# The Pentagon Returns to the Past: Women Out of Combat

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The recent decision by the **U.S. Secretary of Defense, Pete Hegseth**, has reignited attention on the **role of women in the armed forces**. The renaming of the **Department of Defense to the "Department of War"**, established by an executive order from the **Trump** administration, marked a change in lexical and symbolic approach. In this context, the closure of the **Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS)**, an organization founded in **1951** and considered one of the oldest in the department, takes place.

Throughout its activity, DACOWITS has presented over **1,100 recommendations**, of which **94%** have been at least partially adopted. Among its contributions are legislative and policy changes that have promoted women's participation in military life. According to the Pentagon spokesperson, the decision to dissolve the committee responds to the desire to overcome an approach deemed **divisive** and to focus on **combat readiness**.

The **U.S. Secretary of Defense, Pete Hegseth**, a former television personality, has repeatedly emphasized the need to redefine the **“warrior ethos”** of the armed forces, highlighting the necessity of a model based on uniform criteria and shared standards.

## The Offensive Against Diversity and the Transgender Issue

Alongside the closure of DACOWITS, a **Task Force** has been established with the aim of **“restoring the American fighting force”**. Among the measures adopted is the revision of **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)** policies. The new directives stipulate that the Pentagon will no longer consider **gender, race, or ethnicity** in promotions, commands, and special assignments, in order to ensure **neutral and uniform standards**.

New provisions have also been introduced regarding **transgender** personnel: enlistment will not be allowed, and **transition healthcare** for those already in service has been suspended. According to supporters of this line, these measures aim to reduce costs and simplify operational management.

Another novelty concerns **shaving exemptions**, which particularly affect **black men**. From now on, such exemptions cannot exceed one year and must be accompanied by a medical treatment plan. In this case as well, the declared intent is to strengthen **uniformity** and **discipline** within the armed forces.

## Women, Combat, and Ideology

One of the most debated aspects concerns the **role of women in combat**. In some interviews, the **U.S. Secretary of Defense, Pete Hegseth** observed that the female presence on the front line would not have made the armed forces more **effective** or more **lethal**, but would have introduced elements of complexity. He clarified that he respects the contribution of women in the armed forces, specifying that his observations refer to situations where **selection standards** would have been lowered to allow access to combat roles.

Another element that has fueled public debate concerns the sharing by the Secretary of Defense of content from Pastor **Doug Wilson**, known for his **Christian nationalism** positions. In the video, Wilson argued that women should not be granted the right to vote. Secretary Hegseth accompanied the post with the phrase **“All of Christ for all of life”**, highlighting his closeness to the pastor's religious thinking.

Pastor Doug Wilson

These positions have sparked a debate in the United States on the relationship between **ideology, society, and the armed forces**. Some observers point out that Secretary Hegseth's choices represent a return to traditional models of military organization, while others highlight the risks of reducing representation and plurality.

In conclusion, the line adopted by the Secretary of Defense fits into a context of **redefining U.S. military policy**. It raises questions about the ability of the armed forces to reconcile **operational standards and social inclusion**, opening a debate that goes beyond the military sphere and touches the very identity of American institutions.

**News link:** https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics/pete-hegseth-women-military-committee-b2832384.html