that a lot of the comments will be echoed from my point of view. But in truly military fashion, I'll start with a bottom line upfront. That it is truly not an issue for us, and it was not for me and my soldiers in Afghanistan in our recent operations.

As a subunit commander, I was not interested in whether or not any of my soldiers were gay, lesbian, or bisexual. What mattered to me was how well they did their job, not what sexual orientation they were. An individual is judged by their competence and their primary job. Like all soldiers, we're judged by our loyalty, integrity, honesty, and professionalism. For me, a soldier who demonstrated a lack of any of these essential soldier qualities was a source of greater concern to scrutiny than anyone who was openly gay or lesbian.

In 2006, I was an infantry company commander in Afghanistan, and we conducted counterinsurgency operations in various districts in Kandahar involving numerous actions with the enemy. And one of my soldiers was a lesbian. It was no secret to the unit. In fact, she was in a common law relationship, that administrative paperwork had been signed off by the chain of command to recognize that, and she was employed as a squad second in command and a light-armored vehicle crew commander. She was extremely competent, very well-respected by her peers, subordinates, and superiors, and I'm happy to report that since that time, she's been promoted to the rank of sergeant and actually returned to Afghanistan in 2008 for another tour, and she was, in fact, a pallbearer for a Ramp Ceremony of another fellow soldier who served with us at that time. She's currently employed as an instructor at our infantry school where she's teaching junior officers and

non-commission members' basic infantry tactics based on her experience in Afghanistan and elsewhere. She continues to provide outstanding service and is extremely well-respected by all her companions.

One's sexual orientation is truly a private concern. The decision to declare or admit one's sexual preference is a personal decision. However, I believe it is counterproductive to not provide an environment where soldiers are free to admit their sexual orientation without fear of reprisals, prejudice, or career implications. For us, I believe it contradicts our social norms.

As a commander, I'd rather have honest soldiers who are not afraid to admit who they are rather than soldiers who deny accusations or live in a constant state of fear and stress. Otherwise, people are continually concerned about offending others and saying the wrong thing at the wrong time, perhaps inadvertently. But, also, in a close-knit unit, like an infantry company, everyone is left guessing whether or not an individual is a certain way or not, and, as we've already mentioned, the soldiers know at the end of the day. But this depends on commanders establishing and maintaining an environment where soldiers are not concerned about reprisals or repercussions, and without an accommodating environment, soldiers will be less than honest with their chain of command and peers, and this contradicts our soldiers' ethos, in my opinion.

Another consideration is the possible negative effect on gay and lesbian soldiers who are afraid to declare that they are in a relationship and have a spouse, particularly with deployments. We have a military family resource center that's set up to assist with those families left behind when a member deploys, and when there is a gay or lesbian member of the unit who is unwilling to report that they have a spouse, often, they are at odds, as we learned this morning, more susceptible to not being included in the group, and can have an adverse effect on their personal operational effectiveness on the battlefield if they're more concerned about their loved ones back home not being looked after.

At the end of the day, I believe it comes down to leadership. As I mentioned, a person's sexual orientation has no bearing on how well they do their job, and, so, it should not be a factor. If a soldier was harassing others or racist or prejudice or was fraternizing with a member of his or her chain of command and it was affecting their ability to do their job or having a negative

effect on the unit, the chain of command would deal with it. Straight, gay, lesbian, or bisexual, it simply doesn't matter.

In an infantry unit, as you can well imagine, it's about working as a team. Brothers in arms, comrades in arms. It's an environment that demands integrity, honesty, loyalty and professionalism. Part of being a professional, I believe, is accepting people from different backgrounds, races, creeds, religions, and indeed, sexual orientation. Gay or lesbian soldiers are just as effective as straight soldiers. It does not mean they'll be less trustworthy or less brave. As I said, it's simply not an issue for me.

SPEAKER: Good afternoon, it's a pleasure to be here, and I'd like to start with a bit of light humor and say that for most of us gays, we think that straights should be allowed to live their life the way they want to in uniform.

The charter was a great tool that forced some social change, and I won't cover the same grounds because we've been there, but the directive that came down from our leaders was very clear and was lawful. And at the end, most of us on the commission, whichever service we're in, have sworn to carry on lawful orders. So that brought the framework to put personal beliefs and professional duty in the right mindset to bring that around.

The charter forced us not just to look at sexual orientation from a discrimination point of view, but other elements of religions and the like, so we had a framework that was very well oriented from a state of menace to what is our core value and how do we really consult some of the differences that we've had in the past. And the value of service is really what defines us. Anyone that goes through the process of joining training and wears a uniform wants to serve their country.

So respecting that core value and creating the environment in which nondiscrimination could take place, and then applying a principal of procedural fairness in the way we bring those rules to bear at the unit level as we manage the different cases that come, that it be of discipline, that it be of administrative issues, personal management issues or training issues.

It's getting to core what's the problem, respecting the base of service, and making sure that everybody is treating the same way. And that's really one of the important climates in the management of those issues. At the end of the day, and I think most would agree, if you look at the

history of gays in the military during the wars and during conflict, the key issue comes to competence, okay. Competence will bring respect. The fact that we can trust a person because of their competence, that we can put our lives in their hands when on missions is what builds the bonds that exist between service members in combat units. No different in submarine, no different in a ship, slightly difference in the sense that, you know, especially as a captain, I am the dictator of a very small country or a very small city, so they have to suffer me a little bit more than they would otherwise.

But it's creating that climate in which people can be themselves, truly be themselves, comfortable being at work, and then they can be the most productive and contribute the most that he can to the unit, and that's how you build cohesion, and that's how you build operational effectiveness. Thank you.

SPEAKER: Thank you all very much. Go ahead and ask a couple questions here. The first thing I wanted to discuss was, one of the concerns that a lot of commanders have is the privacy issue. It rings -- it's an easy argument that gets brought up. This is like men and women, sir, I don't -- I shouldn't have to take a shower or live with him because it's like men and women. I think, again, when that argument comes out, it's brought up as -- from a very heterosexual point of view, obviously. So have you had any instances where your soldiers or sailors have said -- have used that argument, and if they did, if, for example, they did, how did you handle that situation? Yeah, whoever wants to start.

SPEAKER: Well, I come from a different environment where actually for a number of -- the first 15 years of my career probably the shower at sea issue was a luxury, being a diesel electric -- so when we had the chance to take one, we didn't argue too much and we took it. We haven't had significant issue, and actually in our submarines, we have mixed messing with female sailors, as well as straight men and homosexual men.

And we have a very open base management, so there's a minimum standard of dress that's required. And then we have for the ladies or for those who decide to segregate, they use the officers' heads basically because it's the only one that's kind of semi-private from a shower perspective, so it's been very easy to manage.

Our bond in that environment is very dictated by the unique culture of what it is we do. And once we're at sea, we haven't had much issue with sexual identity or any other identity issue. Actually we don't mind slightly odd people in submarines as long as they're competent, and we know that if things go bad, they know which valve to turn and how to operate the system. So a very unique culture in itself, but we haven't experienced major problems there.

SPEAKER: If I can give an infantry perspective, I think, Nick, you wanted to jump in there?

COL. GRIMSHAW: Sure, I think it sort of comes with the territory, you know. An infantry soldier shouldn't expect to receive a whole lot of privacy, especially in operations, so you have to understand what you're getting into, male, female, straight or gay, it doesn't matter, privacy is something that is not necessarily in abundance in an infantry unit on operations.

We do, however, in the Canadian military, provide a level of privacy between male and female soldiers, so that, in fact, my clerk was a female, as well. And she and this Section 20C, the lesbian NCM in my company, shared quarters, and we put the women together.

I've never experienced any situation where a homosexual in a unit has said, hey, I need to have my own space, because, quite frankly, every member of the unit would like to have their own space at some point regardless of what sexual orientation they are. So -- and, as you know, and as a small unit, as we've already said, the troops know what's going on, they knew who the people are who have a gambling problem, they know who the people are who have more cars than they can afford, they know who likes to watch cartoons and who's good at video games, and who is not very trustworthy, and so privacy will always be an issue, but we don't go out of our way to separate straight from homosexual and lesbian, not at all.

SPEAKER: For privacy, I've had no experience with it. In fact, Nick's comments about privacy -- people get in their room and screen, there's a combination that's provided for, this is possible. I've never, in my experience, had any privacy arguments put to me.

SPEAKER: Yeah, me neither, never had any issue. And like Nick said, especially within infantry units, at the squad and the platoon level, they live 24/7, if you're, like, in missions, like, in Afghanistan or wherever, and I've seen it in Bosnia, where they live for 14 or 20 days on an

outpost where they're quartered with their platoon, privacy is not an issue. And it's also about the team work and the way that they deal with each other, you know, it settles itself. It's about respect, mutual respect, it's about understanding, it's about trust within that level to deal with it.

SPEAKER: I guess the next question is, have any of you had any experiences where there was inappropriate conduct by homosexuals, and then, if so, how was that handled?

SPEAKER: Never.

SPEAKER: Never; hasn't happened to me yet. You know, I would echo the problem, the statements that were made in previous panels, most of the inappropriate behavior issues we have to deal with come in environments where, you know, sometimes it's an alcohol problem, sometimes it's, you know, the files that have come through my desk, military reports of activities that they place -- have nothing to do with sexual orientation whatsoever. There are, you know, social -- more social group issues, too much partying and a loss of good judgment at the moment, but none that's related to sexual orientation.

SPEAKER: I've never experienced homosexual inappropriate conduct in the unit that I've served in. But as a former adjutant, we have removed people for inappropriate conduct between a section commander and one of his soldiers, for example, a male-female relationship, because it's inappropriate fraternization within the chain of command. So the same action would have taken place whether it was a heterosexual or a homosexual relationship by the chain of command.

SPEAKER: I've had no experience of homosexual inappropriate behavior. There's been plenty of sort of inappropriate behavior between heterosexual relations, but they mostly end up involving, you know, alcohol excessively and poor judgment, but nothing specifically on sexual orientation.

SPEAKER: I kind of follow on to that, though. What about instances of conduct that are acceptable: public displays of affection, such as like holding hands, hugging, kissing, those types of things? Did these cause disruptions in a unit if or when they did occur? And do you guys enforce a similar standard for heterosexuals in this regard?

SPEAKER: That one is pretty easy. Within our Dutch Armed Forces, we have a

Code of Conduct or a behavior code, like we said, and that applies to everybody, whether you're a homosexual or a heterosexual. It's not appropriate when you're in uniform doing your job to go kissing or hugging or whatever in your uniform, and that's equal to everybody. So we don't accept that and we hold people accountable for that. And then comes the leadership issue again to hold people accountable for that, if they do so, refer to the Code of Conduct and say, hey, this is not appropriate, you should not do this, but it applies to all categories.

SPEAKER: If I could follow with that, the issue is not about a particular group. As a commander, what we are trying to do is create an environment which is open for all, and so, therefore, the policy needs to apply to all. So if there is something that occurs, you know, inappropriate conduct for a particular organization, we'll all get treated exactly the same as everybody else, so that all servicemen, women, soldiers, sailors, marines and the like, they know that it applies to them. And, therefore, that develops that trust in the chain of command that everybody will be looked after and treated the same.

And so the policy that needs to be set to support commanders needs to apply to everybody, not to a particular group. And it's not been my experience that sexual orientation creates any sort of discernable sort of -- anywhere.

SPEAKER: I have nothing to add, I echo the same comments. It's one policy for all members of the service regardless of sexual orientation, so.

SPEAKER: Okay. Looking at this actually from a combat point of view, I want to start directing the questions so that we can kind of cover a little bit more ground. Colonel, have you noticed in your experiences in leading the troops in combat, have you said that the heterosexual troops treat the homosexual troops of gays and lesbians any differently in terms of levying tasks or missions upon them or ostracizing them or any of that?

SPEAKER: The answer is pretty simple. I've been in operations at company, battalion and brigade level, it has never been an issue. It's about the profession, it's about the professional duty, and it's about, you know, fitting that into the team work, and that's the way it goes. It has not been an issue, in my experience, never.

SPEAKER: Any issues with that?

SPEAKER: I'd just add that it goes back to the issue of competence. When you see this kind of behavior that you're, again, that you're straight, gay, that you're whatever group that's visible and visible minority, it's going to show up and it's more an issue of competence. You look at training failures and issues that you need to correct from that perspective, but it has really nothing to do with sexual orientation.

SPEAKER: Okay. The next one goes to implementation. And what I'm looking at here is, what policies, and this is mostly to Lieutenant Colonel King and Lieutenant Colonel Grimshaw and Cassivi, who were there during the repeal process, were in the service, what policies do you think were particularly effective? If you had to single out something that really worked in your mind, what would it have been from when the policy was changed that helped you and your fellow officers to handle the transition?

COL. KING: I think from my experience very much is that, you know, we in the Australian Defense Force, has annual equity and diversity training which addresses all the groups. So the best thing about it is, you're not singling out a group, you're just -- that each group and each -- you need to be equitable, and we respect diverse organizations and diverse people and how it strengthens. So it's not particularly aimed at the sexual orientation, it's just aimed at the group and has everyone working together as a team, and that's a very, very important message that needs to be, not continually reinforced, but sent to people as they progress through different stages of the organization, either entering it, leaving it or moving throughout it.

SPEAKER: For my experience in the late '90s, there was mandated mandatory diversity training, a sharp training program, I can't remember what the exact acronym was, but -- and it was mandated from the top down and enforced, everyone had to attend this training.

SPEAKER: But it wasn't geared towards just homosexual acceptance within the units. It was religion. It was the introduction, or the acceptance, of aboriginal Canadians in our military. So it was the entire spectrum.

And it was an education program for all ranks because, quite frankly, we needed a bit of a course correction in our military at the time. And it has been extremely beneficial because I think it

reset that sort of azimuth for us, or the moral compass, to make sure that we were indeed in line with the rest of Canadian norms and values. So it was a good thing.

CDR. CASSIVI: Yes, I would echo that because of, as I mentioned in my opening remarks, the application of the charter across the entire spectrum, what really helped, it's nothing was particularly aims, except the statement that there was no discrimination against homosexuals. The policies came very quickly. The change to the administrative policy, to the benefit policies, recognition of same sex couples within our common law status inside the Canadian forces -- all came very quickly thereafter. So it made the application of that transition very easy because the signal was very clear that we were being all inclusive.

If it had been slower, the honesty of the statement and the desire to see it through may have been questioned by some. The application, both from the service members who were gays trying deal with the issue and settle out of to those that were opposed to it, being committed to the change may have been questionable. But I think what really helped is it was a very comprehensive adjustment in a very short period of time where all the elements have been put in place that needed to be put in place, for people to be treated absolutely fairly.

LTC. McLEAN: Okay. The next thing I wanted to talk about was the partner benefits because at the unit level, obviously, you have to incorporate the families into the unit because that tends to really build a lot stronger. As we said, you recruit soldiers, but you retain families. So one of the things is have you had instances of including and how were gay and lesbian partners folded into the family group?

There is some concern among the spouse groups that they won't fit into those groups. Has that been an issue, trying to involve partners into family unit functions?

CDR. CASSIVI: I think I'll open on that one. It hasn't been a problem, actually quite the opposite. I found that most wives are quite happy to meet the gay partner, and they exchange notes on a whole bunch of home-front issues. They realize at the end it's no different. They're spouses. They have the same issues they've living with. Their partner is being deployed and things of that nature. So they already have a base there that they can understand themselves and build up on the relationship and be in full acceptance.

My personal experience has been of an element, particularly from my coworkers and their wives, an element of curiosity -- one, getting to know people and then realizing that they're not that different altogether. Yeah, there's no big deal here. So I think it's, from a social phenomenon, not a big problem.

Actually, most of society, particularly in Canada, have coworkers, even have siblings that are gay, and it's less of an issue than we think at their level.

LTC. GRIMSHAW: I think for the Military Family Resource Center, as I mentioned, that support network that exists, it is very inclusive. We mention please submit the particulars of your spouse or significant other, so that they can assist with the families while a member is deployed. But at the end of the day, it's the individual's decision whether or not they partake in that service, whether it's a straight couple or a homosexual couple.

So as long as they have, the individual has, the option to participate, I think that's the key. But excluding them is counterproductive, and it creates more consternation for the service member in the end.

LTC. KING: I'd certainly agree with what Nick said. When I was battalion commander, we would run regular family morning teas. There would be the battalion ball. There would be a whole range of different social activities to invite families to, and it could be anyone from boyfriend/girlfriend to partner, whatever sexual orientation.

Very good, because what it actually does it reinforces inclusiveness. It reinforces that we are looking after you as a family group, regardless of whether you're a single or a boyfriend/girlfriend or the like. So, in fact, all groups garner a lot of support that we are there to help them, and you can pass the message about.

But as Nick says, you can put it on, whether they attend or not. It doesn't matter. They will learn.

COL. MATTHIJSEN: In fact, after everything that has been said, what's important is that homosexual partners, so to say, have the same right as straight soldiers and partners, heterosexual partners.

And what I do think is also important is that, and that also came out of the survey in 2006, is do

not make a big issue of it. You know. Act normal. See it as normal. That makes the acceptance a lot better, and that's also the perception of homosexual personnel within the armed forces. Do not make a big issue of it.

LTC. McLEAN: So I guess real quick, down the line, family housing, the gay couple moving into the straight couple and family housing because that military environment there is seen as very tight knit -- kids, et cetera. I don't know if you have any experience with that. But any issues?

CDR. CASSIVI: None whatsoever.

LTC. McLEAN: Is that it, down the line?

LTC. GRIMSHAW: I haven't experienced any issues with that either, no.

LTC. McLEAN: No complaints or problems?

LTC. GRIMSHAW: Not that I'm aware of.

LTC. KING: We haven't had any issues. A lot of our military housing now is off-base as well, which is a bit different. It's dispersed through the community which in some sense makes it easier. But certainly I've had female lieutenant in an interdependent relationship with another lesbian captain, and they've applied for married quarters and got it and lived, and then gone and got their own place. And nobody has batted an eyelid.

COL. MATTHIJSEN: Well, we don't have the military housing like you have here in the States. So that is a difference because from that perspective the military life, so to say, and the family life is much closer integrated here in the States than it is our country because we don't have families living on bases. So, from that perspective, it's a difference.

LTC. McLEAN: Okay, jumping next to the HIV issue, has there been any concerns among your men and women about combat field transfusions, emergency medical procedures and the transmission? What do you have in place to prevent those problems from occurring?

COL. MATTHIJSEN: I think that overall, also based on my experience, our personnel has really a lot of confidence in the medical system, and from that perspective it has never been an issue. And within that system, we have all kinds of regulations that make that everything they do and everything that is dealt with is trustworthy, is in accordance with the regulations, et cetera. So, no issue at all.

LTC. KING: For ours, there is no issue. There's a medical screen, but it's for everybody. Transfusions come from anybody as long it's passed the medical screening and the like. So people don't see HIV, Australian soldiers don't see HIV as a specific sexual orientation issue.

LTC. GRIMSHAW: I would argue that we're more concerned about drug users and the fact that somebody who is taking illicit drugs in a unit that's deployed is far more of a concern because they may be far more unreliable and not have their wits about them, than guys who are concerned about contracting HIV/AIDS.

CDR. CASSIVI: We do have national policies on blood services and the pre-screening of people as to if you have a lifestyle in which you may have more chance of being exposed, that you're precluded from giving blood. So there's a whole process for the security of the blood and the blood system, and that's been proven through time, and people are educated at that level. So it's really not a problem from that perspective.

The rest of the themes have been covered.

LTC. McLEAN: Okay. A next question is about it's kind of a special status. Have there been any instances where unit level personnel have been ordered to participate in community events, LGBT, Gay Pride Parades, those types of things? What is the policy on participation in those types of events, or sponsorship of those events?

COL. MATTHIJSEN: We do have the pride event every year, like most countries do. Our approach has been very open of the last few years. As long as there's respect of the uniform, people are encouraged, if they so desire, to participate in events. But that's really where our line is.

Respect the uniform and, yes, go ahead and celebrate. Recognize the fact that you're part of a great institution that respects the diversity of this country, and that you can serve freely, and we'd encourage others to do so.

LTC. KING: We have the defense Gay and Lesbian Information Service which is on the Internet as well. They've participated in the Sydney Mardi Gras on a number of occasions now. Nobody is ordered to participate in it. It's voluntary.

They don't wear uniforms when they participate, but that's twofold, which I think is understandable as well. When you wear the uniform, then there's conduct that comes with wearing

the uniform. So, where some people might like to relax in a parade and march with their families and enjoy it, you can't necessarily do that when you're wearing a uniform, regardless of whether you're in a heterosexual parade for something or otherwise.

But nobody is ordered, and certainly the defense is represented in those parades.

CDR. CASSIVI: Our policies, I think likewise it is in Canada. Homosexuals are allowed to join in things like Pink Saturday or that type of event, but it has to be sure that those events are kind of decent, so to say -- so not extravagant or excessive type of events. That's not appropriate. But let's say the normal type of events where it's appropriate to wear a uniform and it fits in the type of event it is, people are free to do so.

LTC. McLEAN: Okay. I guess one last question. It has to do with assignments. Have there been any problems with foreign governments, such as giving orders to personnel to Saudi Arabia or to other countries, to including even the United States, where there's a policy or local laws against homosexuality? Has that ever come up as an issue?

CDR. CASSIVI: We've had a few experiences with that, particularly I've had personal friends who were posted to the United States on exchange at the time and were in a same-sex relationship. Our government stood by them as declared by our rules, and eventually the discomfort that existed was put in perspective, and the person was allowed to come and complete their exchange posting.

That being said, there are unique situations. I do have sailors who have been offered foreign posting in the U.S., for example, and have decided to not go because of sexual orientation because they didn't want to feel like they would need to go back into the closet or they didn't feel they could be as open as they are in Canada about who they are and decided to opt out of their posting. That was a personal friend. There were other circumstances, but at the end there's a choice process that goes through.

LTC. GRIMSHAW: I don't have any experience of actual assignments or knowing of personnel who were reluctant to be assigned to a certain area. But in certain leave centers, when soldiers are transiting from operations to places such as the Middle East, where there are strict alcohol policies and things like that, soldiers are, we say, read the riot act. They're read the rules and regulations for the environment that they're in, and it's no different than what kind of rules are allowed

for homosexuality in the environment I would argue. So it's just the same thing.

LTC. KING: I have no real experience with the personal issues on that from my own experience, but I understand that we've had a couple of occasions where it caused a bit of consternation for some, but they then worked through it on an individual level between countries.

COL. MATTHIJSEN: I don't have any specific experience, but I know that on the individual cases, if it would be an issue, that will be looked upon and the organization would be looking for a solution for that specific case, if that would be the case.

LTC. McLEAN: All right. At this time, we've got about 15 minutes left. So I'd like to go ahead and open it up to the floor for questions.

Yes, on the far right?

SPEAKER: Yes, my name is Stefan Stint . I work with the Veterans and Military Families for Progress, and I'm just here out of interest.

I'm sure you heard in the debate in this country over getting rid of the Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy an oft-stated parallel has been the integration of the armed forces back in the late 1940s by President Truman. I mean, the formal integration in was in 1948 and then for a while after that it was certainly a work in progress all the way through Vietnam. I believe by the late '40s most of the other countries had also dispensed with any sort of segregation of the races in the militaries and as I mentioned, it's been a controversial thing to use as a parallel.

I was wondering, I think it was Colonel Grimshaw you mentioned in the diversity training about indigenous Canadians, I guess my question is, how have historically the minority service members been integrated into your militaries and if you see that as a legitimate parallel to this issue?

LTC. GRIMSHAW: Certainly for the Canadian Infantry we've had a history of aboriginal Canadians in our ranks for many, many years, and they've been received in different ways depending on the command climate of the units. And there's some famous histories of aboriginals who've done well in the Korean War and places like that.

It was all grouped together in terms of the overall diversity training that we went through so it wasn't targeted specifically at one religion or color or creed. It was to be all-inclusive, to

be more accepting so that there was no prejudice and there was no opportunity for prejudice, and so everyone had equal opportunity and it was just reinforced. Everyone always had equal opportunity but it was reinforced again in a more structured manner to prevent people from having those prejudice views of, well, this individual's gay and, therefore, can't be trusted and couldn't be a commanding officer, and that's absolute rubbish.

So, I think -- I'm not sure if I'm answering your question completely, but it wasn't targeted specifically at one group. It needed to be across the entire spectrum for diversity within the CF.

CDR. CASSIVI: And if I may, I think, what you asked about the parallel is at the end, I mean, I always, when I talk to (inaudible) I always talk about, well, we're the invisible minority as opposed to the visible minority so there are parallels, particularly in the way you adapt policy and the way you approach the problem from a leadership perspective. So it's worth the discussion, I think, when you go through the process. Is it an absolute perfect parallel? No, nothing always is because the stigma or the discomfort is quite different, but if you create an environment in which people are valued for a common value, then you can have that framework and bring all that part.

LTC. McLEAN: Next question. Yes, sir, right there.

MR. BAXLEY: Thank you. I'm Larry Baxley. I'm a gay Navy veteran. I was an intelligence officer for 16 years. My question is -- I have two questions.

First of all, we lobbied Congress last week, about 400 of us, and during that presentation we represented data that one of the biggest concerns that the active duty military had was opening up a new class of equal opportunity complaints. Have you gentlemen seen an increase in complaints from a discrimination standpoint from your homosexual service members? That's my first question.

And the second one is, there is a time when public displays of affection becomes acceptable, and that's a homecoming, a ship pulls back into a pier, families are down there, people go out, they hug, they kiss. Has the homosexual homecoming been a problem in your militaries?

CDR. CASSIVI: From the homecoming point of view, no, and actually, you're right, standards change and those events, some level of display of affection is absolutely normal and

would be inhuman to put the hammer down on that one, for lack of a better perspective. So, I would agree with that.

As far as discrimination complaints, you know, in workplace there's always conflict resolution elements that needs to take place from time-to-time because there are misperceptions as to, I think this person is being hard on me and there's a misunderstanding as to why this relationship is developing that way. But as far as pure discrimination, very little, actually, I say that quick transition and changing of the rules kind of made the process neutral because everybody was being treated the same so it did not create a whole bunch of stigma and an excess burden of administrative workload as a consequence of it actually. Because the package was complete, it wasn't done just halfway; it was relatively complete fairly quickly.

LTC. KING: From our end there was no new increase in equal opportunity complaints at all. Again, I think that, you know, when you've got a policy that addresses everybody and everybody sees that it's applied fairly and equally and equitably, it reinforces the trust in the system, so nobody feels as though they're necessarily any worse off than somewhere else. It's when you actually do discriminate that (inaudible) for you.

In terms of public displays of affection, you know, we have a conduct and discipline act and we talk about, you know, behavior on base and we talk about behavior off base. It applies to everybody, doesn't matter who it is. So, there's been no differentiation between sexual orientation and public displays of affection.

COL. MATTHIJSEN: Yeah, that's the same for us in the Netherlands, like Mick said.

LTC. McLEAN: Okay, Peter.

MR. SINGER: It strikes me there's two things here -- sorry, Pete Singer from Brookings. There's often a difference between generational views on this topic, and we're seeing that in the U.S., and it might have been the same within your nations of sort of an old guard view versus younger generations in terms of social acceptance including within the military. And the second is, the military, while you have the idea of, you know, formal policy and top-down chain of command, there's also often a mentor relationship either formally within a chain of command or

maybe with someone who's retired. What were you being told by your mentors as you were going through this transition? What was the kind of advice or what were you hearing from them? That's the first question.

And then the second is, we in the U.S. have an opportunity in a sense to do a little bit like what we're doing right now. Maybe this is a leading question, but would you have benefitted from the ability to hear from officers from other nations who've gone through this kind of transition? So, for example, an infantry officer being able to reach out to an infantry officer from, at the time, you know, be it the Netherlands or Australia, who'd already gone through that? Or would you have had an attitude of, you know what, they may be an infantry officer or a submarine commander, whatever it is, but they don't know my military? That's one of the discourses that we're hearing here and I wonder if you can comment on that.

COL. MATTHIJSEN: Let me start with the last one. In 1974, I was 12 years old, so I wasn't even thinking about taking a career in the military, but the point from that is when I joined the military the policy was already in place. Did I benefit from mentors? No, I kind of made up my own mind, so to say, and I as a person believe that everybody should be able to work in an organization if he wants to, whatever his background. You know, it's the profession that counts, it's the way you do your duty, that is what counts, not the sexual preference that you have or whatever diversity. That is what counts.

I think we always can benefit from other experiences, to your last question. That is always worthwhile, you know, to see what others have experienced and take the best from that for your own situation but you have to be aware to apply the things to your own situation and look at the circumstances or the environment that others have experienced because things might be different.

LTC. KING: In terms of generational views, we're all certainly younger, there wasn't Twitter, Facebook, computers, social networking or the like, and so mentors would be someone who would have a chat with you about something and they'd give you a point of view. Generally as a junior officer, you're reasonably educated to discern what you felt and understood anyway.

In terms of other views, you know, much like anything else, they should be welcome. You don't have to agree with someone else's other views, but you should understand it.

And that will help you to make a more informed decision yourself. So, you should always welcome someone else's views. You don't have to agree, but you should understand the point of view. That's a clear path to success as far as I'm concerned.

LTC. GRIMSHAW: In terms of mentorship, I would have to say as we went through our policy or our programs of diversity training, it was really up to the commanding officers and the senior level leadership to set those conditions. It would have been very counterproductive if the policy came out and the commanding officer of infantry battalion said, right, this just came through, but I don't believe in it, and rip it up and say, if there's any gay people in my unit you've got no business being here. That would have been completely counterproductive and illegal. But the commanding officers set those conditions for mentorship to say, this is the policy gentlemen -- ladies and gentlemen, and it's a good policy. Let's get on with it because we'll be better off as a result, a very positive spin on what we're doing. And there were naysayers, and there will always be naysayers, but they became a pretty quick minority in the units and as it was an evolutionary process, as you mentioned, generational views. My kids in elementary school right now, there are same-sex parents, their friends have same-sex parents, and so I would argue in a few years it will be even less of an issue than it is today for a lot of the generations as we go through this.

And in terms of benefitting from other army's experiences, absolutely. It's part of the profession. We benefit from a collective education, a collective response, or collective viewpoints to see the full spectrum of views on issues, I think, is the better way to do it.

And I use the example of, it wasn't that long ago where Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder was an issue that nobody wanted to talk about that. If anybody was seen to be suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress they were a malingerer, they had no business being in the unit, they were weak, they were chastised, and they were often ostracized and kicked out. Now, we talk openly about PTSD. After a gun battle or an incident where soldiers' lives are lost, it's very common for us to all sit around and talk about the issue because we understand what PTSD and operational stress injuries can do to units and soldiers.

And so we've educated ourselves as a result of our shared experiences, not just within the Canadian forces but among allies, and I think it's prudent to do so, and, again, we've

become a better force as a result. We have less incidents of soldiers coming back with post-traumatic stress because we all have a better understanding and accept it as, hey, this is part of the hazard of the job that we're in.

So, maybe it's a bit of a stretch of an analogy, but it's that education process, willingness to talk about it openly and in an environment where you can voice your opinion and hear the opinions of others as well. So, I think it's very prudent to do so.

CDR. CASSIVI: And just (inaudible) sharing, I think everything else has been mentioned quite well, but we are, as military officers and as soldiers, airmen, and sailors from allied nations, we're from a comparative framework, we pretty much have the same set of corporate values, if we're going to use that expression. You know, a soldier is a soldier, a sailor is a sailor, and we see that time and time again even in non-allied navies when we go to port visits around the world, that it be in Russia, or elsewhere, where there ain't a lot of difference between a sailor and a sailor and I would imagine it's not that different across the bases.

It is also easy to find a whole bunch of differences, especially when you get culture into that because we do have -- we all have cultural differences because we come from different places. It's using the right base for comparison and not being too emotional about it, but being very pragmatic. But that's outside of our limits. That's what the political arena exists for and all of you contribute to that quite effectively. So, finding that common ground.

LTC. McLEAN: Thanks, Luc. What we'd like to do now is try and bundle two or three succinct questions, so I ask that if you have a question, minimize any of the lead in to it and let's get to the meat of it. So, any remaining questions out there?

MR. KAPARA: Well, I'm Ori from the Israeli Behavioral Science Center. I just know that some militaries take special steps to address different minorities in order to attract, for example, women. You know, that you advertise women's service options. And I'd like to hear if you know of any such steps that your military has taken. I know a bit about the Dutch case --

LTC. McLEAN: So, like recruiting? A recruiting focus towards homosexuals?

MR. KAPARA: Yeah.

LTC. McLEAN: Okay. Another question?

MS. BOOTH: I'm Allison Booth from the Naval Academy and I'm just curious -- I'm struck by the uniformity of your responses. I'm just curious whether you see yourselves as representative of the organizations you come from. I feel like I could find people like that in any organization but whether you see yourselves as kind of expressing what you think of as a majority view.

LTC. McLEAN: All right, so whether you guys think you're the odd ones out?

CDR. CASSIVI: Well, I've always been the odd one out in some ways.

LTC. McLEAN: Is there a third question that we can wrap into this real quick? If not, I'll go ahead and turn it over to the panelists. Okay, one more. I think we can fit these three in. I think they're going to be fairly --

MS. STANLINK: Hi, I'm Christie Stanlink from the Naval Academy. I had a question about diversity training, especially from top down which I think is imperative but at the same time that individualism of the people who are receiving the training sometimes balks at diversity training as too PC, too sensitive, and I'm just wondering what sorts of -- what advice you've got to be able to get over that hurdle?

LTC. McLEAN: Okay, so we've got recruiting, uniformity of opinion, and diversity question. I'd ask that you just -- just one of you tackle each one of these and move on down.

We'll start with the recruiting issue. Anybody have anything to add on recruiting?

CDR. CASSIVI: No specific targeting but more presence in recruiting presence in gay pride events, for example, we've had a few of those and tried to extend the blueprint but no quotas, no forced, not false targets of that nature. That gets us into a down spiral approach.

LTC. McLEAN: If I could add to that to -- what about promotions? Is there anything that promotion quotas that highlight a homosexual and you have set limits that you're trying to promote?

CDR. CASSIVI: Absolutely not.

LTC. McLEAN: This is not identified in any of the records?

CDR. CASSIVI: No, there is no promotions guidelines based on whatever minority. You are promoted based on competence.

LTC. KING: Can I just say, in terms of recruiting, you know, the Australian Defense Force doesn't recruit on a sexual orientation, we just promote ourselves as an open and diverse employer and an employer of choice to attract, you know, as many people as we possibly can.

In terms of if there's a majority view, well, certainly before this panel I rang a number of COs that I'd served with to ask for their personal experiences and they're entirely consistent with mine. It's not just the organizational view, it is what we do, to be quite frank.

For diversity training, there's nothing better than a CO standing up in front of a battalion and saying, this is what I believe in. It doesn't become PC when the CO says, this is important. This is what it's about. I believe in this, now let's get on with it. You know? It's not PC. It's not anything else other than saying, yeah, this is important to us and this is what we are and this is what we do.

CDR. CASSIVI: I think just to add on the, are we the odd one outs or are we just representing the organization, I think what you see is -- are four different commanders who've worked in different theaters that have lived through this process or have grown up in an organization where those policies were in place and coming here from those different experiences we come to the same conclusion in the application of leadership in our units. That's basically what it means.

COL. MATTHIJSEN: A few remarks on recruiting in the Netherlands. There's no specific targeting towards homosexuals, so to say. We try to propagate the organization as open to everybody and again it's the profession that counts. Diversity training, we have that included in our initial training and in our career courses for NCOs and officers. But what also is important and Mick said that also, is the role of the commanders. You know, commanders are the ones that have a fairly large role in, you know, getting the climate and the atmosphere and the culture within units that is appropriate and the right climate for diversity to prosper, so to say.

I do not consider myself representative -- well, I may say so, but I'm not sure, let me put it this way, whether I'm representative for the Dutch Armed Forces as a commander, but this is what I think and I know a lot of my colleagues think that as well, but I can't say that all of them do.

LTC. McLEAN: Okay. All right, well, I thank you all very much for your comments today. Thank you all for coming. Again, a very informative panel and from very experienced

commanders who have obviously seen the application of these policies over the last 20 or more years of your careers. So, again, I thank you all for coming, and after this we'll have a short break so we can get back on schedule. Thank you. (Applause)

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE SERVICE OF GAYS AND LESBIANS IN ALLIED  
MILITARIES

Washington, D.C.  
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PANEL 4: SERVICE MEMBER EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS LEARNED:

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## P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. SINGER: So, again, my name is Peter Singer. I direct the 21st Century Defense Initiative here at Brookings. And it's my honor to be moderating this panel, not just because it's the last panel, but because I think it takes us down to the crucial part of this question. We've walked from the ministerial level to the command level and what this panel is going to do is look at the individual experience aspect.

And there's -- before I introduce -- there's two things, two housekeeping notes that I want to make. The first of these is actually a technical one. Anytime you hear the microphone buzzing, it's because someone didn't turn off their PDA in this room, so we will know if you haven't turned off your PDA or your cell phone. So, please, go ahead, a reminder to do that. So not only we won't have cell phones ringing, but also we won't have that buzzing.

The second is a note about -- in some ways this often feels to me watching a little bit like a deposition where we're asking a question and then getting a series of yeses or a series of nos. And so the first thing is the idea of can you stack the deck? Can a think tank reach out into multiple different national militaries and find the exact people who represent the view that we would want? And as powerful as Brookings may hope to be, we don't have that kind of intelligence-gathering capability. And I think that's what we're pleased to have a diversity of experiences, and I'll get to this in terms of the panel members on this one, but I do think it's striking that on certain points we are leading to uniformity. But for the purpose of this panel and to take advantage of this, and I ask of you of the audience members as well, is let's not lose the opportunity we have here. Let's not ask it in yes-or-no questions, but actually ask for sort of the story side. And I'm going to try to do the same and urge you in your opening statements to really reflect on your personal experiences of this.

So, I'm actually, to save time, not going to go through each of the individual

backgrounds. You've got their biographies. What I would say this is the sum total of their experience, again, is quite amazing. You have the tens of years of military experience. More importantly, I was going through and we have folks with a background in everything from naval warfare to logistics, to intelligence, again, it covers the wide spectrum of military activities. The types of deployments that the members have been on, again, range from Bosnia, Kosovo, Iraq, Northern Ireland, Sri Lanka, various UN peacekeeping missions on land and at sea, also in terms of the cross between the military and the law enforcement side on things like drug interdiction. And I think it in a sense is a reflection of the changes in 21st century warfare and the demands that we're putting on our militaries out there, and so we see that diverse experience here.

And so, with that, what I'd like to do is again, let's just walk down from closest to me to the end, please begin with your opening statements reflecting on individual experiences from the service member level.

MR. OHLSON: Thank you very much, and thank you for having me here, especially coming from a small country like Sweden, and it's also a non-NATO member, but we still have a lot of international experience, which I will come back to in just a couple of seconds.

I also remind you that Sweden is now going from a conscript armed service, which we had for -- since -- for hundreds of years until starting this summer with an all-volunteer armed forces, which is a challenge for the politicians, but also, of course, for the armed forces, especially when it comes to attract young people to be -- to have this job.

I also want to remind you that Sweden, we never had a policy like the colleagues from Canada or the Netherlands that people are not allowed to serve, but what we had in Sweden was, until 1979, homosexuality was considered by the health authorities to be an illness. So we could, of course, call in the morning and say that you were sick

because you felt a little bit gay today, but you could also be excluded to doing your military service, which happened.

But from '79 to 2000, nothing really happened. And then in 2000, a study formed in Sweden by a captain and showed that people felt -- were feeling quite bad to homosexuals and lesbians in the armed forces and this -- what happened then was that the then Supreme Commander, Johan Hederstedt, he felt that this was not the case, so he acted on a personal -- he promised a personal commitment to dealing with these issues. But we'll probably come back to that later, but we have a different experience than the colleagues from the other countries.

And from a personal perspective, I can say that I served 1992 in Sarajevo and UNPROFOR, the UN peacekeeping force. Then I was deep in the closet and it was not an issue when you were rounding on Sniper's Alley whether you were gay, lesbian, or heterosexual. You only wanted to survive, and that's what we talked with our colleagues about.

The second time, when I came out, actually, was late -- after the Supreme Commander, we had a press conference and with our network, as you see in my bio, this was the first time I was open to my colleagues thanks to the Supreme Commander.

I was back in the closet when I was studying here in Washington across the river at Bolling Air Force Base for the Defense Intelligent Agency because I could not be -- well, I didn't feel comfortable being open while studying with DIA.

And I was deeply back in the closet in 2005, 2006, when I served as head of district for the Sri Lankan Monitoring Mission in Sri Lanka for two reasons: my colleagues were military officers and police officers from the Nordic countries, and we were serving in a country where we didn't have -- where homosexuality is illegal. So, when I met military commanders from Sri Lankan or from the guerillas, the first question is also, what was my

name, and it was Leif Ohlson, and the you are asked whether I was married or not. But my answer was always that I had a fiancé, but she was killed in a road accident and then everyone was sad. And so, I didn't have that -- and, of course, it felt extremely uncomfortable starting the conversation with a military commander from -- a brigade commander from the Sri Lankan army or the rebel, starting to lie for him when we are supposed to negotiate with them instead.

And that's my personal experience from the field which I will conclude my introductions with.

MR. MULDER: First of all, thank you. Thank you Brookings Institute, thank you to RAND. Yesterday we had a meeting. Thank you also to America. I went to start as a counselor, as a humanistic moral counselor with some words. First of all, I want to apologize that English is not my native language, so please do understand.

Proud and out doesn't mean that you are a drag queen. I'm also openly gay as a counselor, but proud means self-respect, proud means dignity, and proud means also in a freedom and in a freedom on an identity level. I think what my colleague told us that we may not forget that the process of coming out, it's a hard way. It has to do with your background, your parents, your values, your norms, schools, friends, but also your environment on a work level, and the most of the people I speak with also abroad, they say, Wilco, counselor, it's easier to be straight than to be gay, to be openly gay. And that means that the struggle of coming out and being proud, it's a hard way because it's, what we heard before, it's up and down.

In the Dutch Armed Forces we have 150 counselors for all kind of backgrounds: Catholic, Protestants, Jewish, Islam, Hindu, and humanistics. We go with them abroad. We also have 60 social workers in the Dutch Armed Forces and we have also around 60 psychotherapists. And it's not only that we talk about problems, we really support

the LGTB community on identity level. I think that's very important that people feel -- that they feel the support from the Royal Dutch Army, I think that's very, very important.

Twice a year we have a kind of conference like this that the whole LGTB community is allowed to talk for three days freely out in privacy, open about all kind of issues.

That's it. Thank you.

MR. JONES: I had quite a long time in my naval service career to think about the day that the gay ban in the UK would be lifted and I had also gone through a few of the challenging hoops of coming out to family and friends and preparing myself mentally and thinking about what would actually happen. And for those in the room who have worn the uniform at some time in their lives, maybe you'll understand when I say that I felt I had a sense of duty to come out on the day that ban was lifted because it was a hard-fought victory for the gay lobby in the UK and one that really needed a face.

Unfortunately, in the UK there are a lot of generals, admirals, and air marshals who got bloody noses from me in the years that followed. For recalcitrants it was a great shame. And if there is one lesson learned from the UK cases, do it once, do it properly, do it completely, and do it within the values of military service, and that will make life a great deal easier.

The other thing that I'd say from personal experience is that people change. I was serving in HMS Fearless in 2000 when the ban was lifted. And a couple of years after leaving that ship, I met up with the wife of a colleague. I had noticed through January that the supply officer of that ship hadn't actually spoken to me for a while. And he went out for Valentine's night dinner with his wife and he said, there's a gay bloke on board, but it's not an issue because I haven't spoken to him for six weeks. And she left the table. He got the bill, he got his own taxi home, and she told him that if hadn't spoken to me by the time he

came home the following day, don't bother coming home. (Laughter)

And he appeared in my cabin the following morning and we had a really odd conversation. And he said, hi Craig, how are you doing? And I said, fine, Ken. And he said, that's good. See you later. (Laughter)

And that commander and his wife are great friends, and I watched him on a journey over about nine months finally finding the moment after a couple of gin and tonics to talk about the realities of being gay in the military. And however difficult and deep this pit may seem at the moment in the U.S., I have every confidence that your servicemen and women have the integrity and the qualities to make that journey.

MR. HAMSTRA: Thank you. I am the chairman of the Foundation of Homosexuality in the Armed Forces. That means that I am trying to be there for all the people who are serving within the armed forces in the Netherlands. But it's not only what I am, of course. I am Peter Kees Hamstra. I am a professional. I am working within the army, that's my job. And the other thing is, in fact, irrelevant.

But back to the foundation. The foundation is completely funded by the Ministry of Defense. It's founded in 1987, and so we were the first openly gay in the whole world and that means a lot.

One thing is that homo rights or gay rights, however you call it, are human rights. That's very important. You can't deny that you are a homosexual. You are a homosexual. You can't choose it. It's a fact of life. You have to be aware of that.

Why is it important to be gay -- to be openly gay? You are a role model. It's important. There are generals who are role models in our country. There are, of course, a lot of other people who are openly gay. But the thing is, not everything is okay within our country. We have also people who dislike gays, people do not know how to cope with gay people. But one thing is for sure, my colleague here next to me said, people can change,

and one of the things you need to do so is that you have to learn about what is homosexuality. What is really going on? You need to educate people, you need to train people on how to cope with all different situations. That's quite important.

And I think that here in the United States, of course, it's a different country, it's a very big country, but -- and it's a great variety of people living here. And I'm convinced that also here, people can change, people can learn. And, of course, homosexuality is always quite a difficult subject to discuss, but, in the end, people learn to know each other and to value each other. And I think that's one of the main things that is really important.

Thank you.

CDR CASSIVI: Good afternoon again. I guess we should change the quotation to: nothing in life is certain except change, death, and taxes. And we still have a hard time dealing with the three of them from time to time.

The closet is a dark place that needs not be dark. It leads to a lot of issues for the individual and particularly it leads people to lead double lives which for -- if any of you have tried to maintain a mistress on the side, you know it's absolutely impossible. You get caught eventually, so bring that to a frame of reference that some may understand.

Being able to be yourself, one, makes you healthy. Mental health is a huge issue and this becomes a mental health issue when you have a segregationist or discrimination type of policy that you actually tell someone that provides valued service that although your service is appreciated, who you are is not. That's not very healthy.

So, those are all good things or elements that really makes me glad that -- to be Canadian and to have lived through the change, because it wasn't so brilliant before the change, a lot of pressure on everyone.

I guess people do change. They change because they're exposed to things they hadn't been before. Most differences are based on not knowing each other.

You know, when I came out in the mid-'90s after I returned from my service in Australia, there were different reactions. Close friends of mine said, well, finally. Okay? They had all figured it out and it was easy for them to figure it out because they knew me.

For others, well, I've known you for 15 years. I didn't know you were gay, but I've never had that experience, so there was curiosity and once we got to know each other then we had a new found respect.

I still find to this day I go to units, you know, I took command of Ville de Quebec last year, you know, it's my fourth command. There are still people who haven't yet served with openly gay members and for them it's still an element of curiosity because they just don't know.

So, dialogue and getting to know each other is a key and I think for me that's what's most important on my personal experience, but to be successful and fighting through that, and I think it's like any element of change, and we're all guilty of it whatever our background, we can't take ourselves too seriously. You've got to be able to laugh about yourself a little bit, and that surely has been my best way to disarm people and enter in an honest dialogue because once you can actually -- to use a British and Australian expression, pull a piss, about yourself, people then are a little bit more open to actually engage in that dialogue and put those prejudices aside.

So, don't fall into the hard, bad theory of stereotypes. We're not all camp.

MR. SINGER: Thank you. What I'd like to do is I'll pose a question and please don't all feel required to answer it, rather any one volunteer or all volunteer, but what I'd like to begin with is this definition of coming out. It's a phrase that's been used a lot and yet I think it means different things to different people and so the question that I would pose is -- and you can either speak to your own experience or what you think is the sort of majority of how this definition, this process of coming out, how it plays out in your service.

What does it mean there? And/or how might we expect it to be for the vast majority if people do come out?

CDR CASSIVI: I guess coming out is, it's a very personal process to start with so to try to define it, I guess, I haven't spent that energy to define it in my mind, but I think it's creating the -- the person being able to create the environment in which they're comfortable being who they are. So, whatever level of disclosure they feel they need to do to be able to function in a healthy way would probably be the kind of definition I would give it at this point.

MR. JONES: I think also it can differ depending upon where you are in the journey of these types of policies. In the UK these days, people come out gradually and each time -- of course, each time you change units, invariably you have to come out again because of course we change our roles every two to three years, generically in the armed forces, so coming out is something that keeps going.

But in the case of the repeal of DADT, then there will be some differences. There will be lots of different approaches. Some people, a very small minority, I think, may come out on day one, hopefully in a blaze of glory and not otherwise, but others will take their time and feel for how things go. The overwhelming majority I think will do that.

MR. SINGER: (inaudible)

MR. JONES: Well, I went around the cabins, basically, and if naval communications could carry a message like that quite so quickly we would have no problems in warfare. I told five people, including the chief steward, who was the ship's gossip, and it took about 30 minutes. (Laughter) There were 500 people on that ship.

SPEAKER: There may be a new market for (inaudible) on that one.

MR. HAMSTRA: Yeah. As my neighbor said before, we have to come out of the closet every time again and again and again. And I also came out of the closet when I

was in Bosnia, an international surrounding, but I did it. Let's say, all the people from, let's say, Western countries, I told them that I was gay after a few weeks, of course, and it happens to be that it was a Finnish guy who was also gay, but he didn't say it up front, after that, of course, he did. And to the people of, let's say, Bangladesh or Kenya or whatever, I told them that I had a friend, and, of course, it's quite easy if you don't say if it's a she or a he. So, that was the end of the discussion.

So, we have to come out again and again. That's one of the hardest things to do because it says something about your person and also you need a really safe environment because if it's not safe, then you'll stay in the closet and that's also what Leif said earlier, I think.

MR. MULDER: I was out when I was around, I think, 18, 19 years old. I was lucky that my parents were very supporting. My brother, my whole family, was really supporting and also my work and study environment was very supporting.

And the other side, to accept myself, this is me, and this is how I feel, took some years more because, you know, it's not on the IQ level, it's on the EQ level, an identity level, that you need to accept yourself, who you are, and that's a process. And in that way support is very, very important because, you know -- I know by myself that you are different, but on the other side, you are not different at all.

MR. OHLSON: Short comment. What might be easier here in the United States since you have this policy "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," is that it might be easier for people to come out. Because what happened in Sweden when the environment changed and people felt more secure and they decided to come out among their colleagues, they got comments from some colleagues saying, why have you been lying all these years? And that did not, of course -- other gays and lesbians to come out the next morning. But what you have to create here is an environment so that someone can come out if they want to and not

force them and drag them out of the closet. But since here it's a little bit easier because you can't blame me for not coming out if I was an American service member because you have the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," so, hopefully, it will be easier here.

And I also think that like Craig had added, it will not happen overnight and it will take some time, of course, to create the environment. That's what it's all about.

MR. SINGER: I want to turn to the question of training and each of your services went through an implementation process. The question that I would pose is obviously training the systems, the instructions that came down, couldn't have been 100 percent perfect. So, based on what we now know, what was a mistake or what was implemented poorly? What, in your experience, do you go, if we knew then what we know now, we would do differently, even if it's something small or large? What can we learn from this process?

CDR CASSIVI: Well, in the Canadian perspective, there was a comment earlier in the panel about role models and I talked about knowing people, and I think some of the training because we hadn't come to face with a lot of people that had come out or things of that nature, that people couldn't associate with other people in the institution and bring that together as to what the training meant, but one thing that was really smart in the sharp training, I remember taking it when I came back from Australia, one of the video footage to show discrimination was about this scenario of, oh, there's a new family that's moving into the neighborhood, and, oh, you know, they're so different than us, and all. It turned the tables around because the family ended up being a military family. And in Canada at the time, you know, we were respected, but maybe not as much, and we realized that, eh, everybody can be discriminated against. I think that was a great tool to bring people around to understand what it is to be the victim of discrimination or the potential victim of discrimination and bring everybody on the same playing field to actually absorb the material,

so that was actually quite clever.

MR. JONES: A couple of points. I mean, I think we've talked quite a lot about the fact that military commanders need to own these policies and whether they completely believe in them or not, need to do the right thing and obey orders because that's what we do as military people.

I think that diversity needs to be embedded in every stage of leadership training, not as a remote and abstract issue, don't send people on diversity training courses if you can avoid it. At every stage of a military person's career, you do more leadership training in preparation for the next rank and the extra responsibilities. I think diversity training needs to be embedded within that.

And the other thing I'd say is something that is very helpful to success is to recognize that gay men and women in the years after the repeal of such a policy will face considerable personal challenges in finding their place in military societies. And I think mutual support could be extremely important in making sure that you don't fill your military psychiatric hospitals and, therefore, I think that community needs to be gathered. And that was a major shortfall in the UK in that the Ministry of Defense and the armed forces did not try to gather their gay community to achieve mutual support and befriending.

Thankfully, that community gathered itself and, in consequence, by 2004, 2005, we'd got to a stage whereby we didn't have those awful cases of people coming out into environments which were really just bewildered by having gay men and women serving alongside. Not negative, but bewildered and poorly informed.

MR. MULDER: I strongly believe in lessons learned are that -- and especially in the Netherlands, we are quite open. And especially my profession, but all the chaplains, I strongly believe in communication. The dialogue is very, very important to understand each other, to respect each other, and to inspire each other. Because a lot of

people, they are unknown on this level, unknown on the level of identity, so we need to inspire each other.

And I think I also believe in when we meet each other, we are helping each other to bring each other on a higher level of awareness, and I think that's management diversity that we all need each other very strongly.

MR. OHLSON: From Swedish perspective, we made a lot of mistakes since we didn't have a policy that changed, but we had research saying that people are not feeling good being in the closet or being afraid of harassments. But we did an extensive training program and if we were to do it again, I would strongly recommend that we do it embedded in the leadership training because we stirred up a lot of dust and people were feeling extremely uncomfortable. In an audience like this, for example -- I've been traveling around to all the units in Sweden and doing training. It was mentally quite disturbing for me as well, I would say, but because being challenged all the time. But what happened was that you had gays and lesbians in the audience which suddenly heard a comrade, colleague, or even commanding officer saying that he hated gays and gays should not be in the military if they had problems. Then we left and went back to Stockholm where everything was nice and calm and they were still out there on the countryside in this more regimental town, and some of them felt extremely bad.

So, I don't believe in these crash courses for the whole military service as we did in Sweden. Next time, if we have to do it again, we'll have to do it in the leadership training as Craig said. It's extremely important as everyone has said on the panel, the leadership is the most important with these issues.

MR. HAMSTRA: Also, the experience is that the LGTB community is so used to reject -- to be rejected on a social level, all kind of levels, but on the other side, the LGTB community, it's also -- they reject their selves. You know, when you are used to be

rejected, you can also reject yourself in life and that's a big issue.

MR. SINGER: I want to build on that question because a number of you have worked on everything from working groups to foundations that both operate within the military but also reach out to the LGBT community beyond. What would be, again, a lessons learned to the community outside the military? How are things handled right? How are things handled wrong? What can the U.S. learn from this potentially?

MR. HAMSTRA: I think that the communities -- the gay communities have to work together because, as Wilco mentioned before, disclosure is a very bad thing and together you are strong and of course you can learn a lot of each other. In the Netherlands, there's a very large group of international companies who had gay networks called Company Pride Platform and it's a huge foundation at this moment including Shell, IBM, all kind of big companies, also American companies like Cisco and et cetera, et cetera. They try to work together because that's one thing you can learn a lot of each other.

So, education, that's also a kind of education. Learning from each other, that is, I think, one of the most powerful things to do and lets people know that you are there and that's -- you have to reach out, you have to see -- let yourself see, let yourself be seen. Whatever.

MR. JONES: I think employee network groups can be hugely beneficial. And I mentioned a couple of minutes ago about the opportunities that befriending creates. The UK Armed Forces Network Community is called Proud to Serve. It has just over 1,000 members. It's an unusual model. It's hosted outside of the military intranets, so it's on the World Wide Web. It's moderated by serving officers and it has lots and lots of discussion forums and is a membership organization and membership is quite closely vetted by the moderating team who are all serving officers or NCOs.

There was some concern about Proud to Serve in the early years at the

administrative end, what would happen if it was run inappropriately? What would happen if posts went up that were silly or if it became divisive? It's run by serving officers. We have military discipline acts and we'd court marshal them if it was inappropriate. It's as simple as that. And it has been fantastically moderated over the years and fantastically well run, and if you are a gay serviceman or woman and you are going to Afghanistan, Iraq, Cyprus, or the Falkland Islands, or anywhere in the world, there is the opportunity to connect with people who you can step out of your unit with and have what I would call an ordinary gay conversation. And if you are doing a nine-month tour in Afghanistan, that's a great thing to be able to do in terms of just having a release from what is quite a challenging environment, especially if you don't really feel able to communicate completely openly with the colleagues that are around you.

So, I think network groups can be hugely beneficial.

CDR CASSIVI: Yeah, they can be, absolutely. I think we haven't gone as far in Canada. There's Public Service Pride, which is basically both civilian and military, mainly centered in Ottawa that create this kind of communication platform for people to gain from the experience of everybody else. Not so much else (inaudible) more subculture gatherings happen from local clubs and the like, but those assembly permits, the exchange of ideas and build the courage of some people to use some of the mechanisms like conflict resolution in harassment when they may not be so inclined to do it, but by sharing their experiences, they can do what they need to do to take care of minor problems. So, very powerful and I think they need to be used more.

MR. SINGER: One last question and I'm asking this not to get you to comment on General Sheehan's famous episode, but rather I'm building off of our American Quadrennial Defense Review, which at the centerpiece of it, it discussed the need for America to be able to work better with partners at a grand strategy and down to the tactical

level, that this was a priority for us. And you mentioned, but a number of other folks in previous panels have mentioned, that you did not feel comfortable, for example, in certain situations with the U.S. military. I wonder if you could specify what exactly the discomfort is. How does that play out? In a sense give us what are we doing here that's setting this up?

MR. OHLSON: I can say another example that we have, for example, is we have colleagues who had been -- was planned for formations in Kosovo and then they were supposed to be stationed -- because there was a helicopter unit at the Camp Bondsteel in Kosovo and they withdrew their application because they didn't want to be based on an American base because they were openly lesbian. So, that, of course, had an effect on the unit because they actually needed that person. But for us, it is when we go abroad it's voluntarily; you can't force anyone.

MR. SINGER: Can I follow up? Was it an issue of the sense that they were worried they would be harassed or was it this is a policy that I don't agree with and I don't want to be in an environment that upholds that policy? Which are two related, but actually very different things.

MR. OHLSON: It's not the fact, actually, that you think that you would be harassed because if you are based on an American -- Swedish officer based on an American base, you always stick to Swedish rules and regulations so you can always go to your commanding officer. It's also that when you sit in the mess or talk to people, you can't be open -- or it's -- you feel -- you are afraid that it will be difficult to be open. People think a lot about what will happen and what I felt when I was across the river here is that, well, I couldn't talk about it because all my American colleagues would act in a different way. That's what I'm thought. I'm not quite sure what would happen, of course, because I didn't test them. But instead I was back in the closet.

CDR CASSIVI: Yeah, and as I expressed earlier, we had some of those

perception issues with someone say who's been selected for exchange posting, for example, but my experience with American also in exchange in Canada actually has been extremely positive, actually. We're, again, quite curious and really open to discussion, so that way I have no concerns about going to Rhode Island this summer. It should be good.

MR. JONES: I kind of agree, actually. I've served with U.S. Armed Forces for most of my career. But I do think that the DADT policy alienates the U.S. Armed Forces a little bit when working in coalition and joint situations with, for example, NATO Armed Forces because it does make the U.S. a little bit of an oddity, and that's a great shame.

And I think it creates a certain first day at school nervousness. I certainly notice that. I went to Naples for a visit in 2004, a couple of days after I had done something with the International Herald Tribune, and I met a U.S. Navy captain who looked decidedly nervous, and I'm not used to U.S. Navy captains being nervous. They're normally pretty damn robust. So, I thought that was really rather curious. And I worked with that team for about two years and had a great time, but I think it would be great to sweep that first-day-at-school nervousness away.

MR. HAMSTRA: I've not worked with an American -- met with Americans so far, but the thing is, I think that for the Americans themselves, it's far more a threat to work with me because I'm openly gay and I -- if I sense that somebody is gay, then perhaps he thinks, oh, gosh, I have to go away from this guy because he can reveal me. And I don't think that's a good idea.

So, I think we work internationally. We try to form a group within NATO to discuss the issue of homosexuality. It started last year and this year we're going on with that because I think it's relevant and we are working together as NATO partners and I think that's a good thing and we have to maintain that.

MR. MULDER: My experience in Bosnia was quite positive, I told you

yesterday, because they were quite curious about my own identity and also, of course, because I am a counselor. So I didn't feel any negativity around me but the other side is, I always choose an environment where I feel safe. You know, we already heard the word trust, and I always choose, okay, is this a safe environment to open myself and then I will open myself, and was actually in Bosnia, in Sarajevo, no problem at all with Americans.

MR. SINGER: Why don't we open up the discussion? So, please if you have a question raise your hand and again wait for the mike.

MR. McMICHAEL: Hi, Bill McMichael, Military Times Newspapers.

I'm curious if you all could give us any examples, and this might apply less to the folks from the Netherlands, but there may be examples of points where the policy was being implemented and there was opposition or there were situations where people were having difficulty -- a difficult time?

Dr. Okros this morning gave us the example of the squadron commander, whoever it was, who dismissed the petty officer or sent him back to shore for his lack of leadership skills, as he perceived it. I wondered if any of you all had seen or had experienced anything like that in your careers.

CDR CASSIVI: I can tell you a personal story where when I took the appointment of second in command of my first submarine and I was a little -- not concerned but had some issues that I needed to monitor and particularly how the crew may be treated by others, you know, oh, you're on the pink crew type of thing, which did happen as jokes at the bar after that. But at the end, after a few of those events, consensus was, well, you'd be lucky to have the pink XO look after you because he knows his job. I mean, that's kind of as bad as I can relate it.

You know, the world is not perfect. There's always minor attitude issues that will come from time-to-time, and certainly in the early implementation times there were.

You know, people pass comments. You can't change a culture day-to-day. People are used to telling their jokes. People are used to passing their offhand comments. But it's by letting them know that you're there and then going through that discussion process without taking yourself too seriously, disarming the situation, and bringing it back to a common base of understanding.

And surely, in my experience there have been minor issues of that sort. I haven't had any sailor refuse to serve under my leadership or anything of that nature. It's always been a place of respect and I haven't heard of incidents of that nature across -- surely the units have been exposed to.

MR. OHLSON: Just a brief comment to say what has happened in some cases in Sweden is that people are not -- because we have the Supreme Commander who has been very, very offensive, I would say, when we started this, and what has happened is that I've heard from younger officers that they are now so afraid to speak what they really think about other issues because that we are a little bit too strong on the gay issue. And I think that that might be a kind of backlash, I would say, because it's -- then we have created an environment that people can't speak about other important issues as well, where you need to have an open discussion. That is what has happened because we have a very, very strong commitment from the Supreme Commander, but as I would also state that the commitment from the Supreme Commander has been extremely important and it's created a better working environment and it's also created a better recruitment base. And we can see figures of that now, especially when it comes to women, actually. We think that it's -- one of the reasons is because we have a better environment for all minorities now.

MR. SINGER: Any other questions?

MR. BAGSLEY: Larry Bagsley, former Navy officer, again. My question is based upon the current state of repeal in the United States and where we are and what's

been done as a set up from some of the services.

As you know, we had General Pace, who declared homosexuality was immoral; General Sheehan, who's claimed that failures in military performance were due to homosexuality; and then most recently General Conway, who's decided that he would not -- publicly decided he would not put straight people with gay people. That's a set up for what's going to happen when the repeal hits, should it hit. What do I tell my gay marine friends as far as preparing them for the coming out process, in the Marine Corps in particular, in today's world?

MR. JONES: The great thing about sea officers is that generally they don't last very long and dinosaurs die off. And I remember in the couple of years leading up to the lifting of the gay ban in the UK, we had a First Sea Lord who made it quietly known that he felt that he'd resign if the gay ban was lifted, but, frankly, he'd come to the end of his career and he was replaced by a much better officer. So, I think that there will be great challenges.

At the moment DADT is at a stage whereby there are some folks who may believe that by creating a ruckus around the issue, then they may be able to put it off for a while. But I think, as you know from your own experience, military people are quite good at towing the line when they're told to do so in the right way.

MR. HAMSTRA: I think that's quite important, that in the Netherlands, for instance, it's forbidden to discriminate. I think that it's one of the main reasons that it makes it easier for people to act accordingly. And furthermore, there's also a social issue. First you have to have the legislation rights, then after that, then you have the social things going on and the cultural changes and that kind of stuff, and that will take a long time. Even in the Netherlands, it's not finished for a long time, I can assure you that. So, it's a long process, that's for sure. But in the end it makes you stronger because you can be yourself, you can be a professional, and that's what it is. It has nothing to do with homosexuality in the first

place.

CDR CASSIVI: I think practically your friends will know when it's the right time. It will be for them to find out and it will be based on this relationship of trust that they'll have accomplished at their unit and they'll see the attitude to the management of the change and the leadership that will be provided to make the change happen and to honest discussion with their support group that permit them to survive from day-to-day. As long as they haven't created a web of lies that's just going to discredit them and make it difficult, I think that people will come to their own terms and so I wish them the best.

MR. MULDER: Well, as our colleague (inaudible) had told us already before, is you need to handle natural and make contact with them, support them, and don't make a big issue from it.

MR. SINGER: Any other questions? Okay, I think we're getting to the witching hour here. Actually, Aaron, if you could join me up on stage here.

What I'd like to do is first make a comment, which is this panel, but also the prior panels, the sum total of this conference, has for me personally created an incredibly rich, treasure trove of not only perspectives, but just simply knowledge and information. And in many ways, I wish we could take this on the road. And, in fact, I posed that question earlier with a little bit of an agenda, which is my sense that if a transition does happen, it would be incredibly fruitful for those who are serving in the U.S. military to be able to get the kind of question-and-answer experience that we've had with you. You know, the ability of be it a submarine officer who's about to go through this transition to ask someone who's gone through this, et cetera, because we've seen the benefit of having this kind of discussion here. I wish our Congress could have a similar kind of discussion.

The second thing is to thank all of you who've helped make this discussion possible, and that extends from the people who have put in the hard work on the planning

side, particularly Chip and Heather, and the staff at Brookings, our partners at Palm.

But then finally, I want to thank all our speakers and participants who've not only -- I want to thank them for coming, in many cases, long distances or even short distances with our friends from the Australian Embassy next door, but not only for joining us here, but, more importantly, the real introspection, but also openness of discussion that you've helped us to participate in. We very much value that.

So, please join me in a round of applause for these panelists. (Applause)

And with that, I want to turn it over to Aaron for the final words.

MR. BELKIN: Thank you so much, Peter. It's been an honor to work with Brookings, the incredible staff here, the Palm staff. Thank you, General Semianiw, for the delegation that you brought to this conference. It was a huge honor.

The question of balance and representativeness was raised in a discussion about an hour ago. I mentioned earlier that the Palm Center has done nine studies on gays and lesbians in foreign militaries. We interviewed over 100 experts, in Israel, Canada, Britain, Australia, South Africa. We interviewed every single expert we could find who had expressed a public opinion about gays and lesbians in the military: traditional values groups, politicians, ministry officials, journalists, scholars. We interviewed everybody who had predicted that the sky would fall prior to the repeal of gay bans. And we were not able to find a single expert anywhere in the world who had concluded, after the lifting of a gay ban, that any military anywhere had suffered any detriment to cohesion. So, that is the reason why you did not see more diversity in terms of conclusions about the affects of repeal.

I'd like to conclude with a brief story. The Palm Center staff and I have been traveling every year for the last seven years to the Army War College and the Air Force Academy and also to West Point, the military academy, so three times a year for seven

years, to give what I believe were the first lectures in all those venues on “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.” And the very first of those lectures at the Army War College seven years ago, the college was embarrassed that they had invited us to talk about gays in the military and so they titled the panel “Social Problems in the Armed Forces.” And so they had several speakers on gays in the military, but then they also had one person who spoke on disability in the armed forces just to prove that this was not a gay panel.

The arc from that day to Chairman Mullen’s remarks several months ago lead me to believe that the culture has changed, and I really appreciate all the contributions of the experts here to enhance the public policy conversation. Thank you so much.

(Applause)

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