

Gay Rights in the US Military: “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” Is Repealed...Now What?

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The Don't Ask, Don't Tell repeal is finally through Congress. Soon members of the LGBT community will be able to openly serve in the military. But this is not the end of it.

I am glad the bill passed so that this official form of discrimination will soon come to an end. But it will be years, maybe decades, before homophobia is rooted out of the military, if it ever really is.

Can anyone honestly say that racism or sexism is gone from the ranks? As long as these attitudes are in the general population, they will be in the military.

Cynical journalist that I am, I can't help but think that the repeal came now because the US is desperate for warm bodies to make cold in its multi-front imperialist war of aggression. Even with the “economic draft” going on, the US is short troops, which accounts for “stop-loss”, multiple deployments abroad and the high level of mental illness in our Armed Forces today. Against this picture, discharging people simply because they are LGBT makes no sense unless you are Sen. Jon Kyl (R-AZ) who claims that LGBTs openly serving would be a threat to unit cohesion. Someone should check Jon Kyl's brain for unit cohesion.

But now that the bars are being lifted so that LGBT people can serve in the military openly, the question remains: “Why do it?” if you're not that desperate for a job, I mean. We have learned in recent years that the “money for college” deal isn't as good as claimed for a lot of soldiers. And as for wanting to “serve your country”, why does that always mean the military? The so-called “war on terror” is destroying our economy as we go deeper and deeper into debt to finance the killing. Is that serving our country? This war is destroying our reputation abroad. Is that serving our country? Aren't you serving your country in many professions such as public school teacher, public hospital health care provider, firefighter, police officer (if you are not oppressing the community), park ranger, etc. Aren't you serving your country by being a law-abiding citizen, paying your taxes and even being a responsible parent? Why must you kill other people to serve your country?

You forfeit your First Amendment rights once you don that uniform. You may be pressured to adhere to religious views that are not your own. You must take the vaccines they order you to take, even if they are experimental. You must live where they tell you to live, leave your family when ordered to leave, kill people you have never met and who have never done you any harm, and come home physically and emotionally scarred by the experience...if you don't come home in a box. For what? For the greater profits of Halliburton, Xe and Raytheon? So that politicians who have not been in the military (Bush, Cheney and Obama to name just a few) can proclaim how tough we are? So that we can

inspire people who want us out of their lands to commit acts of terrorism? Both LGBT and heterosexual people should think carefully before they sign on Uncle Sam's dotted line and enter a life that is no longer their own.

The United States does need more heroes to serve it: heroes for the common people against the corporations and power elitists on the other side of the unacknowledged class war. Heroes for peace. All sexual orientations welcome.

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