PS for 1/25/90

The real lesson we learn from the use of women in the Panama invasion is that most of what we hear about the performance of women in the U.S. Army is grossly exaggerated even to the point of falsehood.

The U.S. Army finally admitted that, contrary to page one newspaper articles all over the country, Captain Linda Bray was a half mile away in a safe schoolhouse when she radioed an order to her unity to attack a dog kennel (she didn't "lead" any troops), there wasn't any "battle" (when she arrived at the kennel, there were no Panamanian troops), there were no casualties (the "three dead Panamanians" were pure fiction), and the entire event lasted just ten minutes (not three hours).

This is "evidence" that women should be assigned to military combat duty? Anyone who says that must be kidding. Yet, Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder (D-CO) is using this non-event as an excuse to call for repeal of the laws that exempt women from military combat.

Whether women are assigned to combat duty is a decision that doesn't just concern those few women who choose the military as their career. It concerns every American woman and girl under age 26, now and in the future.

On June 25, 1981 in the landmark case of *Rostker v. Goldberg*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that it is constitutional for Congress to exempt all women from the military draft and from draft registration. In that decision, the Court recognized the reality that draft registration, conscription, and military combat are all one continuum.

The court based its decision on the fact that any military draft is for the purpose of raising combat troops. If women are not eligible for combat duty, then it makes to sense to draft them or to register them for the draft.

What the Court said was this. "Women as a group, unlike men as a group, are not eligible for combat. The restriction on the participation of women in combat in the Navy and Air Force are statutory," citing 10 U.S.C. 6015 and 8549. The Army and Marine Corps prohibit the use of women in combat as a matter of policy in conformity with those statutes.

The Court quoted from the legislative history of the draft law. The Senate report stated: "The principle that women should not intentionally and routinely engage in

combat is fundamental, and enjoys wide support among our people. It is universally supported by military leaders who have testified before the Committee… Current law and policy exclude women from being assigned to combat in our military forces, and the Committee reaffirms this policy."

The Court's decision in *Rostker* hammered the point home hard. "The existence of the combat restrictions clearly indicates the basis for Congress' decision to exempt women from registration. The purpose of registration was to prepare for a draft of combat troops. Since women are excluded from combat, Congress concluded that they would not be needed in the event of a draft, and therefore decided not to register them."

The Court again cited the legislative history spelled out in the Senate Report: "The policy precluding the use of women in combat is, in the Committee's view, the most important reason for not including women in a registration system."

Under current federal law, every young man of age 18 must register for the military draft. No young women are required to register.

It is clear that this exemption of women is based on the laws that exclude women from military combat since, as the Court stated, the only purpose of a draft is to induct for combat. (If the government could promise that all those drafted would never see combat, we would obviously never need conscription!)

The oft-stated goal of the radical feminists is a totally gender-neutral society, and the military is the cutting edge of this fantasy. Their three-step scenario to achieve this goal starts with repealing the combat exclusion laws, while telling the public that this change would apply only to women who volunteer.

Step number two will be to make a renewal of the draft registration law gender neutral, while reassuring the public that a draft will never be reimposed. Step number three will be to impose some kind of conscription or universal military service, thereby inducting young women along with young men.

The radical feminists would then be able to use the raw power of government to force us toward the gender-neutral society which is their longtime goal.