

# The Family in America

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## **The Pentagon Surrenders: How the Pursuit of ‘Diversity’ Places the Military at Risk**

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**AMERICANS WHO ADMIRE THE UNITED STATES MILITARY** usually think of it as a conservative, traditional institution that maintains high standards, discipline, and core values unlike those of any institution in the civilian world. They might even think that the American military is a family-friendly institution. That may have been the case at one time. But in recent years, secretaries of defense, army generals and admirals, White House political appointees, and Pentagon bureaucrats have been undermining, albeit incrementally, the unique culture of the military that has made our fighting forces second to none. Yielding to political pressure from both Republican and Democratic commanders in chief, military leaders repeatedly have surrendered—against the wishes of the vast majority of subordinate personnel—to the demands of civilian ideologues, liberal media, and academics who do not understand or appreciate the unique culture of the military. These activists and allies in Congress want the military not so much to protect American interests abroad but to promote the anti-family, social-engineering agenda of “diversity” at home.

When the September 11 attacks occurred, President George W. Bush mobilized the troops to fight, but he did not appeal to the nation’s young men to consider volunteering for the combat arms. Had he done so, many sons of America would have answered the call and the heightened need of new troops for the Middle East wars likely would have been met.

Instead, the Bush administration retained “diversity” goals demanded by civilian and Pentagon feminist ideologues. The armed forces kept recruiting relatively more women and placing young mothers near the front lines of combat, resulting in the deaths of 112 daughters of America serving in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Kuwait. Allan Carlson has called this a “shameful blot” on the American record.<sup>1</sup> President Barack Obama has gone beyond his predecessor, pushing to assign women to submarines and to repeal the 1993 law, always mislabeled “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” that codified long-standing Defense Department regulations declaring that homosexuality is incompatible with military service.<sup>2</sup>

The champions of diversity show no signs of backing down; in fact, they are claiming the high road. They say they are honoring the spirit of President Harry Truman’s 1948 Executive Order that confronted racial discrimination: “There shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin.” That order, primarily issued to advance military necessity, also recognized that racial prejudice was irrational and inconsistent with American ideals. But common-sense recognition that men and women are not interchangeable in all military roles, or that the at-risk intimate behavior of professed “sexual minorities” in the ranks would undermine discipline and morale, cannot be equated with the irrational injustice of racial discrimination in the 1940s and 1950s. The attempt to hijack the moral capital of the civil rights movement dishonors the epic struggle of African Americans for equality before the law. It is motivated not by a passion for American ideals, but by a fixation with the elitist concept of “diversity” for its own sake.

This campaign to subordinate military purposes to political correctness received a boost in May 2005 when Secretary of Defense Donald

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1. Allan Carlson, “Discounting Family Values,” *The American Conservative*, November 17, 2008, p. 14.
  2. The 1993 eligibility law (Public Law 103-160, November 30, 1993, 10 USC Section 654) should not be confused with President Bill Clinton’s “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” enforcement regulations, which removed “the question” about homosexuality that used to be on military induction forms. The actual law states that homosexuals are not eligible to serve in the military, but the Clinton regulations suggest that they can serve as long as they do not *say* or do anything indicating that they engage in homosexual conduct. Elaine Donnelly, “Constructing the Co-Ed Military,” *Duke Journal of Law and Policy* 14 (2007): pp. 903–13.

Rumsfeld established a Pentagon Defense Diversity Working Group that would operate as the “primary collaboration and execution body for diversity management in the Department of Defense.”<sup>3</sup> In that same month, House Armed Services Committee Chairman Duncan Hunter of California was attempting to codify long-standing Defense Department regulations regarding women in or near direct ground combat. In retrospect, it appears that Rumsfeld’s “diversity” initiative took precedence over Hunter’s pending legislation, already passed in committee, which would have codified sensible policies regarding women in the military. In a private meeting, Rumsfeld persuaded Hunter to withdraw his legislation. This led to three years of unprecedented change affecting army women in war zones—a change occurring without congressional oversight. Three years later, obscure language in the National Defense Authorization Act of 2009 codified Rumsfeld’s initiative as the Military Leadership Diversity Commission. That commission includes officials of the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute, which is known for controversial diversity-training programs in the armed forces.<sup>4</sup> According to a recent commission paper, the next milestone will be a “Diversity Measures Strategic Plan,” leading to the implementation of diversity initiatives in all of the military services.<sup>5</sup>

Rumsfeld left the Pentagon in 2006, but Robert Gates has expanded his predecessor’s social initiatives with the enthusiastic support of Adm. Mike Mullen, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In a September 2009 speech before the diversity commission, Mullen proclaimed that diversity is a “strategic imperative for the security of our country.”<sup>6</sup> This was more than a platitude—in the armed forces statements of policy are taken to logical conclusions and sometimes to extremes.

At the Naval Academy, for example, “diversity” is the rationale behind gender-based recruiting quotas that have increased the percentage of

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3. The Defense Diversity Working Group, Issue Paper No. 7, December 2009, p. 1, <[http://mldc.whs.mil/download/documents/Issue%20Papers/DDWG\\_Issue\\_Paper\\_7.pdf](http://mldc.whs.mil/download/documents/Issue%20Papers/DDWG_Issue_Paper_7.pdf)>.

4. Matt Labash, “How the Military Indoctrinates Diversity,” *The Weekly Standard*, August 18, 1997.

5. Defense Diversity Working Group, Issue Paper No. 7, p. 2.

6. John J. Kruzal, “Mike Mullen Speaks About Diversity in the Military,” Armed Forces Information Services, September 17, 2009, <[www.jcs.mil/speech.aspx?id=1249](http://www.jcs.mil/speech.aspx?id=1249)>.

female midshipmen from 17.6 percent to 20 percent since 2006. That proportion has increased even though the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps reportedly have a greater need for male officers for marine infantry and special-operations forces, SEALs, and submarines.<sup>7</sup> The result has been increased pressure to create gender-neutral career opportunities in previously all-male communities. In May, Navy Secretary Ray Mabus and Adm. Mullen announced plans to assign female officers to submarines, ignoring the navy's own reports documenting the unique health risks to women.<sup>8</sup> Submarines differ from surface ships in many ways. The constantly recycled, enclosed atmosphere contains concentrations of carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, and other trace elements that are safe for adults but not for developing embryos in the early weeks of life before a sailor knows she is pregnant. The risk of birth defects could force a captain to choose between the ship's undersea mission and the need for an immediate mid-ocean evacuation, which is dangerous for everyone. According to retired Navy Rear Adm. Hugh Scott, an expert in undersea medicine, ectopic pregnancy is a life-threatening emergency that is not rare. To avoid fatal hemorrhage, it requires immediate surgery. Absent skilled medical care and advanced diagnostic equipment in the cramped quarters of a submarine, a woman's reproductive capability could be put at great risk.

Rarely challenged because of their rank, high-level military officials like Admiral Mullen and chief of naval operations, Adm. Gary Roughead, dismiss such concerns, claiming that diversity-based personnel policies are "the right thing to do." But an examination of the history, development, and implementation of these politically correct policies suggests that they are *not* the right thing to do for the vast majority of men and women who serve in the military. The Pentagon has never ordered an objective, independent review of almost three decades of social engineering, mandated to placate liberal critics instead of advancing military

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7. Testimony of Rodney P. Rempt, Superintendent of the U.S. Naval Academy, Committee on Government Reform, Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats, and International Relations, "Sexual Assault and Violence Against Women in the Military and at the Academies," June 27, 2006.

8. See "Submarine Assignment Assessment Policy," a report prepared for the navy by SAIC, February 1, 1995, <<http://cmrlink.org/CMRNotes/SAPA%20020195.pdf>>.

necessity as the primary goal. Such an examination would demonstrate how experiments with “diversity” undermine important cultural factors—morale, discipline, and overall readiness of our military forces—on which our national security depends.

### **Sending Our Daughters to War**

In 1992, I served as a member of Presidential George H. W. Bush’s Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces. Congress had established the commission after the first Persian Gulf War, which involved the largest deployment of women soldiers in history. To the shock of Americans back home, many of the soldiers fighting that war were young mothers leaving little children behind. Consequently, Congress directed the presidential commission to study and provide recommendations on the assignment of military women to close combat units on land, sea, and in the air, and to consider family issues affecting morale, deployability, and the well-being of children.

After months of field trips and testimony from expert witnesses and military personnel expressing different views, our deliberations came down to one question: What standard should we apply when making recommendations regarding women in combat? During the most intense debate of the year, some commissioners argued that we should assign highest priority to “diversity,” meaning that women should have an “equal opportunity” to serve in all units, including close-combat units on land. The majority of commissioners, however, voted to adopt and apply a different over-arching standard of review: “In the formulation of personnel policies, equal opportunity is important, but if there is a conflict between equal opportunity and military necessity, the needs of the military must come first.” The majority recognized that policies subordinating military readiness and effectiveness to equal opportunity and career considerations would create problems with few benefits. The majority also believed that remedies intended to compensate for the differences between men and women ultimately would not only weaken the culture of the military but also degrade the armed forces’ ability to prevail in war.

The commission narrowly approved a resolution opposing the assignment of female pilots in tactical (combat) aviation. That recommendation took shape after air force survival-training personnel, who specialized in

programs preparing aviators and other potential prisoners of war, testified about the cultural and military impact of witnessing women captives being abused behind enemy lines. In response to evidence of physical differences between men and women, combined with concerns about personal relationships and related factors such as pregnancy, the commission opposed gender integration in the infantry, special-operations forces, submarines, and amphibious vessels, but supported the assignment of women on aircraft carriers and most surface ships.<sup>9</sup>

On November 4, 1992, the day that the commission approved its recommendations, Bill Clinton won the presidential election. Our recommendations were both reasonable and practical, but the Clinton administration and Congress essentially disregarded the commission's report and its findings. In 1993, the House Armed Services Committee invited me to speak for five minutes, the first testimony on the subject heard by the committee since 1979. Although Congress would hold numerous hearings about the harassment or abuse of women in the military, neither the House nor the Senate has given consideration to underlying, unresolved questions about putting women and young mothers in or near close-combat units. Throughout human history and for many sound reasons, "tip of the spear" combat units have been limited to men.

Congress missed an opportunity to review the issue in 2005, two years into the war in Iraq, when House Armed Services Committee members discussed the assignments of women in combat but did not schedule hearings. Chairman Hunter, after leading an hour-long debate, persuaded the committee to pass an amendment to the 2006 National Defense Authorization bill that would have codified existing Defense Department regulations limiting the exposure of women in or near direct ground combat. Hunter initiated the debate in response to persistent, credible reports that the army was placing women soldiers in or near direct ground-combat units that were required to be all male. Former Defense Secretary Les Aspin, who served under President Clinton, had

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9. Report of the Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, November 15, 1992, U.S. Government Printing Office.

established the still-current rules in 1994.<sup>10</sup> Aspin's rules, while opening hundreds of positions to women, still preserved their exemption from assignment in or "collocated" with direct ground-combat units. However, Aspin dropped the "risk rule" intended to limit the exposure of women soldiers in support units to "risk of capture" by the enemy.

Keep in mind how the Defense Department defines "direct ground combat." The official definition involves more than the experience of being in danger, fighting in self-defense, or being "in harm's way." In a war zone, everyone is "in harm's way." This is why Pfc. Jessica Lynch was in a Third Infantry maintenance unit that was ambushed in March 2003. Contradicting reports that she had fought until her ammunition ran out, Lynch later revealed previously withheld medical evidence that she had been raped while unconscious in captivity. Lynch's friend Pfc. Lori Piestewa, raising two little boys alone, became the first woman soldier killed in Iraq. We honor and respect Lynch and Piestewa, who served "in harm's way" and faced constant danger. However, their experience differs from direct ground-combat missions, which *attack* the enemy with deliberate *offensive* action under fire. For example, all-male army and marine infantry battalions and special-operations forces engaged in offensive operations, i.e., direct ground combat, to liberate Baghdad in 2003 and Fallujah in 2004.

Yet many articles and commentaries about women and mothers in war blur this important distinction by invariably asserting that, in the Middle East, everyone is "in combat" because "there is no front line." That may be the case right now, but the observation fails to recognize front-line operations early in Operation Iraqi Freedom or the fact that troops may have to fight aggressively against determined enemies again. Nor is there any guarantee that offensive operations against a heavily armed opposing force will not be required elsewhere in the future. Moreover, differences in physical strength—which training cannot overcome—effectively prevent most women from serving in every military specialty. A fully equipped infantryman, for example, routinely carries on his back weapons, ammunition, body armor, food, water, electronic devices, and

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10. See Memorandum for the Military Service Secretaries, "Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule," January 13, 1993.

batteries weighing one-hundred pounds or more. Women soldiers are brave, but rarely capable of carrying such burdens. Even more strength is needed to individually lift and carry a wounded soldier to life-saving emergency care on the battlefield. This is one reason why female soldiers are exempt from small direct ground-combat battalions and support units that embed or “collocate” with direct ground-combat units 100 percent of the time.

### **The Duplicity of the Defense Department**

While most Americans outside the Beltway understand these realities, “diversity”-minded army generals, political appointees, and bureaucrats in the Pentagon since 2005 have sought not only to downplay documented differences between men and women in close combat but also to disregard the Aspin rules. In the second year of Operation Iraqi Freedom, army officials began redefining and circumventing Defense Department regulations regarding women. In the Third Infantry in Fort Stewart, Georgia, the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, the First Cavalry, Fourth Infantry Division at Fort Hood, Texas, and elsewhere, the army began to “attach” women soldiers to combat-located “forward support companies” that were required to be all male.<sup>11</sup> Following an internal memorandum warning that these actions could be seen as “subterfuge” to circumvent the Defense Department policy and legally required prior notice to Congress, officials claimed they were in compliance because the women were “assigned” (on paper only) to larger brigade-level units open to both men and women. This, they claimed, justified geographically “attaching” them to combat-located forward support companies coded to be all male.<sup>12</sup> If the practice truly benefited the army, it would not be necessary to resort to subterfuge.

In March 2005, President Bush’s newly appointed secretary of the army, Francis Harvey, initially denied changes in policy but later used semantics and sophistry to mislead members of Congress who inquired

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11. CMR Policy Analysis, “Army Still Violating Policy and Law on Women in Combat,” February 2006, <<http://cmrlink.org/CMRNotes/CE-QLO%20051004.pdf>>.

12. “Combat Exclusion Quick Look Options,” an Army Briefing Paper obtained by CMR, May 10, 2004, p. 14, <<http://cmrlink.org/CMRNotes/CE-QLO%20051004.pdf>>.

about credible evidence that the army was breaking the rules.<sup>13</sup> Meanwhile, Gen. Peter Schoomaker, the army chief of staff, told a group of Pentagon appointees “we are going to push these changes through so fast that the mines will all explode behind us.”<sup>14</sup> The controversy simmered until Congress finally took action. In the House Armed Services Committee, Hunter sponsored legislation to codify Defense Department regulations in law, which would not have removed women from any position legally open to them. Hunter’s amendment was approved in committee and had a good chance of passage in the 2006 National Defense Authorization Act. But the full House never voted on the amendment because Hunter complied with the secretary’s request to withdraw the legislation and substituted different language mandating that the Pentagon produce a report on the subject that would serve as the basis for future hearings.

That task was handed off to the RAND Corporation, which delayed release of the report until August 2007, seventeen months after the deadline. Instead of providing objective, credible information useful for congressional hearings and oversight, the RAND report, titled “Assessing the Assignment Policy for Army Women,” created confusion with unsupported findings, misinformation, and flawed assumptions about questionable Pentagon practices. RAND’s “rubber-stamp” report obfuscated the difference between “assigning” and “attaching” women in or near direct ground-combat units, allowing the army to avoid accountability to Congress.<sup>15</sup> The new policy on women in combat since then—essentially, “almost anything goes”—has invited bold evasions of the law. In February 2008, for example, an Indiana National Guard infantry unit deployed to Afghanistan with about thirty-nine women, many of them young mothers, in an infantry battalion that was still coded to be all male. According to the Fort Wayne *Journal Gazette*, officials did this “to expand women’s roles,” but they could not explain what would happen to the women in

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13. “Army Still Violating Policy and Law on Women in Combat, CMR Policy Analysis, February 2006, <<http://cmrlink.org/CMRNotes/CMR%20Policy%20Analysis%20020806.pdf>>. Also Elaine Donnelly, “Hunter Moves to Keep Women From Combat,” *Human Events*, May 13, 2005, <[www.humanevents.com/article.php?print=yes&id=7448](http://www.humanevents.com/article.php?print=yes&id=7448)>.

14. According to an army staff official present at the meeting who prefers to remain unnamed.

15. Rubber-Stamp RAND Report Promotes Women in Land Combat,” CMR Policy Analysis, October 2007, <[www.cmrlink.org/WomenInCombat.asp?docID=305](http://www.cmrlink.org/WomenInCombat.asp?docID=305)>.

the future if the same infantry battalion, now gender-integrated, were needed to perform its primary mission, direct ground combat.<sup>16</sup> By failing to raise such issues during hearings, Congress essentially abdicated its constitutional responsibility for oversight on matters important not just to women in the military, but also to young civilian women.

The army's unauthorized, incremental redefinition of land combat essentially invites the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) to file a lawsuit challenging young women's exemption from Selective Service obligations. In *Rostker v. Goldberg* (1981), the Supreme Court upheld women's exemption from registration because military officials do not assign female soldiers to direct ground-combat units. Since conscripts are called up only when "combat replacements" are needed, the Court in *Rostker* upheld women's exemption from Selective Service registration. In 2006, a Massachusetts court rejected a similar challenge for the same reason.<sup>17</sup> But if the army continues to blur the definition of combat, it is only a matter of time before the ACLU files another lawsuit on behalf of men claiming discrimination. If successful, such a lawsuit likely would result in a court ruling ordering the daughters of American families to share their brothers' obligation to register for Selective Service and a possible future draft. This interpretation of equality would ignore military realities. In direct ground combat, women do not have an equal opportunity to survive, or to help fellow soldiers survive.

### **Motherhood, Pregnancy, and Military Readiness**

The same noncompliance with law and policy on the part of the Pentagon has deterred an assessment of policies that have increased the numbers of mothers sent to fight in war. The National Guard, which allows mothers with multiple children to enlist, has become a magnet for vulnerable women, particularly single mothers seeking medical benefits for their children. Rumpelstiltskin recruiting practices offer generous pay, medical, education, and child-care benefits, with lengthy separations from their

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16. Kara Lopp, "I-293<sup>rd</sup> Adjust to Women in Combat," *The Journal Gazette*, February 25, 2008, <[www.journalgazette.net/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080225/LOCAL10/802250303](http://www.journalgazette.net/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080225/LOCAL10/802250303)>.

17. Samuel Schwartz et al. v. Lewis C. Brodsky and Thomas Reilly, Civil Action No. 03-10005-EFH, May 29, 2003.

children being the ultimate tradeoff later. Nonetheless, the needs of the military often clash with the desires of single mothers, as the November 2009 story of Spec. Alexis Hutchinson reveals. Hutchinson, a 21-year-old single mother who was a cook assigned to the Third Infantry based at Fort Stewart, Georgia, was jailed and faced with court-martial when she failed to deploy to Afghanistan. Hutchinson did not board the plane because her plans to leave her ten-month-old son with her mother in California had fallen through. The army expected Hutchinson to put her child into foster care, if necessary, but she refused. As reported nationwide, the single mother was confined on base. In February 2010, officials separated Hutchinson from the army with an other-than-honorable discharge.<sup>18</sup> Thousands of mothers in the military, whether single or married, face similar dilemmas during time of war. All have reason to worry about their children left behind.

In December 2009, the RAND Corporation released a surprisingly candid study of the emotional impact of longer deployments on military children. Commissioned by the National Military Family Association, the study found that across all age groups, children from military families reported significantly higher levels of emotional difficulties than children in the general population. About one-third of the children surveyed reported elevated symptoms of anxiety, evidenced by behavioral problems in school and at home. Researchers also found that longer deployments worsened emotional problems even among older children.<sup>19</sup>

The 1992 presidential commission on which I served heard testimony from child-development experts predicting these problems. Little was done, except to spend more dollars on the Defense Department's child-care system—the largest in the world. Recognizing that there were no simple solutions, the commission made a series of recommendations identifying three parties of interest in military family matters: the mother and her career; field commanders who need deployable troops; and the

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18. Joe Gould, "Charge or Discharge? Single Mother Jailed for Refusing to Deploy," *Army Times*, p. 16.

19. RAND News Release, "Longer Parental Deployment Linked to More Emotional Challenges for Military Children," December 7, 2009, and Shaun Waterman, "Deployed Troops' Children at High Risk of Angst," *The Washington Times*, December 7, 2009.

needs of children. But instead of attempting to balance these interests, Pentagon officials have assigned highest priority to women's careers, despite negative consequences for field commanders and the well-being of children. Gender-based recruiting targets (read quotas) for female recruits have remained unchanged, even during the post-Gulf War draw-down in the 1990s and the post-September 11 wars in the Middle East.

By making no distinction between who does the soldiering and who does the mothering, these policies have increased the number of single mothers with custody and the number of dependent children separated from dual-service parents during lengthy deployments. They also make it difficult for field commanders that need deployable troops. Late in 2009, Maj. Gen. Anthony Cucolo III, commander of the Multi-National Division-North in Iraq, discovered this when he staked out a position on a sensitive matter: pregnancy in war zones.<sup>20</sup> Noting that pregnancy is one of several conditions requiring evacuation from war zones, General Cucolo issued new rules treating pregnancy as a combat-readiness issue. *Stars and Stripes* reported that the general's directives outlined penalties including courts-martial for soldiers becoming pregnant or, in the case of men, causing a pregnancy. The rules paralleled prohibitions against other actions, including illegal drug use, elective surgery, or self-inflicted physical injuries, which cause a soldier to be non-deployable or evacuated from a war zone.<sup>21</sup>

The general's common-sense policies did not sit well on Capitol Hill. Democratic Senators Kirsten Gillibrand, Barbara Mikulski, and Barbara Boxer immediately demanded that Army Secretary John McHugh rescind Cucolo's wartime pregnancy policy. Enter Army Chief of Staff George Casey—the same general who after the November 2009 Fort Hood attack suggested that “as horrific as this tragedy was, if our diversity becomes a

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20. Elaine Donnelly, “Making Both Love and War,” *Human Events*, January 13, 2010, <[www.humanevents.com/article.php?print=yes&id=35173](http://www.humanevents.com/article.php?print=yes&id=35173)>.

21. Teri Weaver, “U.S. Personnel in Iraq Could Face Court-Martial for Getting Pregnant,” *Stars and Stripes*, December 19, 2009, <[www.stripes.com/news/u-s-personnel-in-iraq-could-face-court-martial-for-getting-pregnant-1.97533](http://www.stripes.com/news/u-s-personnel-in-iraq-could-face-court-martial-for-getting-pregnant-1.97533)>.

casualty, I think that's worse."<sup>22</sup> Casey met with Cucolo in Iraq and provided "professional development" guidance, but the general stuck to his guns, explaining that his goal was to promote "thoughtful thinking and responsible behavior" about personal choices affecting others. Stressing the importance of maintaining sufficient "mission-critical" manpower, Cucolo said, "I'm going to do everything I can to keep my combat power. And in the Army, combat power is the individual soldier." The general added that letters of reprimand, not the courts-martial and jail penalties that some media outlets reported, were sufficient for enforcement.<sup>23</sup> Within days, however, the commander of the Iraq Forces, Gen. Ray Odierno, issued a broad new policy that omitted pregnancy from the list of punishable personal behaviors resulting in non-deployable status. Odierno's intervention left field commanders to carry on with short-handed units and a new form of "double standards involving women," or DSIW for short, which impose burdens on everyone else. Military women are not responsible for most forms of DSIW, including gender-normed scores in physical training, but they often get undeserved blame when double standards harm morale.<sup>24</sup>

The Cucolo controversy demonstrates the failure of feminist-fearing generals and admirals to reconsider flawed policies involving women. *Navy Times* recently reported that pregnancy rates in the navy spiked by 50 percent in two years.<sup>25</sup> Ship crews suffer when sailors become unavailable for deployment or require early evacuations due to pregnancy and year-long maternity leaves. Instead of re-assessing misguided policies that have worsened the problem, the navy plans to *extend* them to the submarine service in the next milestone on the "high road" to "diversity."

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22. Patrick Jonsson, "Fort Hood Review May Challenge Political Correctness Up the Ranks," *The Christian Science Monitor*, November 14, 2009, <[www.csmonitor.com/layout/set/print/content/view/print/263143](http://www.csmonitor.com/layout/set/print/content/view/print/263143)>.

23. Michael J. Carden, "General Cites Reasons for Pregnancy Provision in Iraq," American Forces Press Service, December 22, 2009, <[www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=57232](http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=57232)>.

24. Associated Press, "Commander to Rescind a Provision on Pregnancy," December 25, 2009, <[www.nytimes.com/2009/12/26/us/26military.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/26/us/26military.html)>.

25. Mark D. Faram, "More Moms-to-Be: Fleetwide Survey, Other Data Show '08 Pregnancy Spike," *Navy Times*, August 31, 2009, p. 16.

### **The Push to Open the Ranks to Homosexuals**

Given this history, the repeal of the 1993 law stating that homosexuals are not eligible for military service, which should have been called the “Military Personnel Eligibility Act of 1993,” has become the next step in the campaign to promote diversity in the military. Had the George W. Bush administration been vigilant in maintaining sound priorities, President Obama would be facing an uphill battle to remake the military. Instead, a last-minute addition to his State of the Union address in January has put repeal of the 1993 law on the fast track. It doesn’t matter that the law was passed by both houses of Congress with veto-proof majorities, signed by President Clinton, and upheld as constitutional by federal courts several times. If successful, President Obama’s repeal effort would further undermine the culture of the military and place America at risk.

A few days after President Obama called for repeal, Joint Chiefs Chairman Mike Mullen and Secretary of Defense Robert Gates testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee, promoting the cause as if the president’s speech had settled, by fiat, the issue. Neither witness claimed any benefits of repeal except the advancement of “diversity.” Secretary Gates cited the president’s campaign promise to interest groups representing those who identify themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered, or “LGBT” for short. Admiral Mullen overstepped his appropriate role by expressing his personal opposition to a policy that, he claimed, forces some service members to “lie.” The institutional dishonesty that Mullen complains about is not a result of the 1993 law but the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” enforcement regulations that are inconsistent with the statute. Mullen and Gates also disregarded the professional advice of more than twelve hundred Flag & General Officers for the Military, fifty-one of them former four-stars, who personally signed a statement to President Obama and Congress warning that repeal would lead to consequences that would “break” the all-volunteer force.<sup>26</sup>

This latest push follows legislation introduced in 2009 by Democratic Rep. Patrick Murphy of Pennsylvania, the primary sponsor of H.R. 1283. The Murphy bill, which would also repeal the 1993 eligibility law, would

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26. See roster of names posted at the website of the Flag & General Officers for the Military, <[www.flagandgeneralofficersforthemilitary.com](http://www.flagandgeneralofficersforthemilitary.com)>.

apply retroactively and forbid discrimination based on “homosexuality or bisexuality, whether the orientation is real or perceived.” Whether imposed by legislation or Pentagon regulations, this open-ended law would change the military’s culture by advancing “diversity” on behalf of LGBT minorities. The congressman secured more than 180 co-sponsors, but he lacked sufficient votes to achieve passage in the House Armed Services Committee, currently chaired by Democratic Rep. Ike Skelton of Missouri, who supports the current law. Success seemed even more unlikely when Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen co-signed a letter asking Congress to delay action on the Murphy legislation until after the Pentagon review and survey of the troops is completed later this year.

On May 27 of this year, however, a combination of liberals and misguided legislators fell for a “Repeal Deal,” contrived by the White House with LGBT appointees and activist groups, which would immediately revoke the 1993 law with “delayed implementation” long after the 2010 elections. Murphy substituted the Repeal Deal amendment for his original bill while Joseph Lieberman offered identical amendment language in the Senate committee bill. Disregarding letters of opposition from the military-service chiefs of the army, navy, air force, and marines, the House of Representatives and the Senate Armed Services Committee voted for identical Repeal Deal amendments to the 2011 National Defense Authorization bill.

The bill now awaits action on the part of the entire Senate unless John McCain, a ranking member of the Senate committee, successfully executes a filibuster. If that fails and the bill passes, final action would not occur until the Pentagon finishes its review, due December 1. At that point President Obama, Secretary Gates, and Chairman Mullen are supposed to “certify” that repeal will not harm “military readiness, military effectiveness and unit cohesion, recruiting/retention, and family readiness that may result from repeal of the law and recommend any actions that should be taken in light of such impacts.” Since the proposed legislation lacks any definition of these terms, the designated triumvirate will have the power to pull the trigger sixty days after “certification” of their own previously stated opinions regarding the 1993 law. With Congress and the statute out of the way, the Obama administration will then have full power to impose “sexual diversity” on the military.

### **Consequences of the Pending 'Repeal Deal'**

As the language of the original Murphy bill reveals, any policy that advances the LGBT agenda would govern the lives of men and women in all military branches and communities, including army and marine infantry battalions, special-operations forces, navy SEALs, and submarines. Unlike civilians, military personnel in these communities do not return home at night after work. They must accept living conditions involving what the current law describes as “forced intimacy,” offering little or no privacy. Consequently, the mandated inclusion of professed homosexuals and bisexuals in this high-pressure environment—24 hours a day, seven days a week—would be tantamount to forcing women soldiers to share private living quarters with men. Such a situation would be unacceptable to the majority of military women even if assaults never occurred. In gender-neutral terms, the military would require military *persons* to accept exposure to *persons* who may be sexually attracted to them.

Personnel policies work best when they encourage discipline rather than indiscipline. This is why the military separates, to the greatest extent possible, men from women in close quarters where there is little or no privacy. The new law requiring cohabitation with homosexuals or bisexuals, “whether the orientation is real or perceived,” would disregard what we already know about men and women in the military. Sexual tension or misconduct of any kind is inherently disruptive whether it occurs on the romantic end of the behavioral spectrum or on the other end where harassment or sexual assaults occur. Some advocates of homosexuals in the military argue that modern military facilities provide more privacy than older ones. Even if service members are exposed to “sexual minorities” in the field, younger people are used to it, they say, so this is no big deal. But the armed forces are not a *Will and Grace* world, created by television sitcom writers for laughs; the “gender-free” culture of the diversity gurus is social-science fiction. The issue involves sexuality and the normal human desire for personal privacy and modesty in sexual matters. Elitist arguments equating sexual differences with skin-deep, irrelevant racial differences stand in stark contrast with common-sense customs that are culturally routine.

Consider, for example, a community recreation center that has separate locker rooms for men and women. Inside the entrance of the women’s

locker room, a sign clearly states that boys of any age are not permitted. A similar sign regarding girls is posted in the men's locker room. The signs are there not as an affront to young boys or girls. They are there because the community respects the desire for modesty in conditions involving personal exposure to others using the same facility. This is the case even though patrons visit the center for only an hour or two; they do not live and sleep there for months at a time. Signs mandating racial segregation in the same community center would never be acceptable. Racial segregation has no rational basis; separation by gender does. Military volunteers deserve the same consideration. Yet they would have no such recourse under an LGBT regime. Indeed, commanders, mid-level career officers, and noncommissioned officers would be required to determine how the open-ended "real or perceived" concept would apply. Political appointees or the federal courts, ultimately, will interpret the new "non-discrimination" paradigm and will likely extend it to include every conceivable "sexual minority," including individuals perceiving themselves to be persons of the opposite sex.

In a May 2009 report promoting a road map for repealing the 1993 law, the Michael D. Palm Center, formerly called the Center for the Study of Sexual Minorities in the Military, not only conceded the difficulties that will emerge under the new regime but also called upon the military to overcome those expected problems through conscious coercion.<sup>27</sup> In a three-page section of that report, subtitled "Organizational Changes that Should Accompany Policy Change," the authors used variations of the word "implementation," "enforcement," or "compliance," often in tandem with the word "problems," no less than thirty-five times. The largely civilian leaders of the Palm Center based their recommendations not on military history or experience, but on "social science research that has focused specifically on sexual orientation and on the open service of gays and lesbians in militaries abroad." The report's recommendations proceed from an erroneous premise that military organizational culture is essentially a "theme" related to successful inclusion of all sorts of minorities,

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27. "How to End Don't Ask, Don't Tell: A Roadmap of Political, Legal, Regulatory, and Organizations Steps to Equal Treatment," Michael D. Palm Center, University of California Santa Barbara, May 2009, pp. 19–21.

not simply racial minorities. The inapt comparison underlies an apparent desire on the part of the Palm Center to redefine military culture as a vehicle to advance its social goals, not to achieve military objectives—that is, deterring or winning wars.

Under a Defense Department-imposed policy sought by the Palm Center, the most potent career incentives would reward commanders who embrace the new regime enthusiastically and end the careers of those who do not. Civilian and military commanders would be required to interpret and apply the law in all stages of training, education, and deployment—under threat of career penalties if they fail to make it “work.” Incentives for superior officers—recommended by the Palm Center as “carrots,” “self-interest,” or “rewards for effective implementation”—would create conflict with the expectation of “accurate information about implementation problems.” Some officers inevitably would be tempted to advance their own careers by reporting no issues of concern under the new law, even when aware that subordinates are experiencing demoralizing problems. Other commanders might fear that accusations of unacceptable attitudes and poor leadership could sink their careers if they take the side of a subordinate who doesn’t claim an aberrant sexual “identity” over one that does. The appearance of self-interest in the decisions of superior officers—an element that the Palm Center considers a positive thing—would undermine the bond of vertical cohesion and trust that must exist between commanders and the troops they lead.

### **Military Cohesion and ‘Zero Tolerance’ of Dissent**

In the armed forces, cohesion is more than being liked by others; it is a willingness to die for someone else. Horizontal cohesion within a given unit involves mutual dependence for survival in combat. Vertical cohesion is the bond of trust that must exist between the commander in chief, subordinate leaders, and the troops they lead. Both types of cohesion develop from strong bonds of mutual confidence, trust, and discipline that make survival possible under chaotic wartime conditions. Military discipline does not just happen—it must be taught by leaders who have the trust of people who will live, and sometimes die, under their command. Policies that weaken horizontal or vertical cohesion undermine the military’s ability to defend America and to deter aggression elsewhere

in the world.<sup>28</sup>

The Palm Center's recommended disciplinary "sticks," described as "strong sanctions for noncompliance," would deny promotions and end the military career of anyone who disagrees for any reason. This "zero tolerance" policy would force out of the military thousands of junior officers and enlisted personnel who are the land, sea, and air combat commanders, chiefs of staff, and senior enlisted advisors of tomorrow. Chaplains and personnel of most major faith traditions would be the first affected by career-ending penalties mandating intolerance in the name of "tolerance." Involuntary losses of good people would compound the harmful effects of shortages caused when others voluntarily decline reenlistment or avoid military service in the first place. It is impossible to justify the potential loss of valued future leaders such as this, incurred to satisfy the demands of determined sexual "diversity" advocates and their civilian allies in academia and the media.

Without essential factors that reinforce military culture, such as unit cohesion, discipline, and high morale, the armed forces would degrade into disorganized cohorts of self-interested and leaderless young people armed with lethal weapons. This is why the culture of the military must be guarded at all times. As columnist Thomas Sowell wrote, "Military morale is an intangible, but it is one of those intangibles without which the tangibles do not work."<sup>29</sup> Because the armed forces differ from the civilian world, "diversity" engineering would weaken the unique culture of the all-volunteer force, the only military we have. Political leaders must support sound priorities that allow military officials to heed the over-arching principle embraced by the Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces: "Equal opportunity is important, but if there is a conflict, the needs of the military must come first."

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28. William Darryl Henderson, testimony before the Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, June 26, 1992, and Commission Report to the President, November 15, 1992, Finding 2.5.1, page C80–C81, quoting Henderson, *Cohesion: The Human Element* (National Defense University Press, 1985).

29. Thomas Sowell, "The Anointed and Those Who Aren't," *The Washington Times*, February 8, 1993, p. E3.

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