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national news

Williams outing completed

The Aug. 13, 1991 issue of *The Advocate* completed the on-going outing of head Pentagon spokesperson Pete Williams by publishing the exposé that had been slated for the defunct *Out-Week* magazine.

Williams responded, "As a government spokesman...I am not paid to...talk about my personal life and I don't intend to."

Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney said Williams will "absolutely not" be asked to resign and noted, "We've got a large number of gays in military service."

Defense Department Directive 1332.14 bans homosexuals from military service, but it does not apply to civilian Pentagon employees. The military has discharged 12,966 gays and lesbians since 1982.

The story, written by Michelangelo Signorile, revealed: "So many gay men seem to know Williams and know his homosexuality that it becomes questionable as to whether he was ever in the closet."

Rex Wockner

Father of Pink Panther would approve

In a letter to the editor of *Time Magazine*, appearing in the July 1 issue, Louise J. Richlin of Los Angeles wrote:

"Regardless of the MGM Pathé suit against a gay and lesbian organization calling itself the Pink Panthers [GRAPEVINE, June 10], my late husband Maurice Norman Richlin would have loved the idea that his Pink Panther is being used to protect people. As a liberal screenwriter, he would have been repelled by gay bashing."

Discrimination survey circulated

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, working in conjunction with Overlooked Opinions, Inc., is conducting the "1991 Gay/Lesbian Discrimination Survey" to assess the level and nature of prejudice and discrimination based on sexual orientation.

To obtain a survey, write Overlooked Opinions, Inc., at 3712 N. Broadway, Chicago, IL 60613, Attention: NGLTF Survey Project.

Military ban questioned

A federal appeals court in San Francisco ruled on Aug. 19 that the U.S. Army will have to prove that there is a rational basis for its 48-year old ban on homosexuals, according to *The Oregonian*.

The ruling would expand the rights of lesbians and gay men to serve in the military.

A three-judge panel handed down the decision in the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals. The judgment further stated that the court "would not accept anti-homosexual prejudice as a valid reason for exclusion from the armed forces," reported the local newspaper. The decision was based in part on a 1984 Supreme Court decision regarding interracial marriage, which stated that social disapproval did not justify denial of child support.

The Department of Defense had no comment until lawyers review the case

Linda Kliewer

House kills teen sex survey, and approves fetal tissue research

A federally financed study into teen sexual behavior will be carried out thanks to a recent vote in the U.S. House of Representatives, according to *Bay Windows*. The study had been killed by Health and Human Services Secretary Louis Sullivan in response to complaints from conservatives that such a study would violate teen-agers' privacy by asking them questions about homosexuality, oral and anal sex. Scientists have argued that the study could lead to better understanding of AIDS and how it is transmitted among young people, reported the New England lesbian and gay newspaper.

A similar study into adult sexual behavior was killed in 1989.

The bill reversing the teen study decision also approved federally financed fetal tissue research. Opponents to the research argue that "allowing experiments on tissue from aborted fetuses would encourage abortions and business contracting for fetal tissue," according to *Bay Windows*. Anti-abortionists had persuaded Sullivan to issue the ban on the research.

Medical researchers claim that fetal tissue research may be instrumental in treating Parkinson's Disease, juvenile diabetes, Alzheimer's Disease and spinal cord injuries. The research may also hold the key to reconstituting the immune system of people with AIDS, according to Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergies and Infectious Diseases.

Linda Kliewer

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