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The Feminization of the U.S. Military

The same week that Middle East terrorists and the hostage problem dominated the news, the *New York Times* featured a front-page story headlined "West Point Picks Woman to Lead Cadet Corps." The position of first captain of the Corps of Cadets, the academy's highest honor, puts her in charge of overseeing virtually all aspects of life for the 4,400 West Point cadets.

The picture showed a casual, T-shirted, straggly-haired 20-year-old girl. What do you suppose the bad guys of the world — the terrorists, the Soviets, the Chinese thugs, Qaddafi or Castro — think when they see this image of the one selected to lead West Point seniors?

West Point's Superintendent, General Dave R. Palmer, said, "She does not have the position because she's a woman." He is correct, but not the way he meant it. She has this honor because he is a wimp who toadies to the feminists who are constantly breathing down his neck and demanding more "career opportunities."

The *Times* article tried to reassure its readers that she deserves this position of leadership over all other West Point cadets, 90 percent of whom are men, by saying she has "a strong academic record, played soccer and competed in cross-country skiing." And one more qualification: she "worked as a speechwriter in the Pentagon." As Queen Victoria would have said, "We are not amused."

The Superintendent who made this newsworthy choice must think his mission is to train young people to be paper-pushers in the Pentagon in a peacetime military, while keeping fit with athletics (but not the really tough men's sports). But if that's all West Pointers are being trained for, the cadets can go to any state university at one twentieth the cost to the taxpayers.

When General Douglas MacArthur, hero of three wars and the most distinguished cadet who ever graduated from West Point, delivered his great "Duty, Honor, Country" commencement speech there on May 12, 1962, he gave it to them straight. "Your mission remains fixed, determined, inviolable. It is to win our wars. Everything else in your professional career is but corollary to this vital dedication. . . . You are the ones who are trained to fight."

MacArthur continued, "Yours is the profession of arms, the will to win, the sure knowledge that in war there is no

substitute for victory, that if you lose, the Nation will be destroyed." Times and weapons have changed, but the mission of West Point graduates is — or should be — the same as it ever was.

This is not a mission for girls (even if they excel in skiing and speech-writing), but a mission for real men. As MacArthur said, West Point must graduate men who, whether they are "slogging ankle deep through mire of shell-pocked roads, . . . blue-lipped, covered with sludge and mud, chilled by the wind and rain," or, on the other side of the globe, in "the filth of dirty foxholes, the stench of ghostly trenches, the slime of dripping dugouts," in "the loneliness and utter desolation of jungle trails," can be relied on to muster the strength and courage to kill the enemy.

Can we believe that this 112-pound, 5-foot-4-inch girl can do that — and, in addition, lead troops of men to risk death under such circumstances? You have to be kidding!

The official excuse for this catering to the feminists is that the baby boomers are now past military age, causing a shortfall of men who will volunteer for the All-Volunteer Force. But the real reason why there is a shortfall of male volunteers is not demographics; it is the feminization of the military.

Men are attracted to serve in the military because of its intensely masculine character. The qualities that make them courageous soldiers—aggressiveness, risk-taking, and enjoyment of body-contact competition—are conspicuously absent in women.

Fighting wars is a mission that requires tough, tenacious and courageous men to endure the most primitive and uncivilized circumstances and pain in order to survive in combat against enemies who are just as tough, tenacious and courageous, and probably vicious and sadistic, too. The armies and navies of every potential enemy are exclusively male and no women diminish their combat readiness.

Pretending that women can perform equally with men in tasks that require those attributes is not only dishonest; it corrupts the system. It discourages men from enlisting and it demoralizes servicemen from developing those skills that produce Douglas MacArthurs and George Pattons in our country's hour of need.

The Military Double Standard

If you want to know how America sank to this ridiculous situation, you should read Brian Mitchell's new book called **Weak Link: The Feminization of the American Military** (Washington, D.C., Regnery Gateway, 1989, \$17.95). It's the definitive book on how the radical feminists have caused our military officers to cower in fear and to acquiesce in policies that make the integration of females a higher priority than combat readiness.

Mitchell, who served seven years as an infantry officer and is now a reporter for *Navy Times* newspaper, chronicles how this happened and documents the profoundly disruptive effect which women have had (such as ten percent of them being pregnant at any one time). Our top active-duty officers have bugled retreat on this issue and surrendered to feminist ideology and androgynous experimentation.

The service newspaper *Army Times* editorialized: "Mitchell has dared to utter every male soldier's darkest doubt: that the American Army will come apart when women start dying in battle." Mitchell's book is must reading for anyone who cares about the national security of the United States.

There is no real evidence that technology has reduced the need for physical strength among military men. Evidence shows that most military jobs still require more physical strength than most women possess. The result is that the males in the services do more work to make up for the shortcomings of their female co-workers.

Mitchell says, "All of the services have double standards for men and women on all the events of their regular physical fitness tests. Young male marines must perform at least 3 pull-ups to pass the test, but women marines must only hang from the bar with arms flexed for 16 seconds. In the Army, the youngest women are given an extra three minutes to complete a two-mile run. All of the services require men to perform more situps than women, despite their much-vaunted strength of the female midsection."

Mitchell shows that the rifles and pistols selected by the Army are not the best but those that are lighter-weight and more comfortable for women to handle. He concludes, "American soldiers are unlikely to get the weapon they need if it makes life more difficult for women."

George Washington instructed his officers: "Discipline is the soul of the Army. It makes small numbers formidable; procures success to the weak, and esteem to all." But discipline is out of fashion in a military that bends the rules to be nice to women, to accommodate their lesser physical strength and pregnancies and baby-tending, and to wink at fraternization and promiscuity.

Mitchell explains, "The presence of women inhibits male bonding, corrupts allegiance to the hierarchy, and diminishes the desire of men to compete for anything but the attentions of women." The romantic and sexual relationships between individual men and women defy regulation and dramatically affect the daily work relations of men and women.

Attrition rates (the failure to complete an enlistment contract) are consistently higher for women than men. A high attrition rate reduces service strength, increases personnel disturbance, and makes maintaining the armed services more costly because it cheats the taxpayers out of their investment in training. Women in all the services are hospitalized two to

three times as often as men.

Pregnancy is a constant problem and a reminder of the gender differences between men and women. In the course of a year, 10 to 17 percent of all servicewomen are pregnant. At any one time, 5 to 10 percent are pregnant, and some small units have at times reported pregnancy rates as high as 50 percent. Servicewomen are eight times more likely to be single parents than men. If a pregnant soldier resigns, she contributes to the problem of attrition (but still gets maternity care until six weeks after delivery), and if she keeps her baby she contributes to the growing demand that the military provide daycare. Either way, she is a burden to her unit because a pregnant woman or recent mother is exempted from so many duties while her male co-workers must pick up the slack. The military is now one of the largest daycare providers, and is currently asking Congress for money for 81,000 more daycare slots.

Look at the 1989 case of 21-year-old Spc. 4 Cheryl Beekman who had a baby when she still had a year and a half left to serve of the term for which she had enlisted. Under Army policy, a pregnant soldier gets full maternity coverage and is also given the choice of an immediate release or signing a statement that after the baby is born she will accept whatever assignment comes down for her and her unit. Beekman chose the latter option and received all the special treatment the Army gives, including limited duty during pregnancy and 42 days leave after the baby was born followed by limited duty for six months with no strenuous tasks. Then the orders came for her to be transferred to South Korea and she didn't want to go. Surprise, surprise! Beekman hired a lawyer and filed suit, and the Army caved in like a deck of cards and let her out of her signed contract.

The Cover-Up and Deception

Our military men know exactly how to develop tough, trained soldiers who can win our country's wars. The historical record is clear. They also know, as Vietnam veteran James H. Webb, Jr. so eloquently wrote in his famous *Washingtonian* magazine article, that "Women Can't Fight." (November 1979) But the official line in the military and on the media is that women soldiers are performing just as well as men.

The performance record of women in the American military is the biggest cover-up in twentieth century politics and the greatest military deception carried out in modern times. Brian Mitchell's book *Weak Link* is "an account of the creation of a lie." He wrote it "on behalf of the many thousands of military men who know the truth but are under orders not to notice that the Emperor has no clothes."

Mitchell sets forth the convoluted and contorted semantics the military uses in order to conceal the fact that women do not meet the same standards, take the same training, pass the same tests, or endure the same trials and discomforts as men. The officers refer to "dual standards" as a euphemism for double standards. They talk about "equivalent training" when it is self-evident it is not equal training. When commissions, awards, honors, and badges are passed out, everyone knows the women have **not** met the same requirements, but no one is permitted to say this out loud.

The military carries on systematic brainwashing to promote

the notion that women must be fully integrated and promoted in all aspects of the services. Male soldiers are forced to close their eyes and their mouths both to women's failure to perform equally and to the preferential treatment given to women.

Mitchell explains the process like this: "Official publications of the services are filled with propaganda promoting a favorable view of servicewomen. Commanders are required to publicly endorse and enforce equal opportunity in the military. Units are assigned equal opportunity officers to watch over the climate of relations between the sexes and report violations of policy, much in the way the Soviet military has Communist Party officers assigned to units to keep commanders politically straight. Personnel are required to attend equal opportunity training, during which EO officers preach the sanctity of sexual equality and the folly and immorality of belief in traditional sex roles. The definition of sexual harassment has expanded to include the open expression of opposition to women in the military. Officers and senior enlisteds are kept in check by their performance reports." A bad mark can mean a career is derailed.

Twice a year the feminist thought-control brigade, called DACOWITS (Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services), meets to oversee female affirmative action in the military and to complain about the lack of "progress." They lobby shamelessly to promote women over men and to eliminate the laws and regulations that prohibit assigning women to combat duty. They lay a guilt trip on military officers and Defense Department officials because they haven't turned over fifty percent of the high-ranking jobs to women.

Federal law specifically excludes women from combat jobs, and Congress stoutly rejected a determined effort by President Jimmy Carter and the feminists in 1979 to repeal this prohibition. Carter's Secretary of the Army, Clifford Alexander, violated the spirit if not the letter of the law by redefining "combat" so narrowly that many Army women were assigned to positions formerly considered combat jobs. This policy of renaming combat jobs as "combat support" jobs, and then assigning women to them, has continued ever since.

To put a veneer of plausibility on this duplicitous policy, feminist agitators and the media have deliberately propagated the myth that women in the Israeli army are treated just like men. The fact is, as Mitchell says, that members of the women's component in the military, called Chen (which means charm), are barred from jobs involving physical strain, adverse environmental conditions, or combat. They serve as clerks, typists, nurses, teachers, and social workers, but definitely not as pilots, sailors, truck drivers, or combat infantrymen.

Mitchell concludes that "The American military has been used by a political faction with no concern for national defense — for no other purpose than to advance feminism. . . . So long as the military remains mostly male, the hounding of the services will never cease. To expect feminists to settle for less is to gravely mistake both their will and their intent."

Mitchell has accurately figured out that the goal of the feminists is a gender-neutral society. The cutting edge of this objective is the U.S. Armed Services, whose mission, traditions, and training all combine to build the stereotype of

manliness, toughness in the face of adversity and pain, and physical strength to overcome the odds in all emergencies. That is what the feminists want to reduce to gender neutrality.

So Mitchell is correct when he predicts, "Feminists can be expected to oppose a return to the draft until the combat exclusion laws are struck down by the courts. When the legal basis for excluding women from the draft no longer exists, feminists are likely to support the draft as a means of forcing more American women into nontraditional lifestyles." Indeed, in the 1981 U.S. Supreme Court case of *Rostker v. Goldberg*, which upheld the male-only draft, the National Organization for Women filed a brief which alleged that exempting women from the draft and from combat roles consigns women to a "second-class status" and deprives women of "politically maturing experiences."

The Folly of Women in Combat

The American taxpayers do not spend billions of dollars to maintain the U.S. Armed Services and military academies so that young men and women can enjoy "upward mobility" or opportunities for education, travel and training in job skills.

The armies of all potential enemies are almost exclusively male. No other nation in the world has such a high percentage of women in the military as the United States. The Soviet Union's 4.4-million-member armed force includes only 10,000 women, and they do mostly clerical and medical work. Sending American women out to fight and to try to kill enemy men is contrary to all historical experience, common sense, and the American culture.

If there is any subject on which this poor planet earth has plenty of experience, it is fighting wars. The lessons of hundreds of wars speak with a thunderous voice that wars can best be won by trained, disciplined, healthy, vigorous, risk-taking young men. Why this is so was persuasively explained in an excellent article called "No Right to Fight" by Lieutenant Niel L. Golightly, U.S. Navy (*U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, December 1987), in which he also points out that virtually none of the advocates of women in combat have any combat experience.

There is no evidence in all history for the proposition that coed combat assignments in armies and navies will promote national security, improve combat readiness, or win wars. Even Hitler and the Japanese, when they ran short of manpower, found it more efficient to use underage and overage men in combat than female troops. Of the thousands of books written about World War II, no one ever wrote that Hitler or the Japanese could have solved their manpower shortage problem by using women in combat.

The only two nations that used women in combat in modern times, the Soviet Union and Israel, have both abandoned the policy because it doesn't work. We should study their experience and find out why.

American women served honorably during World War II in separate services such as the WACS and the WAVES, and they could do so again today. It is the sex integration of males and females, and the pretense that they can perform equally, which is destructive of combat readiness, discipline, and morale.

The desire of military women for combat is in inverse relation to their rank. That is, the female officers seek their

“career advancement” to be promoted to high rank and pay in the peacetime army, but female privates are certainly not demanding assignment to the combat infantry.

Between 1948 and 1969, the percentage of women in the military, even including nurses, never exceeded 1.5 percent and averaged 1.2 percent of the total active strength. Women never came close to reaching the 2 percent limit set by the law. Congress lifted the 2 percent ban in 1967, but women did not reach 2 percent until five years later, **after** U.S. troops were pulled out of Vietnam.

The most insensitive people in the nation today are the female officers who agitate for repeal of the laws excluding women from combat — knowing full well that the enlisted women who lack a college education would suffer the brunt of a change in the combat policy. Perhaps these female officers are dreaming of an army in which women officers would hold the command positions, while men would do all the dangerous, dirty, often-fatal combat jobs that are assigned to enlisted personnel.

The Armed Services should not be used as a social experiment in equal employment opportunity. Affirmative action for women in the military is just as ridiculous as it would be to make the Armed Services subject to the new “Disabilities Act,” which requires detailed and costly practices in order to bring into the mainstream of employment and public accommodations all persons with every kind of handicap from paraplegia to alcoholism and dementia.

But, some agitators argue, don't women have just as much right to die for their country as men? Dying for your country is not the purpose of the Armed Services; their mission is to make enemy troops die for **their** country, and men are demonstrably better at that task than women. Ask any real man who has personally experienced combat if he wants his daughter assigned to combat.

If the men in the U.S. Armed Services are too wimpish to stand up to the foolish feminists and their unnatural demands, how can we count on our Armed Services to stand up to the Russians?

Bias in the Media

The pro-feminist bias of the media can clearly be seen in any coverage of the topic of women in the Armed Services. If you keep a file on television and newspaper features on this subject, the editorial message leaps out at you: women now perform equally with men, and a fully-integrated coed U.S. Army will fight our future wars. Reporters simply don't interview those who think that the coed army has reduced our combat effectiveness, besides being highly discriminatory to men.

These articles and television segments just omit telling the truth that men and women in the army are **not** held to the same standards of ability or performance. In the 17-21 age group, men must do 42 pushups, women only 18. The minimum time for men to do the two-mile run is 15 minutes, 45 seconds, but women are allowed to take 18 minutes, 45 seconds. Pull-ups have been eliminated from the physical fitness chart, probably because few women are able to do even one pull-up.

The following letter I received from an Army wife explains another differential in treatment between men and women.

You will probably never read a letter like this in the big-city newspapers.

“Since when is the military supposed to be Big Brother to thousands of women in uniform who choose to have babies and expect the government to accommodate them in terms of long-term paid leave, not only after the child is born, but also before! After the child is born, these women demand that their units accommodate them so they can have their cake and eat it, too.

“I am talking about the demand to relieve them of guard duty, overnight field training, and other duties which would prevent them from going home at 5:00 p.m. sharp. This, of course, forces the active-duty males to take up the woman's slack as well as do their own work. In effect, the male's workload is increased twice as much.

“This governmental pampering of active-duty women has really caused a morale problem in the services. My husband, a platoon sergeant and military instructor, tells many horror stories of taxpayer-paid abuses committed by these women. Not only is it unfair, as well as a drain on the taxpayers, but I believe the fundamental issue is this: What are these men and women in the military for? Is it to fight for our cherished freedom and way of life, or is it because there's a big daddy out there who will always take care of them no matter how much time they take off, thus shirking their duties and shifting them to another soldier or sailor?

“Not only that, but there is no decrease in their paycheck. So, what it boils down to is that the military person whose responsibilities are increased does not get any extra rewards for this imposition, while his female counterpart is getting the same rate of pay. Isn't it about time that taxpayers should be relieved of this unfair burden?

“America has a military force to be proud of, as recruitment and retention rates are very high. But if we continue to pamper those who have very little interest in carrying out their number-one mission and use the military as a means of subsidizing their lifestyle, even when immoral, then the services will become nothing more than a glorified welfare system. Forget spending millions of dollars to build army child-care facilities. It's time to stop babying active-duty women, and if they choose to bear children, then they should be forced out of the army. We used to do that years ago, but thanks to the liberal feminists, the government changed its policies.”

The American public deserves to have these issues discussed in the media instead of given the silent treatment. Ask the media to interview Brian Mitchell on his book, *Weak Link*. Read the book yourself and encourage book reviews wherever you can. If it is not in your local bookstores, ask them to order it. Ask your Senators and Congressmen to vote NO on any attempt to put women in combat or combat-support roles. Ask the Secretary of Defense to obey the spirit as well as the letter of law to keep women out of combat-related jobs, and also to discharge all pregnant servicewomen. Ask President Bush to appoint to DACOWITS just as many persons who support the combat exclusion laws as who oppose them, or else abolish this mischief-making committee altogether. If you would like to serve on a Task Force to monitor the women-in-combat issue, contact Eagle Forum, Alton, Illinois 62002.

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