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WHO PROMOTED SENDING WOMEN INTO MILITARY COMBAT?

One of the biggest mysteries in the politics of national defense in recent years has been the peculiar push to assign women to serve in military combat. It is very difficult to find anyone who favors it; no country in the world does it; nothing in history or reason or logic supports it.

Yet the existence of an orchestrated campaign to achieve this objective (the repeal of 10 U.S.C. 6015 and 8549) was obvious when the House Armed Services Committee, Military Personnel Subcommittee, held four days of hearings on that proposal on November 13-16, 1979. Based on the massive evidence against women in combat, the effort to repeal the male-only combat laws was quietly dropped.

Diligent research has just uncovered where the original idea came from: a little-known federal body called DACOWITS -- the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services. This is a group of 30 civilians, mostly women, each appointed by the Secretary of Defense for a three year term, "to assist and to advise the Secretary of Defense on policies and matters relating to women in the Services."

An examination of the minutes of the DACOWITS meetings shows that this group, throughout the decade of the 1970s, carried on a steady barrage of pressure against the Armed Services in behalf of full sex-integration even to the assignment of women to military combat. Here is the official record:

DACOWITS Recommendation of April 6-10, 1975: "#9. That the Department of Defense initiate an amendment of Title 10, U.S.C. Section 6015 to remove the total prohibition against assignment of women to vessels other than hospital or transport vessels thereby allowing assignment of persons (male or female) to vessels and aircraft in accordance with individual qualifications of the person to be assigned and the particular mission to be performed. (Utilization)"

DACOWITS Recommendation of October 5-9, 1975: "#5. That the Department of Defense direct the Department of the Navy to initiate a legislative proposal to revise or repeal Sec. 6015, Title 10, U.S. Code, to provide women of the Navy and Marine Corps access and

assignment to vessels and aircraft under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Navy. (Utilization) #6. That the Department of Defense direct the Air Force to initiate an amendment or repeal of Sex. 8549, Title 10 U.S. Code, so as to permit assignment of women to aircraft. (Utilization)"

DACOWITS Recommendation of April 21-25, 1976: "That the Office of the Secretary of Defense direct the Department of the Navy to initiate legislation to revise or repeal U.S.C. 6015, so as to provide women of the Navy and Marine Corps access and assignment to vessels and aircraft under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Navy; and that OSC direct the Department of the Air Force to initiate amendment or repeal of 10 U.S.C. 8549, so as to permit assignment of women to aircraft. (Utilization)"

DACOWITS Recommendation of November 14-18, 1976: "#8. That laws now preventing women from serving their country in combat and combat related or support positions be repealed. Rationale: Self-explanatory." This recommendation resulted in wire service news stories headlined: "Combat Role for Women Urged; DACOWITS Seeks Law Change."

The word "Utilization" after the above recommendations means that they came from the "Utilization Subcommittee." Here is how the proceedings of that Subcommittee, which met four times during the April 6-10, 1975 DACOWITS meeting, reveal the author of the recommendation to put women in combat:

"Judge O'Connor initiated discussion of Title 10, U.S.C., Sec. 6015 relating to the Navy's prohibition against assignment of women to vessels other than hospital or transport vessels. ... This resulted in the following motion by Judge O'Connor, seconded by Dean Heyse, and agreed upon by all present: That the Department of Defense initiate amendment of Title 10, U.S.C,, Sec. 6015 so as to remove the total prohibition against assignment of persons (male and female) to vessels and aircraft in accordance with the qualifications of the person to be assigned and the particular mission to be performed."

Judge Sandra O'Connor was appointed to a three-year term on DACOWITS in 1974 and became the principal sponsor of the effort to repeal the laws that exempt women from military combat. Those are the same two laws (10 U.S.C. 6015 and 8549) which the majority of the Supreme Court ruled on June 25, 1981 justify the exemption of women from the military draft. The Court treated the exclusion of women from military combat as fundamental to our civilized society. Sandra O'Connor is simply out of step. (end)