

# Q Notes

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## Military ban revisions tighten compliance

by David Stout  
Q-Notes Staff

WASHINGTON, DC—On the heels of 1998's record-high servicemember discharges due to sexual orientation and the July 5 beating death of a gay Army enlistee, on August 13 the military's top brass announced revisions to the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy regarding gays in the armed services.

"I've made it clear there is no room for harassment or threats in the military," US Secretary of Defense William Cohen said about the release of the guidelines.

Under the new directives, the Pentagon ordered commanders to seek approval from senior civilian officials before undertaking certain kinds of investigations; instituted anti-harassment training at all levels of the service; and

mandated that military lawyers consult superiors before investigating soldiers suspected of being gay.

The revisions came just after testimony had wrapped up in the Article 32 hearing (the military equivalent of a grand jury hearing) for Private Calvin Glover, 18, charged with the premeditated murder of Pfc. Barry Winchell, 21. A second soldier, Spc. Justin Fisher, 25, is accused of encouraging Glover's actions.

The post commander, Maj. Gen. Robert Clark, will decide if Glover and Fisher will be tried for their alleged crimes. At press time, he had not issued a ruling.

According to military observers, the brutal slaying at Fort Campbell, KY, in which Glover is alleged to have beaten Winchell to death with a baseball bat, provided the final push for the

policy clarifications.

"It's truly unfortunate that something so serious had to happen before the Pentagon would finally move on this," said Stacey Sobel, senior staff attorney for Servicemembers Legal Defense Network (SLDN), noting that Winchell had been the subject of rumors and anti-gay harassment for several months prior to his murder.

"Pentagon officials have had very similar guidance sitting on the shelf for two-and-a-half years. It's shameful that it wasn't released earlier when so many other servicemembers' careers and physical safety were at risk."

According to a Pentagon report, 617



Defense Secretary William Cohen

servicemembers were discharged for homosexuality in 1994, the year "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" took effect. That figure soared to 1145 last year, the highest number since 1987. ▼



## Gay health leader to speak at Expo

by Jeff Prince  
Special to Q-Notes

GREENSBORO, NC—Dr. Saul Levin, president-elect of the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association, will be the keynote speaker at the "Triad Wellness Expo for the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Community" on Saturday, September 18 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Greensboro. The Expo will open at 9:30am and conclude at 5:00pm. Levin's address will be presented at 10:00am.

Dr. Levin, currently the president of a private consulting firm in Washington, DC, has served as a special expert to the Department of Health and Human Services and to the director of the Office on AIDS for the Clinton administration. In his role as president of the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association, Levin will head the organization with a membership of more than 2000 gay and lesbian physicians.

In addition to Levin's address on "Coming Out of Your Health Closet," the conference, sponsored by Triad Health Project, Guilford County's leading AIDS service organization, will feature several workshops on health-related issues important to the GLBT community. Topics will include aging, health-related legal issues, body image, transgender issues, men's health and substance abuse.

Additional featured speakers at the conference will include Dr. Cheryl Viglione, director of Women's Imaging at Southeastern Radiology in Greensboro, who will present a discussion on cancer issues in the GLBT community. Viglione's talk will be followed by a presentation of *My Left Breast*, a powerful one-woman play focusing on a lesbian dealing with breast cancer. The play is presented by Greensboro's L'Chaim Productions.

Dallas Denny, founder and the former ex-See EXPO on page 24

## Gay-themed cemetery memorial approved by VA

by David Stout  
Q-Notes Staff

PHOENIX, AZ—In a landmark decision, the Acting Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs in the National Cemetery Administration has approved the design and donation of a memorial for GLBT Veterans of the US Armed Services.

The memorial is scheduled to be installed next year in a veterans cemetery in Phoenix and is sponsored by the local chapter of Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Veterans of America (GLBVA).

In approving the donation, Under Secretary Roger Rapp stated, "The design of the proposed [memorial] conforms precisely to the established National Cemetery Administration criteria for size, shape, and material. The proposed inscription is non-offensive and clearly commemorates veteran service. The donor organization — Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Veterans of America — is an established nationwide veteran group which has a National Constitution and Bylaws. It appears that the organization is primarily patriotic in nature and its objective is to commemorate military service."

The Rainbow Memorial will be located in the Founders Plaza of the National Cemetery in North Phoenix. It will be a boulder-shaped monument made of rainbow granite. On its face will be inscribed "VETERANS MEMO-

RIAL, In Memory of all Veterans who served with courage and pride, donated by the Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Veterans of America."

The National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona is currently undergoing a \$13 million improvement project, but the memorial is expected to be placed in a new plaza and dedicated on Veterans Day 2000.

Wally Straughn, president of the Phoenix chapter of GLBVA and a naval veteran, commented about the memorial, "It's in memory of all veterans who served, but it will be the first memorial in any National Cemetery that we know includes us. We invite all veterans, servicemembers and their families to join the Phoenix chapter of the Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Veterans of America in dedicating the only monument in this country that specifically and pointedly includes everyone who has fought for its ideals."

Edward Clayton, national president of GLBVA, congratulated the Phoenix chapter. "On behalf of the National Board of Directors, GLBVA chapters from coast to coast and the entire membership of Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Veterans of America, I extend to Phoenix GLBVA our warmest congratulations on the approval of the memorial. The Phoenix Chapter has written another important page in the history of our organization as well as another

chapter in the distinct history of our nation."

Additionally, Clayton, a veteran of the Marine Corps who was dishonorably discharged in 1987 due to his sexual orientation, stated, "The membership of Phoenix GLBVA, in leading this effort, exemplifies the qualities of leadership and dedication that is the goal of military training and they bring great distinction to our national organization, the State of Arizona and the United States of America."

Mainstream veterans groups say they have no problem with the memorial. Julius Maklary, a 21-year Army veteran and state commander of the American Legion, stated, "I'm sure there are gays and lesbians who lost their lives during wars. These people do good things. They have their rights also. As long as they don't infringe on anyone else, straight people shouldn't infringe on them. They should be left alone."

The monument is also fine with the administrative officer of the statewide chapter of Veterans of Foreign Wars. "We've never protested against anyone putting a memorial in the National Cemetery," said Gil LaMontagne, a Navy veteran.

For more information on The Rainbow Memorial or GLBVA, contact Phoenix GLBVA, 2039 W. Northview Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85021; call (602) 864-6092; email [pglbva@aol.com](mailto:pglbva@aol.com). ▼

## Falwell agrees to soften rhetoric; meet with gays

by Dan Van Mourik  
Q-Notes Staff

LYNCHBURG, VA—The Rev. Jerry Falwell agreed to tone down his anti-gay rhetoric after meeting with the Rev. Mel White, a gay activist who was the ghost writer of Falwell's autobiography.

"It's historic," White said. "We are euphoric."

White said he told Falwell the purpose of the meeting was "not to stop you from preaching your conscience, but to lower the volume and shrillness of the rhetoric."

Falwell said the discussion was not new. He and White first discussed the same issues three years ago and Falwell noted that he has his own concerns.

"I speak constantly around the country and almost invariably some of the radical activists...disrupt the meeting or commit violent acts," Falwell said. "It

has been getting more precarious with passing time...."

"Mel sincerely wants to lower the rhetoric on both sides. That is exactly what we want."

White, who co-chairs Souforce, Inc., said his group will be coming to Lynchburg October 22-24, and had been prepared to demonstrate in front of Falwell's Thomas Road Baptist Church, if necessary. But now, instead of bringing 5000 people, he will invite only 200 who will be trained in non-violent discourse before a Saturday night dinner with Falwell.

While White said Falwell invited him and his group to dinner on October 23, Falwell said nothing is firm yet. The two plan another meeting before then to finalize details.

White also asked Falwell to have members of his congregation house the 200 activists coming to Lynchburg, but Falwell declined, citing Biblical

quotations about not showing hospitality to sinners, White said.

White said his group sees Falwell as a victim of misinformation and welcomes the chance to share stories with Falwell and his people.

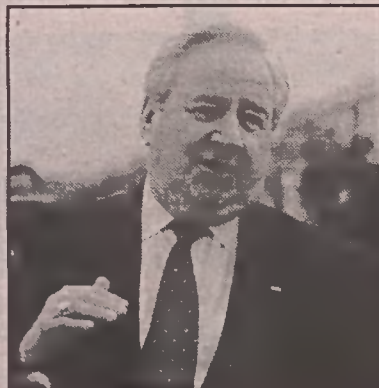
"Speech has power.... Words do not fade. What starts out as a sound ends in a deed," said Rabbi Abraham Heschel in one of White's flyers. Those words describe the purpose of the meeting with Falwell, White said.

Falwell said his anti-gay rhetoric is aimed only at the "fringe activists" who believe in same-sex marriages and commit violent acts, but White disagrees.

"We have 10 years of horrible stuff," he said.

A letter signed by Falwell about Al and Tipper Gore entertaining 150 members of the Human Rights Campaign, for example, says, "I wonder how much of our tax funds were used to wine and dine these perverted homosexuals who absolutely hate everything that you and I and most decent, God-fearing citizens stand for...."

"Make no mistake. These deviants seek no less than total control and influence in society, politics, our schools and in our exercise of free See FALWELL on page 24



Rev. Jerry Falwell