

# Marines wait for orders as other services end gay ban

WASHINGTON (AP) — The head of the Marine Corps urged his troops to "remain on watch" and not quit over the issue of homosexuals while three other services ordered recruiters to stop asking applicants their sexual status, officials said Tuesday.

While the Army, Navy and Air Force began their adjustment, no matter how uneasy, to President Clinton's new policy, the Marines said they would wait for official instructions before issuing orders to their recruiters. None of the changes were publicly announced.

Last Friday, Clinton temporarily suspended the formal

discharge of homosexuals from the military and announced that new recruits would no longer be asked if they are homosexuals. Clinton ordered the Defense Department to produce a draft executive order by July 15 that would formally end the ban on homosexuals.

Defense Secretary Les Aspin has not yet implemented Clinton's interim policy, but spokesman Bob Hall said Tuesday he expected Aspin to act by the end of the week.

"At this point I don't know what will be in those particular instructions," beyond telling recruiters not to ask applicants about their sexual status and

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— Gen. Carl E. Mundy, Marine corps commandant

suspending the permanent discharge of troops found to be homosexual, Hall said.

Congressional Republicans had promised to fight Clinton

by writing into law the homosexual ban. But on Tuesday, divisions appeared in their ranks in the Senate.

"Codification does not seem to be the most attractive thing," Sen. Alan Simpson of Wyoming, the second-ranking Republican in the Senate, said after a policy luncheon.

The chiefs of the four armed services, plus Gen. Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, strongly oppose Clinton's intention to permit gays to serve openly, but they are taking the first steps to conform with Clinton's changes.

In a message sent last Friday night, Gen. Carl E. Mundy, the

Marine Corps commandant, urged his forces to put their allegiance to the corps above their personal feelings and to remain in the service no matter how they feel about the homosexual issue.

"It is not characteristic of Marines to quit their posts, either under fire or when things are not to their liking," Mundy wrote in his message for all Marines. "Those of you whose pride in the corps, sense of duty, honor and personal moral values run so deep are exactly the ones needed to remain on watch to provide a steady hand."

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## Beating victim requests task force on gay-bashing

WILMINGTON, N.C. (AP) — A gay man who said three Marines beat him up because of President Clinton's push to lift the ban on homosexuals in the military is seeking a meeting with the president.

"He says he is willing to listen to American people," Crae Pridgen said on the "Today" show this morning. "And I'm an American person who has something to say. And I'm a victim who doesn't want to go unheard."

Pridgen, 28, said that he wants to tell the president about attacks on homosexuals and that he hopes Clinton will establish a task force on gay bashing.

Clinton has begun steps to end the military's 50-year ban on homosexuals.

Pridgen said the Marines shouted, "Clinton's going to pay!" during the fight Saturday at a gay bar. Pridgen lost a tooth and suffered a black eye, a swollen lip and a cut ear.

"I was brutally beaten because I was gay," he said. "I felt like my civil rights had been violated."

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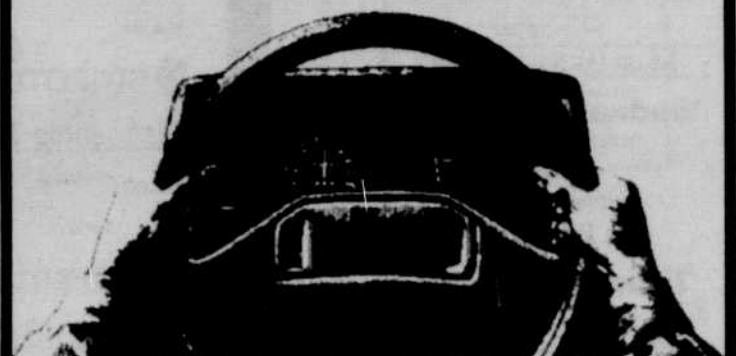
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