

fields of agriculture, banking and community service. He was a member of the Blakely Peanut Company and served as President from 1944 until 1978, and as Chairman of the Board from 1944 to 1985. Additionally, he was a member of the National Peanut Council, and served as the association's Chairman in 1966.

Along with his advocacy efforts on behalf of Georgia's peanut farmers, Mr. Singletary was the Supervisor of the Flint River Soil and Water Conservation District from 1944 to 1971, and was Supervisor Emeritus from 1977 to 2011. Moreover, he served as a member of the Presidential Commission on World Hunger from 1979 to 1980.

Despite the demanding commitments associated with his occupational duties and agricultural advocacy initiatives, Mr. Singletary still found time to remain actively involved with other community organizations. He was a Mason, a Shriner, former Chairman of the Board of the First United Methodist Church and a distinguished member of the Blakely Rotary Club. In 2009, he received the Rotary Club's most prestigious award, the Four Avenues of Service Award.

He is survived by a daughter, Anne S. Hammack and her husband Albert of Dalton, Ga.; a daughter-in-law, Henrietta Singletary of Albany, Ga.; a sister, Emily S. Garner of Milledgeville, Ga.; 5 grandchildren: James Albert Hammack, III and wife Elizabeth of Atlanta, Ga; Margaret H. Long and husband Jason of Atlanta, Ga; McArthur Singletary and Duncan Singletary, both of St. Simmons Island, Fl. and Raymond Singletary of Atlanta, Ga.; 2 great-grandchildren: James Albert Hammack IV and Mary Moore Hammack of Atlanta, Ga.

I would like to ask my colleagues to join me in paying homage to Raymond C. Singletary, Jr. He lived a full life and the people of southwest Georgia will always be indebted to him for his unyielding support of our state's peanut farmers and our agricultural community at large. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family, friends and the Blakely, Georgia community at this time of great loss.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH DEFENSE
SECRETARY PANETTA ON THE
AFGHANISTAN/PAKISTAN STUDY
GROUP

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 22, 2011

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I submit my correspondence with the administration on my call for an Afghanistan/Pakistan Study Group. My letters to Defense Secretary Leon Panetta of July 19, 2011; August 1, 2011; and August 8, 2011 follow:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
July 19, 2011.

Hon. LEON PANETTA,
Secretary of Defense,
The Pentagon, Washington, DC.

DEAR LEON: I write today concerning the U.S. mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan. My amendment, which gives the Secretary of Defense the authority to establish an Afghanistan/Pakistan (Af/Pak) Study Group, was included in the House-passed FY 2012 Defense Appropriations bill. I pressed for the amendment because I believe fresh eyes are

needed now to examine the situation on the ground and the overall U.S. mission.

I envision the Af/Pak Study Group being modeled after the Iraq Study Group (ISG). Both you and your predecessor Bob Gates served on the ISG and know better than most the benefits it provided after three years of fighting in Iraq. Now that the U.S. is in its 10th year in Afghanistan, I believe a similar effort is necessary.

Before he was appointed as ambassador to Afghanistan, Ryan Crocker supported creating an Af/Pak Study Group, along with Ambassador Ronald Neumann and Jim Dobbins from the RAND Corporation. American men and women are fighting and dying in Afghanistan. If we are asking them to put their lives on the line daily, I believe we have an obligation to provide an independent evaluation of the U.S. mission. We owe our military forces nothing less.

I do not have the answers. But as you know, there is a movement building in Congress in favor of pulling troops out of Afghanistan. An amendment offered by Rep. Jim McGovern earlier this year to the National Defense Authorization Act to accelerate U.S. departure from Afghanistan was narrowly defeated 204-215. If six members had changed their vote, the amendment would have passed. I have talked to several members who voted against the McGovern amendment who are seriously concerned about the war in Afghanistan and could change their vote if the situation on the ground does not improve rapidly.

I also believe it is critical that Afghanistan be examined in tandem with the facts on the ground in Pakistan. It is clear that in order to be successful in Afghanistan, we must have a clear understanding of how Pakistan is influencing U.S. operations. Just look at the recent news from the region. Hamid Karzai's half-brother was murdered and his funeral bombed, Karai advisor Jan Mohammed Kahn was murdered, and militants attacked and laid siege to the Intercontinental Hotel in Kabul. The enclosed article printed recently in the Washington Post states, "... optimism and energy vanished long ago, gradually replaced by cynicism and fear. The trappings of democracy remained in place . . . but the politics of ethnic dog fights, tribal feuds and personal patronage continued to prevail."

The men and women serving in Afghanistan deserve to have fresh eyes look at this region as soon as possible. With House passage of the A/Pak amendment, I ask that you use your authority as secretary and move quickly to create this study group. I have discussed my amendment with John Hamre at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and he has offered to coordinate the group with professionals with a wide range of expertise.

I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss this important initiative and look forward to working with you to ensure we are successful in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Best wishes,
Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
August 2, 2011.

Hon. LEON PANETTA,
Secretary of Defense,
The Pentagon, Washington, DC.

DEAR LEON: I want to follow up on my previous letter regarding Afghanistan policy and bring to your attention a book I am reading, *The Wars in Afghanistan*, discussed in the enclosed Washington Post book review. Its author, Ambassador Peter Tomsen, is a veteran of the Foreign Service and has

an impressive background in the South Asia region. If you have not read his book, I highly recommend it to you. The Post review concludes: "This long overdue work. . . is the most authoritative account yet of Afghanistan's wars over the last 30 years and should be essential reading for those wishing to forge a way forward without repeating the mistakes of the past."

After three years of the Iraq war, the formation of the Iraq Study Group garnered the support of Secretary Rumsfeld, Secretary Rice, and Joint Chiefs General Pace. Our military men and women have been putting their lives on the line in Afghanistan every day for 10 years, seven years longer than when the decision was made to create the ISG to provide the independent assessment needed for U.S. policy in Iraq. I believe we owe it to our brave soldiers to focus now with fresh eyes on the target in Afghanistan.

I have spoken with Ambassador Tomsen about a framework for moving forward in Afghanistan, and he would be happy to meet with you and your team to discuss his breadth of experience there. I urge you to take him up on his offer.

Best wishes,
Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
August 8, 2011.

Hon. LEON PANETTA,
Secretary of Defense,
The Pentagon, Washington, DC.

DEAR LEON: I want to draw your attention to the enclosed letter I received from retired Marine Corps General Charles Krulak regarding an Afghanistan/Pakistan (Af/Pak) Study Group.

General Krulak makes an important point that we cannot be successful in Afghanistan if we do not address the ongoing tensions and frequent hostilities between Pakistan and India. I again ask you to take the language in the FY 2012 Defense Appropriations bill and use your authority to create the Af/Pak Study Group. Every day we delay is another missed opportunity to successfully address U.S. policy in South Asia.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to meeting with you in the near future to discuss this important issue.

Best wishes,
Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

BIRMINGHAM-SOUTHERN COLLEGE,
Birmingham, AL, July 25, 2011.

Hon. FRANK R. WOLF,
Cannon House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN WOLF: Thank you so much for your letter of July 20, 2011 forwarding me your letter to Secretary Panetta. You asked for my thoughts on the proposed Af/Pak Study Group and here they are:

I think you are spot on! It should be obvious to everyone concerned that the time has come to do a professional evaluation of the current policy in the region. When I mention "region", I believe it is important to include India. At the end of the day, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India are inextricably linked . . . you cannot establish policies in a stove pipe manner. The Study Group will immediately recognize that fact and accommodate it.

It is important to understand that conflict occurs at three levels . . . Strategic, Operational, and Tactical. Too often we look at the tactical level . . . see the heroism and accomplishments of our servicemen and women . . . and make conclusions re. the conduct of the war. Unfortunately, that is

NOT the way to look at this current conflict. Like Vietnam, we can do a solid job at the Tactical Level and lose the war at the Operational and Strategic Levels. This is where we find ourselves today in Afghanistan . . . and the path to any kind of victory is closely linked to success in Pakistan and India. The possibility of achieving such success across all three countries is small . . . certainly following the policies in place today (and yesterday.)

Again, I applaud your work and on behalf of those young men and women who are sacrificing so far from home, I thank you.

Semper Fidelis.

CHARLES C. KRULAK,
General, USMC (Ret.).

ON THE OCCASION OF THE END OF "DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL"

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 22, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" (DADT) policy officially ended.

Yesterday, J.D. Smith, a 25 year-old Air Force officer and gay rights advocate could drop his pseudonym and come out as who he is—1st Lieutenant Josh Seefried.

Yesterday, Maj. Darrel Choat, a gay Marine officer wrote in The Washington Post: "I am a patriotic American. I am an officer who loves country and Corps. I am doing my best to serve honorably and proudly. And I happen to be gay."

Yesterday, a policy that since 1993 has led to over 14,000 servicemembers being fired simply for being open about their sexual orientation officially ended, allowing Major Choat, 1st Lt. Seefried and thousands of other servicemembers to continue their service in the U.S. military without having to hide who they are.

Policies like "Don't Ask, Don't Tell", which created an atmosphere of fear and mistrust among colleagues serving side-by-side, have no place in the military.

I applaud the official end of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and the significance of its repeal in ensuring equality in our military and in securing rights for members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community.

WHEN WILL MARINE LEADERSHIP STAND UP FOR GAY SERVICE MEMBERS?

(By Darrel Choat)

If President Obama could have ended "don't ask, don't tell" by announcing a policy change, rather than his intent to work with Congress to repeal the law, in his 2010 State of the Union address, I might have served in the Marines openly but quietly. But the repeal debate turned ugly, and as gay veterans and gay soldiers and Marines serving in Iraq and Afghanistan were disrespected by military and civilian leaders, I realized that a quiet transition was not an honorable course of action.

Remarks by senior Marine leaders made clear that their conception of "Marine" did not include those who were gay. During and following his confirmation hearings in fall 2010, Commandant Gen. James F. Amos said that he did not want his Marines dying because of a "distraction." He probably meant that managing the repeal would be a distraction, but many gay Marines, myself included, felt that Amos was saying that we

were the distraction that would get our fellow Marines killed. Given the number of gay Marines in combat, this comment was deeply hurtful.

I am a patriotic American. I am an officer who loves country and Corps. I am doing my best to serve honorably and proudly. And I happen to be gay.

My challenge is not to simply acknowledge my sexuality as a Marine officer but for my actions to reflect the legacy of the Declaration of Independence—that all Americans are created equal and deserve equal consideration from their government. My task is to demand no less from my country and Corps. I understand that my statements will prompt anger and disgust among some active-duty and retired Marines. History demonstrates, however, that deliberate steps are necessary to overcome the legacy of dishonor and prejudice such as that inspired by "don't ask, don't tell." I have confidence that my Corps will take those steps.

While working in the Senate in the 1990s, I remember Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) talking to the floor and disparaging the "agenda" of gays and their "sinful" and "deviant" behavior. I felt helpless. One day Helms stepped into an elevator in which I alone was riding. Slowly, I realized no words could be adequate to confront him. His hate and ignorance could not be rationally discussed. The only effective course, it seemed to me, would be to disprove him by example, by personifying a proud, honorable and gay American who—simply by existing—refuted Helms's demagoguery.

I came out to my family years earlier, and I had long been in the habit of letting co-workers become aware of my sexual orientation. Often I made no pronouncements. Engaging in honest discussions about weekend activities or personal relationships was all that was necessary. My guiding principle was simple: If I felt I had to say something or compromise out of fear or shame because I was gay, I had to stop and take the honest course. If I got fired, I got fired. No job was worth the sacrifice of my honor and courage.

In 1981, I had been awarded a four-year Marine Corps Reserve Officer Training Corps scholarship. I was aware that I was different—I hated being different—and I was self-conscious. I found it difficult to interact with other midshipmen and Marines, so I left the program. In 1997, however, I knew that "don't ask, don't tell" did not preclude my service; it simply required that I shut up about being gay. So I applied and was accepted to attend Officer Candidate School in Quantico in October 1997. I greatly underestimated the personal cost of this compromise.

After the Battle of Saipan in 1944, Marine Commandant Gen. Alexander Vandegrift said, "The Negro Marines are no longer on trial. They are Marines, period." His predecessor, Gen. Thomas Holcomb, had said that "Negroes did not have the right to demand a place in the corps" and that "If it were a question of having a Marine Corps of 5,000 whites or 250,000 Negroes, I would rather have the whites." It took leadership for Vandegrift to recognize the heroic service of African American Marines and end officially sanctioned segregation in the Corps.

While Sgt. Maj. Micheal Barrett, the service's senior enlisted official, clearly stated in June that a Marine is a Marine, regardless of sexual orientation, I am aware of no senior Marine officer who has followed Vandegrift's lead and set a leadership tone that will turn the page on the prejudice of the past. A January video by Amos and Barrett's predecessor, Sgt. Maj. Carlton Kent, sent the message simply that the don't-ask law has changed and that Marines follow the law. Action to overcome the legacy of "don't ask, don't tell" is still necessary.

Vandegrift is an example of the possible. With the formal repeal today of "don't ask, don't tell," it is time for the Marine Corps to end the bigotry and prejudice regarding sexual orientation and to give Marines, combat veterans and Purple Heart recipients the respect and consideration they have earned. Marine Maj. Darrel Choat, a student at the Marine Corps University in Quantico, is the author of a report and personal essay in "The End of Don't Ask, Don't Tell," a forthcoming book from Marine Corps University Press. The views expressed here are his own.

IN HONOR OF THE BUCKS COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 22, 2011

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 50th anniversary of the Bucks County Conservation District. Their mission is to provide for the wise use, management, and development of Bucks County's soil, water, and other important natural resources.

Through a comprehensive approach which includes traditional advocacy as well as educational efforts such as school-based programs to present lessons to students on soil and water conservation, and watershed education for teachers to educate them on the importance of protecting our watersheds, Bucks County Conservation District is leading the conservation efforts in my district.

Local solutions that originate in groups like the Bucks County Conservation District are often the best solutions, and I congratulate them on celebrating 50 years of success and I wish them the best of luck as they work to preserve vital soil and water resources for generations to come.

IN HONOR OF MAYOR STEVE BACH

HON. DOUG LAMBORN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 22, 2011

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate the new mayor of Colorado Springs, Steve Bach. Situated at the heart of my district, Colorado Springs is an exceptional community that deserves an exceptional leader. Mayor Bach is that man.

In 2010, Colorado Springs voters adopted a strong mayor-council form of government. As the city's first mayor under this new model, Steve will lead Colorado Springs through this historic transition. For the first time in the city's 140-year history, the Mayor will have broad powers over hiring and firing city workers.

Mayor Bach has a unique opportunity to shape the city's direction for years to come. Mayor Bach has lived in Colorado Springs for over 40 years and has seen the city change from a small town nestled in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains to the 41st largest metro area in the country.

Mayor Bach previously was a commercial real estate broker who retains longstanding ties to the business community. He promises to improve the business climate by cutting red tape at City Hall. His fresh ideas on job creation and his history of building coalitions in