



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on March 2, 2010

Pro-Family Spokesman Blacklisted for Remarks Against Homosexuals in Military

When Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council, was invited back in October to be the guest speaker at a February 25 prayer luncheon at Andrews Air Force Base, he had no idea he would be expected to suspend his opinions on such issues as homosexuals serving in America's military. After all, as a noted pro-family spokesman he can certainly be expected to promote values that are conducive to strong families and a stable society. His reputation in that capacity is, no doubt, what garnered him an invitation to speak at the prayer luncheon (and thousands of similar events over the course of his career) in the first place.



Imagine Perkins' surprise, then, when he received a letter on January 29 from the chaplain's office at Andrews Air Force Base, retracting the invitation because of comments Perkins had made concerning President Obama's efforts to rescind the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy for homosexuals serving in the military. The offending remarks had come following Mr. Obama's January 27 State of the Union Address, in which the President had called on Congress to lift all restrictions on homosexuals serving in the armed forces. Perkins quickly took to the Family Research Council website, pointing out the dangers of such a move and urging Congress to maintain the current law that prohibits homosexuals from openly serving as military personnel.

The letter informed Perkins that his invitation to speak at the prayer luncheon was being rescinded "due to statements posted on the Family Research Council Web site which are incompatible in our role as military members who serve our elected officials and our commander-in-chief." The letter said that as military personnel "we are sworn to support our commander-in-chief, and are forbidden to make or support statements which run counter to our roles in the armed forces."

After the disinvite became public knowledge, the Andrews Air Force Base public affairs department attempted to clarify the actions of the chaplain's office, explaining that the invitation had been rescinded because Perkins' comments "made many who planned to attend the event uncomfortable."

The theme of the prayer luncheon was "Getting Back to the Basics," and Perkins told Pete Winn of *Cybercast News Service* "that is exactly what I was going to talk about, the basics — as Christ talks about the two greatest commandments, to love God and to love your neighbor." Perkins emphasized that he would never have used the venue to push his political views on others. "This was to focus on the spiritual needs of the men and women in uniform," he said.

Perkins, who is a former Marine Corps officer, said that as one who "took the oath to defend and protect our freedoms," he was disappointed that he had been denied the "opportunity to speak to



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members of the military, in a non-political way, solely because I exercised my free speech rights in a different forum.”

Calling it ironic that he should be “blacklisted” for speaking in favor of retaining and enforcing a “valid federal statute,” Perkins expressed concern about the threat to religious liberty — especially in the military — should Mr. Obama’s proposal be accepted and open homosexuals be welcomed into military service. “Such legislation would not merely open the military to homosexuals,” he warned. “It would result in a zero-tolerance policy toward those who disapprove of homosexual conduct.”

How would such a change impact military chaplains? “Would their sermons be censored to prevent them from preaching on biblical passages which describe homosexual conduct as a sin?” Perkins wondered. “Would they remain free to counsel soldiers troubled by same-sex attractions about the spiritual and psychological resources available to overcome those attractions? Any chaplain who holds to the millennia-old tradition of Judeo-Christian sexual morality could be denied promotion, or even be forced out of the military altogether.”

Among those condemning the actions of the Andrews Air Force Base chaplain’s office was U.S. Rep. Trent Franks (R-Ariz.), who called the move rank “political correctness,” and noted that “if in the name of inclusiveness we throw out someone who is a Christian or has a view that might be a little bit different than Mr. Obama’s, then we’ve dishonored the very service that fights to uphold and defend the Constitution.” He told *Cybercast News Service* that “to suggest somehow that someone like Tony Perkins shouldn’t be welcome on a military base because he has some views that are antithetical to some of Barack Obama’s views is just outrageous.”

As to Perkins’ views on the proposed policy change, he called the President’s proposal “very troubling,” explaining that not only would it impact national security, but would “in fact affect the lives of men and women who serve in uniform.” Noting that America’s armed forces exist not to further the agenda of a special interest group but “to keep our country safe by being prepared to fight and win wars,” Perkins demonstrated the impact of allowing homosexuals to serve openly in the military.

He cited a survey in the *Military Times* that indicated that a full 10 percent of those currently serving in the military would leave if the armed forces were opened to homosexuals, while another 14 percent would consider quitting. “These figures,” he said, “dwarf the tiny number of homosexuals who have been discharged in recent years.”

He also pointed out the very real concerns expressed by those currently serving about the “consequences of increased sexual tension, sexual harassment, and even sexual assault on morale and unit cohesion. Such problems in turn would threaten the readiness of the force.”

Additionally, he said, there would be the real threat of homosexuals infected with HIV and the subsequent threat to national security. While HIV-positive individuals are banned from enlisting in the military, should someone on duty become infected, not only could he not be deployed, but he also could not be discharged — presenting an unwieldy Catch-22 of sorts. “Since scientists have said that homosexuals and bisexuals are fifty times more likely to contract HIV,” said Perkins, “it is inevitable that welcoming them into the military will increase both medical costs and the number of personnel who are essentially dead weight within the force.”

An [Action Alert on the Family Research Council website](#) notes that in 1993 President Clinton signed Public Law 103-160, which declares, “The presence in the armed forces of persons who demonstrate a propensity or intent to engage in homosexual acts would create an unacceptable risk to the high



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standards of morale, good order and discipline, and unit cohesion that are the essence of military capability." Notes the FRC alert, "Nothing has changed since that time regarding the needs of the military or the nature of human sexuality that would justify any change in that conclusion." The alert strongly urges the Senate and House Armed Services Committees "to oppose any legislative efforts to repeal, or administrative efforts to evade, the military personnel eligibility provisions of that law."

In a recent op-ed, Perkins wrote that a review of the crucial "three Rs" that keep the military strong and viable — recruiting, readiness, and retention — can only lead to the conclusion that homosexuals do not belong in military service. "Our armed forces do not exist to serve the needs of a single interest group, but to protect and defend this nation and all our people," he wrote. "That's a bottom line too important to ignore."

Photo: Tony Perkins



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