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**PALM RELEASES MAJOR STUDY OF GAYS IN FOREIGN MILITARIES
As Top Generals Add to Momentum, Research Stresses Simple Steps for Swift Repeal**

SANTA BARBARA, CA, FEBRUARY 23, 2010 - The [New York Times](#) reported yesterday on the release of the largest ever study of gays in foreign militaries. [The report](#), which is being released today by the Palm Center, concludes that foreign militaries that allow gays and lesbians to serve openly achieved success by implementing an inclusive policy quickly and under decisive leadership. The principal author of the study, "Gays in Foreign Militaries 2010: A Global Primer," is Dr. Nathaniel Frank, Senior Research Fellow at Palm, who last year published the book, "Unfriendly Fire: How the Gay Ban Undermines the Military and Weakens America." Also contributing to the report was top expert on the British military, Dr. Victoria Basham, as well as a retired Captain in the Canadian Forces and several social scientists who study gender, sexuality, and military personnel policy.

Other key conclusions of the new study are that preliminary findings that open gays do not disrupt military effectiveness hold over time, including in Britain, whose policy of non-discrimination marked its ten-year anniversary last month; that successful transitions did not involve creating separate facilities or distinct rules for gays or straights; and that the U.S. has a long tradition of turning to foreign armed forces as relevant sources of information about effective military policy.

"This study helps us understand exactly what works when major militaries end discrimination against their gay troops," said Frank. "Decisive action is a must, while slow-rolling implementation carries risks of muddling the process, a point the U.S. military itself is now beginning to express."

This week, two top U.S. generals, Gen. David Petraeus, Commander of U.S. Central Command, and Gen. Raymond Odierno, Commanding General of Multi-National Force - Iraq, added marked words of support to the government's plans to scrap the "don't ask, don't tell" policy. Gen. Petraeus supported further study, but noted that the change in Britain, Israel, the CIA, and the FBI was "uneventful." Asked if he believed soldiers on the ground cared if their peers were gay, he replied, "I'm not sure that they do," and suggested that service members are more concerned with the question of "how's this guy's shooting" than with who is gay or lesbian. He also cited the evolution of the position of Gen. Colin Powell, who has reversed his opposition to openly gay service since 1993. Gen. Odierno said, "My opinion is everyone should be allowed to serve, as long as we're still able to fight our wars and we're able to have forces that are capable of doing whatever we're asked to do." He also supported the study process announced by the Pentagon earlier this month.



Dr. Aaron Belkin, Palm’s Director and also an expert on foreign militaries, said it was significant for a commander of multi-national forces to express support for repeal. The new study contains a section on joint, multi-national operations involving openly gay troops. It finds that, “in many documented cases, U.S. troops have served in these military campaigns shoulder-to-shoulder with troops who belong to militaries that allow openly gay service” with no negative impact on effectiveness.

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The Palm Center is a think tank at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Since 1998, the Center has been a leader in commissioning and disseminating research in the areas of gender, sexuality, and the military. For more information visit www.palmcenter.ucsb.edu.