Equality For Women In Our Military

by Phyllis Schlafly May 19, 2004

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The picture of the female U.S. soldier, Pfc. Lynndie England, holding a leash around the neck of a prone naked Iraqi male prisoner, like a dog, is a public relations disaster for America abroad. Just as distressing is the humiliation of America in letting the world see to what depths the gender-integrated military has taken us.

A second picture shows another female GI enjoying the sexual humiliation of naked, hooded Iraqi prisoners piled in a pyramid. Of course, our soldiers shouldn't have committed such abuse, but where was the adult supervision, and why were female GIs assigned to guard male prisoners anyway?

The pictures are a stark illustration of the sex-gender experimentation that has been going on in our military services. The pictures have lifted the curtain on a subject about which the American public has largely been kept in the dark.

Bill Clinton, when President, made clear his contempt for our military, but the Clintonista feminazis were more focused in their disdain. They were determined to give us a gender-neutral military or, as one of their spokespersons put it, an "ungendered" military.

That goal means masculinizing women and feminizing men. Our soldiers are even put through prisoner-of-war-desensitization training exercises to help them emotionally accept the mistreatment of women by the enemy.

The pictures show that some women have become mighty mean, but the feminists can't erase eternal differences. Feminists distanced themselves from their erstwhile heroine Jessica Lynch after her ghost-writer revealed she had been a victim of anal sexual assault and she told Diane Sawyer, "People need to know . . . how they treat the female soldiers that are over there."

The Clinton-era feminists eliminated the Defense Department's "risk rule" that had previously kept women out of areas where they had "a substantial risk of capture," a regulation change that was directly responsible for the capture by the Iraqis of Jessica Lynch, Shoshana Johnson, and Lori Piestewa. The Clinton feminists persistently pushed women into more and more near-combat and combat-related jobs, so 18 women have been killed in Iraq, plus three in Afghanistan.

Adopting coed basic training for all the services except the Marines lowered the standards to the physical capabilities of women. This was often disguised by gender-norming, the deceitful practice of scoring women higher than men for the same performance and then pretending that women are performing equally.

Something much more insidious and destructive to our military and our culture has also been going on. Clinton's famous "don't ask don't tell" regulations do not merely mean tolerance of gays in the military; they also mean that commanders' eyes are diverted away from all kinds of sexual misconduct and even fraternization (sex between soldiers of different ranks).

The result is a breakdown of military discipline and a dramatic coarsening of women and of men's treatment of women. This has caused a critical diversion of time and energy away from the essential task of teaching men to be soldiers into dealing with the obvious problems caused by the powerful factor of sex when lonely, scared young men and women are crowded together in an environment where moral standards have been abandoned.

The current high percentage of women in the military has been achieved by gender quotas in recruitment and retention, and by affirmative action to promote women to higher ranks so they could command men. Nobody admits the existence of gender quotas, but everybody knows they explain why we have a 15 percent female military.

Social experimentation in the military includes generous subsidies to induce single mothers to enter and remain in the military. That's why we have had the shameful incidents of single mothers of infants being killed or taken prisoner, a byproduct of the Iraqi war that the feminists describe as equal opportunity for women.

Affirmative action for women in the military is a longtime feminist goal. It was even urged during the 1970s by now-Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg in her book "Sex Bias in the U.S. Code," in which she also called for the sex-integration of prisons.

In a fitting turn of fate, the officer in charge of the military police at the Abu Ghraib prison was a woman, Army Brig. Gen. Janis Karpinski. Now back from Iraq, she has been riding the talk show circuit to disclaim knowledge and responsibility for the abuse of prisoners.

I suspect that the picture of the woman soldier with a noose around the Iraqi man's neck will soon show up on the bulletin boards of women's studies centers and feminist college professors. That picture is the radical feminists' ultimate fantasy of how they dream of treating men, and the less radical feminists will quietly cheer the picture as showing career-opportunity proof that women can be just as tough as men in dealing with the enemy.

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