from Phyllis Schlafly

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WHAT DO THE FEUINISTS REALLY WANT?

Television viewers during the past week were treated to a lot of extraordinary gymnastics by women. The athletic gymnastics were on display at the Olympics in Barcelona, and the mental/psychological gymnastics were shown to the nation Saturday night when C-Span aired Rep. Les Aspin's (D-WI) hearing on women in the military.

This hearing gave us a preview of how the feminists would henpeck the military in a Clinton Administration. Congresswomen Pat Schroeder (D-CO) and Beverly Byron (D-MD) used their committee positions to scold the four Joint Chiefs like little boys.

The hearing spelled out how the feminists are using the “Tailhook” incident to argue that women should be admitted to military combat. This outrageous non sequitur involves two leaps of logic that spring from skewed feminist ideology.

(1) The feminists argue: Because some drunken aviators mauled some women in a Las Vegas hotel, that proves that the entire U.S. Navy is guilty of sexual harassment, sexism, discrimination against women, and all the other sins that feminists regularly complain about. That is the favorite feminist theory of group guilt; i.e., all men are slobs and should be punished, so the feminists have been gleefully pillorying the entire Navy by media humiliation and holding up Congressional approval of all promotions.

(2) The feminists argue: The reason why servicemen are guilty of all these sins is that women are excluded from military combat, which makes women “second-class” citizens, and that’s why men don’t respect then. But it is ridiculous on its face to argue that NOT exposing women to the sadism of vicious enemies proves that American men don’t respect women.

Tailhook should be a good argument against assigning women to combat duty. If women can’t protect themselves against some “friendly” drunks in a U.S. hotel, how are they going to defend themselves on the battlefield?

At Les Aspin’s House Armed Services Committee hearing, the four Joint Chiefs were forced to make long “mea culpa” statements detailing all their tough new procedures designed to eliminate sexual harassment. Funny thing, nobody ever defined sexual harassment. They made clear, however, that it includes not just overt acts but also attitudes, and that “equal opportunity” commissars will henceforth have the power to terminate a serviceman's career if he has the politically incorrect attitude.

The big tough soldiers who were bullied on television by the feminist Congresswomen must have been asking themselves, what do these complaining feminists want from the U.S. Armed Services -- do they want to be treated like a man or treated like a lady? One of the most emotional complaints made by the female interrogators, for example, was that no officer came to the defense of the women who were harassed at the Tailhook incident.

But isn't the idea of “protecting" women from the bad guys an out-of-date Victorian stereotype that the feminists want eliminated in their gender-neutral new world order? Didn't Army Major Rhonda Cornum testify that, when she was “violated manually, vaginally and rectally" while a POW in Iraq, that was no big deal because it was just an “occupational hazard” of her job?

Let me explain what the feminists really want. They want each woman to enjoy the option to make a different decision in every situation about whether a man should treat her like a man or like a lady, and furthermore the feminists want the option to make each decision ex post facto. I doubt if the military -- or any man -- can cope with that kind of rule, because it isn't a rule at all; it puts every man at the total mercy of every woman.

The one who made the most sense at the Les Aspin hearing was Congressman Herbert Bateman (R-VA). He said that we simply cannot eliminate the inequality of exempting women from military combat and replace it with a rule that gives women the option to go into combat or not (after they look at the risks) while telling the men “By golly, you go where you are assigned, or else!”

Bateman also pointed out the unjust consequences of what the Joint Chiefs called “zero tolerance” of sexual harassment. A reasonable inference from their statements would be that an accusation of “sexual harassment” would be enough to terminate a serviceman's career without due process and irrespective of guilt.

Indeed, that is exactly what the feminists want, ds clearly manifested by their persistent harangues to make the American people believe that Clarence Thomas should have been denied confirmation because of Anita Hill's accusations, even though there was never a shred of evidence to corroborate her bizarre story.

For 20 years, the gender-equality feminists have pushed for the repeal of state laws against statutory rape because they are based on the stereotype that young women need special protection. Now, the macho-feminists who are yapping about sexual harassment in order to repeal the combat-exclusion rules are demanding what is, in effect, a statutory rape rule to protect women of every age; i.e., men are always at their peril when they make a pass at any woman of any age because she can decide afterwards whether she consented or not.