

Bizarre Hearing on Gays & Srebrenica Gen. Sheenan Trapped by Pharisaic Questioning

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<http://a2e.de/phm/10/03/sheehan>

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The massacre of Srebrenica happened under the eyes of Dutch peacekeepers. After the South-Ossetian incident of 2008, Vladimir Putin repeatedly argued that Russia showed by its action that, unlike the Dutch at Srebrenica, it took its own internationally acknowledged role as a protector of the civilian population of South Ossetia seriously. The lessons of Srebrenica are continuing to arouse public debate, and in one such debate, US Gen. Sheenan mentioned that the Dutch Army had, in the years before Srebrenica, undergone a process of decay, as an example of which he mentioned the recent admission of (overtly) gay soldiers into that army. This immediately led to scandal reporting, reflected in news headlines like "US General blames gays for Srebrenica", and to a hearing in the US Senate whose salient part is found in the Youtube film below.

The Japanese author Sakaiya Taiichi describes in 組織の盛衰(Rise and Fall of Organisations) how the Japanese Imperial Army entered into a stage of self-referentiality and ensuing decline in the early 20th century and how the expansiveness of the army itself was a symptom of such decline. Sakaiya cites a theory of Max Weber about the communitarianisation (Vergemeinschaftung) of organisations. These tend to lose sight of their functions and instead focus more and more on internal well-being. One symptom of this is hypertrophy, as has happened with the Imperial Japanese Army, and, more recently, with the European Patent Organisation. Another form is the "liberalisation" and "socialisation" that Gen. Sheenan talks about in the hearing.

At the Senate hearing the questioner Levin visibly tries to trap Gen. Sheenan into asserting a causal relation between homosexuality and inability to combat. Even without reading books of Sakaiya or Weber, an average listener should be able to understand that Sheenan is mentioning the recent admission of gays into the Dutch army only as one exemplary event which illustrates the path of communitarianisation and organisational decay that this army had, according to a widespread view, taken. He does not say that armies that allow overt homosexuality in their ranks necessarily fight less well.

The questioner Mr. Levin tries to trap the interviewee by a method reminiscent of the questions that the pharisees used to put to Jesus:

1. He frames the words of the interviewee into simple assertions of causation which the interviewee never made.
2. He tacitly assumes that this causal relation is factually wrong just because it is contrary to current political orthodoxy.

Similar ongoing cases are the pending appeal of CLS vs Martinez to the US Supreme Court as well as recent and pending equality and "anti-discrimination" legislation in EU and Japan. In particular the Japanese "Human Rights Protection Act Draft" seems in itself to be a threat to human rights, because it proposes to install an administrative agency that encroaches on the private autonomy of individuals.

The excessive focus on anti-discrimination is perhaps a symptom of decline not only for an army but also for society at large. Plato described the decay of democracy as a process in which the sovereign of democracy, the people, becomes obsessed with equality, negation of social authority, cult of youth, rights of non-citizens and even animal rights. According to Plato, this process, which is very similar the communitarianism of Sakaiya and Weber, ends with the rise of a populist dictatorship, i.e. the transfer of sovereignty from the people to a kind of new king and thus the launch of the next round of an eternal merry-go-round of sovereignty-shift from king to aristocrats to the people.

An alternative to this would be that in face of crisis the sovereign reorients itself toward a more functional perspective, giving priority to questions of collective survival and success.

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- Gen. James Sheehan: "Dutch gay soldiers partly to blame for Srebrenica genocide"
- CLS v. Martinez and the Freedom of Association