Open Letter to VMI Alumni

June 11, 1996 by Phyllis Schlafly

This is an open letter to Virginia Military Institute Alumni.

Dear Alumni:

Your VMI training not only taught you to be tough, courageous and honorable, but also to survive humiliation and harassment. You are now facing your greatest challenge.

You've lost a major battle. Are you going to be survivors, or are you going to let the enemy wipe you and your kind from the face of the earth, pour salt in the soil that produced you, and drop you down the Memory Hole?

The most important factor in any confrontation is the ancient maxim "Know your enemy." I'm not sure you ever understood the nature of your enemy.

The massive government lawsuit against VMI wasn't about "ending sex discrimination" or "allowing women to have access to the same educational benefits that men have at VMI." It was a no-holds-barred fight to feminize VMI waged by the radical feminists and their cohorts in the Federal Government.

The radical feminists just can't stand it that any institution in America is permitted to motivate and train real men to manifest the uniquely masculine attributes. Feminists want to gender-neutralize all men so they can intimidate and control them.

The feminists' longtime, self-proclaimed goal is an androgynous society. Repudiating constitutional intent, history, tradition and human nature, they seek to forbid us, in public or private life, to recognize the differences between men and women.

Feminist strategy is straightforward: whine that women are victims of centuries of "oppression" and

"stereotyping," lay a guilt trip on men, and use all the stereotypical cultural techniques that women have always used to wheedle what they want out of men. Then, use feminists on the public payroll in all three branches of government to change the laws in order to force us to conform.

Since feminists successfully got women admitted into the military academies, and got the Clinton Administration to assign women to military combat positions, VMI and the Citadel remained as the most visible fortresses of the concept that men and women are fundamentally different. The feminists hate you just because you exist.

The notion that a military institution that has functioned with success, public acceptance, and significant prestige for 157 years, suddenly, one day in June 1996, can be rationally said to violate the Constitution is patently ridiculous. Black robes and Ruth Bader Ginsburg's devious rhetoric about "scrutiny" can't make such judicial arrogance any less ridiculous.

The idea of setting up a VMI course for women at Mary Baldwin College to save VMI from an adverse decision was a futile gesture, and Ginsburg held this expensive effort up to ridicule as "invented post hoc in response to litigation." You need to understand that the lawsuit against VMI had nothing to do with securing opportunities or benefits for women; it only had to do with destroying the masculine integrity of VMI.

Ginsburg's opinion asserted that "women's successful entry into the federal military academies" proves that women can successfully matriculate at VMI. That assumption is false because VMI's regimen is very different from the military academies'.

The VMI trial record proved that women's so-called "successful" experience in the federal military academies is based on quotas, dual standards, and gender norming. Female cadets compete against other female cadets for designated female slots, rather than competing against the men.

The VMI decision was wholly predictable when Clinton appointed Ruth Bader Ginsburg to the Court. Her activist determination to write her radical feminist goals into the Constitution was all laid out in her published writings, but no Senator questioned her about them. Every Senator who voted for her confirmation shares in the shame of this decision.

VMI Alumni, your response to this Supreme Court defeat should be to reject the state subsidy and embark on a national fundraising drive to raise the money to keep VMI functioning exactly as it always has. If the

still-existing single-sex colleges, such as Wellesley and Smith, can survive on private fundraising plus government student loans, and if Hillsdale College can survive without any government funds at all, there's no reason why VMI and the Citadel can't do this, too.

Don't make the mistake of changing VMI's unique lifestyle to try to accommodate Sister Rats. The women who seek a military career based on dual standards and gender norming can go to West Point, Annapolis, or the Air Force Academy.

VMI Alumni, if you allow Ginsburg et all to do to VMI what Pat Schroeder et all have done to the United States Navy, you are not the exemplars of manhood we thought you were. And that goes for Citadel alumni, too.