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## Media's Big Guns Fire Away at Military's Gay Ban

By Robert Knight, Director, Culture and Media Institute

The mainstream media have enlisted in the gay activist army infiltrating the U.S. military, if recent coverage is any indication.

As part of their ongoing campaign against the military's ban on open homosexuality, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times* and NBC's *Nightly News* fired off a one-sided barrage in their coverage of Wednesday's House Armed Services Committee hearing about "Don't Ask, Don't Tell."

*The New York Times* on Wednesday helpfully ran a story, "Don't Ask, Don't Tell' Hits Women Much More," using information obtained by the Service Members Legal Defense Network. The *Times* incompletely identifies SLDN as "a policy advocacy organization." In fact, it's a gay activist group, and the policy it advocates is open homosexuality in the military. The *Times* quotes nobody on the other side, and characterizes the higher incidence of lesbians being discharged as proof of sexism. The *Times* fails to acknowledge the possibility that there may be a disproportionate incidence of homosexuality among women who choose to enter the military. DADT is just something that "hits" women. In the name of accuracy, the *Times* should have used the more complete phrase: "hitting on women," but the *Times* never mentions the documented cases of lesbian harassment of other women in the service.

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One such incident was described at Wednesday's hearing by Elaine Donnelly, President of the Center for Military Readiness and an outspoken opponent of lifting the ban. "We're talking about real consequences for real people," Donnelly said, noting that lifting the ban would increase the danger of homosexual assaults. She related one such incident, a lesbian gang assault.

According to Dana Milbank of *The Washington Post*, "At the witness table with Donnelly, retired Navy Capt. Joan Darrah, a lesbian, rolled her eyes in disbelief."

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Milbank, who specializes in character assassination of conservatives, launched a full-throated, nasty attack on Donnelly in his Thursday column, "Sorry We Asked, Sorry You Told." He began by sarcastically introducing Mrs. Donnelly only as someone "who has been working for years to protect our fighting forces from the malign influence of women." Milbank even criticized the way Donnelly dressed, saying she was "severe in a black jacket with a flag pin." Well, at least he got the flag pin right. The suit was Navy blue, and Donnelly also wore a pink blouse and pearls. Severe?

In point of fact, Donnelly deserves a great deal of respect. She served on the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services and on a presidential commission that examined the role of women in the armed service. She has worked for years to implement policies that make life easier on military families, and to resist the liberal campaign to lift the combat exemption for women. To Milbank, who apparently wants to shove our daughters into harm's way as soon as possible, that's maligning women.

During her testimony, Donnelly explained the difference between the actual law and Don't Ask, Don't Tell, and outlined several probable outcomes of open homosexuality in the ranks. Milbank described Donnelly's testimony as "an extraordinary exhibition of rage." Anyone who has seen Mrs. Donnelly under fire knows that she does not *do* "rage." What she does do is demolish the other side's arguments with logic and carefully documented materials. She also went out of her way to recognize the service to their country by three co-panelists on the other side of the issue.

The hearing certainly had more than its share of rage, but the wellspring of that ire was the pro-open homosexuality side, as documented by the Capitol Hill publication, *The Hill*. In a story headlined ["Lawmakers grill critic of](#)

[gays in military.](#)” *The Hill* noted one Congressman’s “sarcasm,” another “rolling her eyes” several times, and a third becoming “visibly enraged” at Donnelly.

Even Milbank quoted a number of liberal Democrats who were aghast at Donnelly for daring to disagree with their plan to homosexualize the military: “Just bonkers” and “dumb” (Rep. Vic Snyder, D-Ark.), “embarrassed” (Rep. Carol Shea-Porter, D-N.H.), “shocked” (Rep. Ellen Tauscher, D-Calif.)

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It was the same kind of reaction that greeted former Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Peter Pace when he stated that he believed homosexual behavior is immoral. Shock! Outrage! Sack him!

I asked Donnelly what she thought of Milbank’s characterization of her testimony. She said, “I know what it’s like to be bullied by powerful men. I kept my composure. What they’ve done is to make my main point, which is that if the ban is lifted, people who believe in traditional sexual morality will be abused and have no recourse, no defenders.” That pretty much sums up the hearing itself, at which most of the Republicans fled and none challenged the assertions of the pro-gay witnesses who repeatedly attacked Donnelly, who could not respond until called upon to give her testimony.

The *Post*’s commentary pages chimed in on pro-gay military crusade by running a column, “Our Duty to Our Gay Defenders,” by retired Rear Admiral Jamie Barnett. If you take the admiral’s reasoning to its logical conclusion, it’s a miracle that the United States prevailed in any war in which soldiers were not allowed to openly express homosexual desires.

For its part, NBC’s *Nightly News* segment on Wednesday’s hearing was a classic pro-homosexual production, featuring gay “victims,” pro-gay congressmen and virtually no counterpoint. The lesbian retired Navy captain, Joan Darrah, was shown strolling down a country path with her partner and their playful dog. Retired Marine Eric Alva, who lost a leg in combat and has been featured on other newscasts as the face of gay soldiering, was shown in full uniform.

In the 2:39 segment, NBC gave 3 on-camera seconds – count ‘em – to the opposing side. Retired Army Ranger Sgt. Major Brian Jones is shown saying: “We’ve got to huddle together to stay warm and keep from freezing in the night.” His statement was immediately rebutted by Rep. Patrick Murphy (D-

Penn.), who says, “As a former army officer, I can tell you that it’s an insult to me and to many of the soldiers.”

Why, exactly, is that an insult?

Well, we’ll never know because the segment moved briskly to a graphic presenting the ABC News/*Washington Post* poll asserting that 75 percent of Americans want the ban lifted.

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If 75 percent of the American people really want open homosexuality in the military, a questionable proposition, an observer might scratch his head and ask why.

Part of the explanation could be a general decline of sexual mores in TV, movies, and music, along with the proliferation of pornography. Ample evidence suggests that a good portion of America is trying out decadence and liking it.

Another reason might be that Americans are seeing and hearing only what gay activists want. A compliant media are feeding them a steady stream of emotionally compelling images intended to elicit sympathy and shut down honest discussion. If anyone who opposes the agenda is just a “hater,” then why include that side of the issues? The National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association is debating whether to call for barring inclusion of pro-family spokespeople in coverage of gay issues. Keep in mind that the NLGJA has representatives in every major news organization, most of which recruit at NLGJA events and buy ad space in the programs.

But let’s get back to the military issue. Two weeks before the hearings, *60 Minutes* re-ran a piece about Eric Alva first broadcast in late 2007. The wounded veteran is becoming a regular on network news shows. A few days before the hearing, *ABC News Saturday* ran a “closer look” segment about Alva.

Check out this portion of the ABC segment. ABC gives Alva a platform to call for changing the law to accommodate open homosexuality in the service:

MIGUEL MARQUEZ: Last year, Alva announced he was gay. And says not only does the Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell policy have to be overturned, but the military should go farther to protect gays. Would there have to be some sort of law, some sort of rules, to protect gays?

ALVA: Sure, I mean the Military Code of Justice -- the UCMJ – would probably have to be changed, as well.

Later, Marquez finishes up with an emotional pitch:

MARQUEZ: Eric Alva says the military should accept him, just as many of his Marine colleagues already have.

ALVA: As of to date, three of my friends, three Marines, I'm godfather to three of their sons.

MARQUEZ: Alva will testify before Congress next week on the Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy.

Well then, that settles it. Three Marines respect Eric Alva, so we need not examine any of the profound implications of the military embracing, instead of discouraging, homosexuality.

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In network and newspaper coverage, Americans are also being misled almost daily about the law itself. In 1993, Congress passed a law lifting the induction question about homosexuality but still barring anyone from military service with even the "propensity" for homosexual behavior. The Clinton administration's Pentagon staff ignored the law and drafted "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," which allows homosexuals in the military as long as they don't act out the behavior or declare themselves to be gay. Courts repeatedly have upheld the law itself.

But over the years, the media have misreported that Congress passed "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," not the actual ban.

Mrs. Donnelly could tell them the difference, and has done so in a highly public forum. But the media have not allowed American people to hear it.

# Appendix

**As a public educational service, CMI reprints below a key portion of Elaine Donnelly's testimony on Wednesday before the House Armed Services Committee's Subcommittee on Personnel (July 23, 2008). Here is Mrs. Donnelly, regarding the immediate effects of lifting the ban on open homosexuality in the military:**

This means that heterosexuals will be required to live in forced cohabitation with professed (not discreet) homosexuals, on all military bases and ships at sea, on a 24/7 basis. Such a policy would impose new, unneeded burdens of sexual tension on men and women serving in high-pressure working conditions, far from home, that are unlike any occupation in the civilian world.

The real-world issue here is not superficial. Nor is it a Hollywood fantasy portrayed for laughs in a television sitcom. We are talking about human sexuality and the normal, human desire for personal privacy and modesty in sexual matters.

Repealing the 1993 law would be tantamount to forcing female soldiers to cohabit with men in intimate quarters, on all military bases and ships at sea, on a 24/7 basis. Stated in gender-neutral terms, forced cohabitation in military conditions—which offer little or no privacy--would force *persons* to live with *persons* who might be sexually attracted to them. Inappropriate passive/aggressive actions conveying a homosexual message or approach, short of physical touching and assault, will be permitted in all military communities, to include Army and Marine infantry battalions, Special Operations Forces. Navy SEALs, and cramped submarines that patrol the seas for months at a time.

The ensuing sexual tension will hurt discipline and morale, but commanders will not have the power to improve the situation. Individuals whose beliefs and feelings about sexuality are violated by the new policy will have no recourse. The only option will be to avoid or leave the service.