

GAYS IN THE MILITARY

A QUESTION OF HEALTH

AIDS and many other diseases are prevalent among homosexuals. Their poor health, would cost billions and threaten the nation's security.



By Ronald D. Ray

THE MILITARY ban against homosexuals rests historically and legally upon government deference, particularly by Congress and the U.S. Supreme Court, to the judgment of military leaders on the basis of "military necessity." The military's singular mission is, as stated by the Secretary of Defense, on March 25, 1992, "to fight

A retired Marine colonel and Vietnam combat veteran, Ronald D. Ray currently practices law in Louisville, Ky. He also is a Reserve historian with the Marine Corps Historical Center in Washington and recently wrote a book, Military Necessity & Homosexuality, that argues for the ban on homosexuals openly serving in the armed services. The book is not available in bookstores but can be obtained by calling (800) 837-0544. The opinions expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the position of the Department of Defense. Copyright 1993 by First Principles, Inc.

WARNING

The following article contains sexually explicit language that may be offensive to some people and it should not be read by minors without parental guidance. The information contained herein is presented for the sole purpose of ensuring honest debate on the prudence of lifting the ban against homosexuals serving in the Armed Forces of the United States.

and win our wars," to defend America from enemies foreign and domestic. Anything or anyone who interferes with or inhibits the military's ability to accomplish that high calling with the fewest casualties threatens America's national security.

The military is entirely separate and apart from the civilian society it defends and is necessarily governed by different rules and standards. Soldiers are recruited and selected from classified groups. These classifications,

HIGH-LEVEL DEBATE—President Clinton and the Joint Chiefs discuss the ban on homosexuals in the military.

based upon military selection criteria, have been developed over time and proven on the battlefield.

First and foremost, the battlefield demands that young recruits between the ages of 18-26 be able-bodied. The military for the good of the services selects certain classifications of people and excludes classifications with characteristics shown to be unfit for military service such as convicted felons; non-high school graduates; drug users; physically disabled, etc. This is especially true when the military is reducing forces and ample numbers of able-bodied men are available for combat service. The extraordinary physical demands of combat on land, sea and air are unchanging and are still critically important in war. Military leaders declare that the battlefield has not become less demanding because of today's advanced technology, but rather more lethal.



In its effort to adhere to this standard and keep combat readiness at peak efficiency, service chiefs have consistently determined that there are no military reasons for allowing open homosexuals to serve in the Armed Forces. Among the many significant military reasons cited for maintaining the ban are sagging morale and cohesion, lack of privacy, fraternization, favoritism, sexual harassment and unnecessary disorder. While these are important considerations, any decision to allow homosexuals to serve is fundamentally flawed for one primary reason: Homosexuals as a group are simply not able-bodied.

DEFINING HOMOSEXUAL BEHAVIOR

"It is very difficult for me to make love, even safely; when the very act is now so inextricably bound up with death." —Larry Kramer¹

"In the first place, these people are in-

The media has put the nation at risk by protecting gays' deadly activities with the shield of "civil rights."

.....

involved in what I consider to be a filthy, disease-ridden practice . . ."—Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, USN (Ret.), former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

* * *

Without some understanding of what homosexuals actually do, a valid appraisal of the serious dangers homosexuals present to themselves, to others and to America is not possible.

Many homosexuals engage in sexual practices that are virtually unknown among heterosexuals. Almost all homosexuals engage in sexual practices involving degradation or humiliation that are rarely practiced by heterosexuals.² Furthermore, study after study indicates that homosexual men are extraordinarily promiscuous, which only aggravates their medical risk to the military.

A 1981 study found that only 2 percent of homosexuals could be considered monogamous or semi-monogamous (having 10 or fewer lifetime partners).³ Larry Kramer, a homosexual and AIDS activist, put it this way: Those with AIDS may be described sexually as the "genuinely promiscuous and the nearly monogamous."⁴

A 1983 study that required homosexuals to keep a diary of their sexual experiences found that the average male homosexual, in one year, 1) fellated 106 different men and swallowed seminal fluid 50 times, 2) experienced 72 penile penetrations of the anus, and 3) ingested the fecal matter of 23 different men.⁵

Despite the onset of AIDS, many male homosexuals, particularly younger men of military age, are still very promiscuous and have merely cut back on the number of partners: in one study, from 70 different partners per year to 50; in another study, from 76 different partners per year to 47.⁶ This is in contrast to a study published in 1990 which reported that for the U.S. population as a whole, the estimated number of sex partners since age 18 is seven to nine.⁷

IN ADDITION, most homosexuals still engage in unsafe sex. A study of 823 homosexual and bisexual males in 1989 found that 64 percent had engaged in at least one unsafe sexual practice during the previous two months. Only 9 percent claimed to consistently practice safe sex. Almost one quarter reported having unprotected anal intercourse during the previous two months.⁸

A compilation of recent health studies⁹ shows that homosexuals account for 80 percent of America's most serious sexually transmitted diseases, and that they account for less than 2 percent of the total American population.

Youths engaging in homosexual behavior are 23 times more likely to contract a sexually transmitted disease

AIDS AND VA

MORE than 30,000 veterans—mostly homosexuals or drug users—have been treated for HIV and AIDS at VA hospitals and clinics since 1983.

VA says the demographics of its AIDS patients mirror that of the U.S. population as a whole. As of September 1992, veterans being treated for AIDS in VA facilities were:

- 98 percent male.
- 48 percent homosexual or bisexual.
- 27 percent intravenous drug users.
- 7 percent homosexual drug users.
- 3 percent heterosexual.

According to VA, 3.5 percent got AIDS from tainted blood transfusions and 12 percent contracted the disease from unknown causes. Although women represent 4 percent of the veterans' community, less than 1 percent of VA's AIDS patients are female.

VA says the average age of a veteran diagnosed HIV positive is 43; average age that AIDS occurs is 54.

Both these figures are 10 years older than the national average.

In 1992, more than 37,500 new cases were reported nationwide. In spite of massive educational campaigns conducted by VA and other government and private health agencies, AIDS cases are on the rise.

Last year, VA treated 16,205 veterans as being HIV positive or having AIDS, compared to 14,947 in 1991, and 12,469 in 1990. In 1988, VA treated only 4,919 HIV/AIDS patients. Currently, HIV/AIDS treatment costs VA an average of \$29,000 per patient.

Veterans receiving care at VA facilities account for 6 percent of the nation's adult male AIDS patients, making VA the largest single source of AIDS treatment. According to VA, an average of 190 new AIDS cases are diagnosed each month at its facilities.

VA eligibility for treating veterans with HIV/AIDS is no different than the eligibility requirements for any other medical problem. Veterans

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IN THE HEADLINES—Les Aspin, Secretary of Defense, right, and Sen. Sam Nunn, the Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman, speak to the press after a meeting with President Clinton about gays in the military.

than strictly heterosexual youths. Lesbians are 19 times more likely than heterosexual women to have had syphilis, twice as likely to suffer from genital warts, and four times as likely to have scabies.

Male homosexuals are 14 times more likely to have had syphilis than male heterosexuals. They are also thousands of times more likely to contract AIDS. According to the Centers for Disease Control, at least two-thirds of all AIDS cases in the United States are directly attributable to homosexual conduct.¹⁰

Even more ominous than this blasé attitude towards promiscuity and sexually transmitted diseases, leaders of the homosexual/"gay rights" movement have consistently been willing to sup-

OPENING DEBATE—President Clinton delayed his campaign pledge to lift the ban by assigning Defense Secretary Aspin to write a new policy by July 15.

press data concerning the direct link between promiscuous homosexual behavior and AIDS in an effort to preserve public acceptance and empathy, or at least public neutrality and apathy."

The "cultural elites," including the media, have presented the matter entirely as a "civil rights" issue and have succeeded in concealing from the public their deadly activities while putting

the nation at risk. An informed public would be outraged at the truth and would undo all the gains that homosexuals have made in the name of "gay rights."

THE MEDICAL FACTS OF AIDS

Among the most obvious dangers homosexuals pose for the military is the
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PLUS

Gays In The Military?

SHOULD WE LIFT THE MILITARY'S GAY BAN?

As the President prepares a final decision, two combat colonels debate the issue: Is the ban against homosexuals a question of civil rights or military preparedness?

THE DEBATE over homosexuals in the military began during the first week of the new administration when President Clinton announced he planned to lift the ban on homosexuals in the Armed Forces.

Clinton says on July 15 he will issue an executive order permitting open homosexuals in the military. In the meantime, new military recruits are not being asked about their sexual orientation, and known homosexuals on active duty are no longer being separated from the service. Instead, they are being transferred to the standby Reserves.

As the July deadline approaches, the heated debate in Congress and the country is expected to grow. To better understand the issues, THE AMERICAN LEGION magazine brought together two combat veterans on opposite sides of the controversy for a face-to-face exchange.

Retired Marine Col. Ronald D. Ray, 50, saw combat in Vietnam. He received two Silver Stars, a Bronze Star with a combat "V," and Purple Heart. He was a deputy assistant Secretary of Defense in the Reagan administration. A practicing attorney and law professor, Ray also was a member of the Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces and is author of *Military Necessity & Homosexuality*.

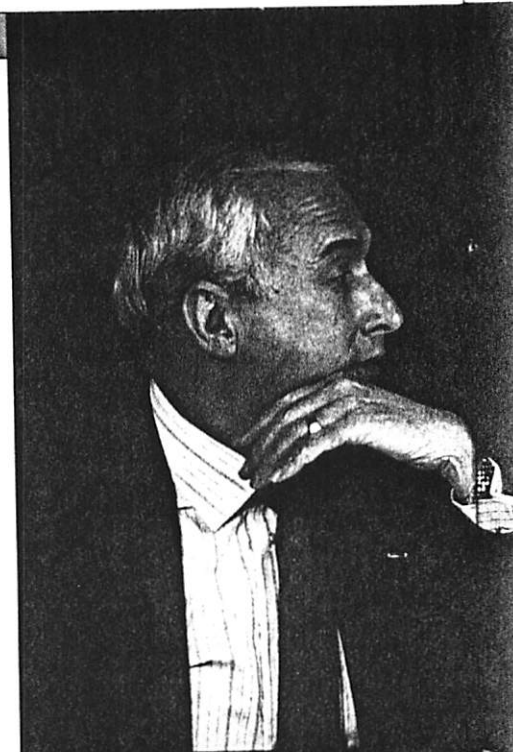
Retired Army Lt. Col. Charles F. "Chuck" Magness, a homosexual, has 20 years of service that included tours in Vietnam as a helicopter pilot and company commander. His awards include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star and Air

Medal. Magness, 53, who comes from a military family, graduated from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service. Today, Magness is an active volunteer with several homosexual rights groups.

AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE: President Clinton says "patriotic Americans should have the right to serve the country as members of the Armed Forces without regard to sexual orientation." What's wrong with that?

RONALD D. RAY: Homosexuality is incompatible with military service. Those who advocate the removal of the ban make no military case for doing so. There is no constitutional or legal right to serve your country.

We have a military selection process that historically classifies individuals according to the type of men we want on the battlefield. The criteria include age, mental aptitude, physical and psychological characteristics, and character and



HIGHLIGHTS

Charles Magness on...

Military gays: "It's a question of civil rights. You are discriminating against a class of people because of their sexual orientation, not behavior."

Schwarzkopf: "He said an openly gay person in the foxhole breaks down unit cohesion. Where's the proof?"

Gays at O clubs: "They should certainly be able to bring their partners to the clubs."

HIGHLIGHTS

Ron Ray on...

Excluding gays: "The experts say that in classifying people as suitable for military service, the group they would recruit from last is homosexuals."

Promiscuity: "Studies of homosexuals show that after they come out of the closet, their promiscuity becomes much more rampant."

Sexual expression: "It is encouraged in the homosexual community."

FACE-TO-FACE—Retired Army Lt. Col. Magness and retired Marine Col. Ray debate the ban.

conduct. The experts say that in classifying people as suitable for military service, the group they would recruit from last is homosexuals.

Q. Many ex-military homosexuals, including Chuck Magness, are living proof that homosexuals have served their country, and served it well.

RAY: We have all kinds of people who have excellent records but then we discover they had a problem, like alcoholism. Once it becomes known that someone possessed a characteristic which we would screen out ordinarily, that changes our assessment of the individual's worth entirely. He ceases to be a readiness asset for our nation's Armed Forces.

Q. Don't people like Chuck, who served honorably and faithfully, prove the President is right when he says you have to distinguish between orientation and conduct?

RAY: We are screening individuals on the basis of a classification system for military standards. Uniformity is what we are looking for.

I haven't seen Chuck's service record, but I have no doubt that he has a fine record, that he loves his country as much as I do, and that he served ably and well. It means we are screening him out because we are trying to have the most combat-ready force.

Q. Gen. Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs,

Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf, Gulf War commander, and Adm. William Crowe, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs and a backer of Clinton during the presidential campaign, oppose lifting the ban on homosexuals. A *Los Angeles Times* poll found that 74 percent of military people today also oppose lifting the ban. Col. Magness, why do you think you are right and all those people are wrong?

CHARLES F. MAGNESS: Gen. Schwarzkopf said that when you have a person who is openly gay in the foxhole, unit cohesion breaks down. Where is the proof for that? We didn't have open homosexuals in foxholes during the years I was a commissioned officer. I challenge anybody to present facts and figures supporting Schwarzkopf's claim. They just don't have them.

Q. David Hackworth, who is described as the most decorated living American veteran, says he witnessed "countless examples of inappropriate morale-busting behavior by homosexuals in the military." He cites a case of a gay soldier who could not keep his hands off other soldiers in his squad, a personnel major who had affairs with teenage soldiers in exchange for jacking up their test scores, and a gay commanding officer who gave combat awards to his lovers who had never been on the line. Won't the admission of open homosexuals and their promotion to higher ranks lead to more such cases?

MAGNESS: You have to prove what Mr. Hackworth is saying

PHOTOS BY GRANDALL PICTURE GROUP



RAY:
 "If Congress listens to the people, it will pass a ban on homosexuals in the military."



MAGNESS:
 "The military has yet to come up with any facts why Clinton shouldn't lift the ban."

is correct. The rules say he would have had to discharge homosexuals. Did he just watch unit cohesion go down? I don't know if he is making them up or whether he was a well-decorated, lousy commander who didn't enforce the rules.

Q. Another Vietnam veteran, columnist William Hamilton, has raised other fears. "How can we in good conscience order our warriors to share the battlefield with the highest risk group for AIDS?" he asks. What if homosexual GIs gave blood to fellow soldiers?

MAGNESS: There wasn't an instance of it happening in the Gulf War. We don't transfuse people with other people's blood under those circumstances because it is dangerous, and not just because of AIDS, but because of hepatitis B and other diseases that might be in their blood. You have to have pure blood.

Q. But aren't homosexuals more prone to all of those other diseases?

MAGNESS: Homosexuals are the largest category of people infected with HIV and who have AIDS. But the homosexual community has tapered off in the rate of infection. Meanwhile, the rate of infection among heterosexuals is skyrocketing.

THE LEGION'S POSITION

THE American Legion has called on the President to abandon his plan to lift the ban on homosexuals in the military.

"The purpose of our military is to defend our country, not serve as a laboratory for sociopolitical experimentation," says National Commander Roger A. Munson.

The Legion supports the Department of Defense (DoD) position opposing homosexuals in military service. This support was reaffirmed during the 1992 Fall Meeting when the National Executive Committee passed Res. 25, which states, "that The American Legion go on record as being in total support of the DoD position that homosexuality is incompatible with military service."

Q. But, surely you can understand why heterosexual soldiers would fear having homosexual soldiers at their side? Look at basketball star Magic Johnson, who is infected with the AIDS virus. He was forced to retire from the sport a second time after fellow basketball players were alarmed to see him bleeding during a game.

MAGNESS: I understand that. But if we accept the low number of 2 percent homosexuals in the country, are we going to be immobilized because of that? And have you heard of Wilt Chamberlain, another basketball player, who said in his book that he has had sex with 20,000 partners? The issue is promiscuity.

RAY: Yes, and studies of homosexuals show that after they come out of the closet, their promiscuity becomes much more rampant. The average homosexual who doesn't have AIDS has had over 500 partners and those who do have AIDS have had over 1,000 partners. And it is the open homosexual that we are saying cannot serve in the military. The homosexual who has his sexuality under control is for all military intents and purposes not a homosexual.

MAGNESS: I talk with a lot of people who are very concerned about the lack of leadership in the military today because of the heterosexual misconduct that goes on. The Tailhook scandal was very damaging.

Q. Won't you compound the problem of sexual misconduct by allowing open homosexuals in the military?

MAGNESS: If I tell you I'm a homosexual, are you worried right now that I'm going to run up your leg with my toes?

RAY: It is a felony in the military.

MAGNESS: Have you ever heard of the felony called adultery? Maybe you ought to go to Korea and see how many heterosexual soldiers conduct themselves. Married troops stationed in Korea without their wives are living with Korean women. Where is the cry that we should put these people out of the service?

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