Special-Interest Lobbyists Overlooked By The Media

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The media are having a field day criticizing the lobbyists for Enron, but they are overlooking the most effective special-interest lobbyists ever to function in Washington. They have met with high- ranking administration officials, they directly influenced (some would say dictated) important national security policies, and they swaggered with the protocol rank of three-star generals.
They have been impudent to their critics, secretive with the media, high-handed in their demands, and dishonest in maintaining their power. Who else would have the chutzpa to surreptitiously use Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's automatic signature pen to sign the confirmation papers of their pals selected by former Secretary Bill Cohen before Bill Clinton left office?

If you figured out that these special-interest lobbyists are the radical feminists manning (excuse the expression) the ramparts of political correctness, you would be correct. We are talking about the members of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS), a tax-funded lobby that has provided the radical feminists a platform to lobby to make the U.S. Armed Services gender-neutral.

DACOWITS has demanded that women be assigned to submarines, to the crews of Multiple Launch Rocket Systems (the vehicles that launch rockets during land-combat operations), to the helicopter crews of Special Operations units such as the Army Rangers, and even to land combat units that directly engage the enemy.

Such policies, if ever adopted, would compromise training standards, weaken morale, worsen deployment problems, hurt recruiting and retention, and endanger the lives of the men who would have to depend on female soldiers to carry their share of the load. Such policies ignore the fact that only about three percent of women score as well as the average man on the Physical Fitness Test, and most women can't throw a hand grenade far enough away to keep from killing themselves.

The golden era of DACOWITS's 50 years of promoting social experimentation in the U.S. military was, of course, the pro-feminist Clinton Administration. No DACOWITS recommendation was too extreme for the Bill and Hillary White House, whose Pentagon appointee, Assistant Secretary of the Army Sara Lister, attacked the Marines as "extremist."

The question now is, will the Bush Administration, which has demonstrated the courage and vision to take on the Taliban, be man enough (there I go again) to tell the Clintonista feminists that their days of unchallenged influence ended on January 20, 2001?

Members of DACOWITS now serving were appointed by Bill Clinton, and they voted in lockstep last year, 33 to 0, to demand feminist policies in the military that are opposed by combat experts. Even if President Bush and Secretary Rumsfeld had appointed replacements for the one-third of members whose terms expired last year, they would still have been outvoted 2 to 1.

It is encouraging that the Bush Administration allowed DACOWITS's charter to expire on February 28, but the feminists' lobbying campaign continues in high gear. Five past chairs of the committee (all

women, of course) signed a joint letter to Rumsfeld demanding its continuance, and they have run to the media to orchestrate favorable articles.

They coopted U.S. Rep. Heather Wilson (R-NM) to plead their case to Pentagon officials. In a meeting with Paul Wolfowitz, she claimed that women in the service "need to have a voice that is outside the chain of command."

That argument is a fraud. DACOWITS is not a voice for "women" in the service; it's a voice only for women officers who ride roughshod over the concerns of enlisted women, the overwhelming majority of whom do not want to be assigned to military combat.

Get your hanky out to cry for the two examples Rep. Wilson gave Wolfowitz of how DACOWITS is needed to help servicewomen. DACOWITS made sure that women's hygiene products are available at base stores, and DACOWITS corrected the "problem" that female pilots who gave birth to new babies were not allowed back into the cockpit as fast as women who took other types of medical leave.

DACOWITS also recommended that the Army stop reprimanding soldiers who exceed the limits established by the Army's Weight Control Program. And DACOWITS is solicitous that the Army have an adequate supply of maternity uniforms.

DACOWITS's goal has always been careerism for female officers at the expense of combat readiness. Now that a real war is going on, this is no time to try to appease the unappeasable Clinton feminists in their perennial pursuit of an androgynous military.

The Bush administration is to be commended for allowing the old DACOWITS charter to expire, firing 22 Clinton administration holdovers and an even larger number of staff members, and reconstituting DACOWITS' duties under a new charter.