

DEFENSE MEDIA REVIEW

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The New Radical Navy: Force-Fed Egalitarianism

Tough guys don't dance to loony tunes.

The emasculation of the armed forces is making great strides in the United States. Tied into humble knots by the Tailhook Fall-Out, the Navy is dying – pun not intended – to appease its critics by purging all remaining macho elements from its officer corps. In early July, in quick succession, fighter squadron commanders Dave Tyler from VF-51, Robert Clement (VF-111) and George Moe (VF-124) were relieved of their command "for failing to stop a lewd skit about a congresswoman at a naval aviators' banquet in San Diego," writes Eric Schmitt in *The New York Times* (3 July). A few hundred pilots had honored the aggressive skit and a huge banner proclaiming "Patricia Schroeder Sucks!" with standing ovations at Naval Air Station Miramar in California. Why were they not fired, the whole lot of them? The Navy thus missed an opportunity to open up a least a dozen fighter pilot slots, so eagerly sought by at least that many women.

J. Daniel Howard, for a few days the Navy's acting secretary, confessed in a klutzy soundbite: "We have not yet found the methodology that assures us that we don't have people who occasionally act like jerks and idiots." In the meantime, Mr. Howard ordered that during this summer each Navy and Marine Corps unit suspend operations for a day and conduct sensitivity training, using video tapes and live lecturers, written tests and structured discussions on the subject of sexual harassment, which is the hottest topic in the sea-going service since the guided-missile cruiser *Vincennes* bagged the Iranian Airbus in the summer of 1988. First results of Mr. Howard's indoctrination orders are not encouraging. On July 23 the armed services' most favored congresswoman received a one-page fax containing "sexually offensive comments about Ms. Patricia Schroeder and, in general, about women in the Marines. The fax also had drawings of women performing sexual acts," reports Eric Schmitt in *The New York Times* (25 July). The fax was easily traced back to a helicopter base near Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. The Navy is investigating. This time, sensitivity training for the perpetrators might not do the job. But forced labor will. Ms. Schroeder's comments offer a perceptive vision: "It just doesn't end, it's become a routine. It makes you wonder what these poor women in the military are having to put up with."

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Like being taken prisoner in Iraq, for example, as happened with Maj. Rhonda Cornum during Desert Storm. She was "violated vaginally and rectally" (her own words) by her Iraqi captors. Lest the nonconsensual encounter be exploited in the United States to block the radical egalitarian movement's demand for women's assignments to combat, Maj. Cornum assures the public that "it was no big deal." These women warriors are space ages ahead of a conservative public still concerned with old-fashioned concepts of chivalry and decency. Thoroughly desensitized, they show no sense of shame.

Wesley Pruden captures all these points poignantly in his column "How flapping lips sink Navy ships," published in *The Washington Times* (29 June):

Let's raise a cheer for the United States Navy. And let's hope we never need it until we get a better generation of leadership at the top. The men in charge have run their lace-edged skivvies up the mast in hopes the boarding party of radical feminists will be kind to them.

If Patsy Schroeder terrifies them, we can imagine how quickly they would give up the ship in a face-off with a ferocious manly foe. The men and women who actually man the ships, whose devotion and dedication to duty puts the rest of us in their eternal debt, deserve far better than they're getting from the ticket-punchers in charge of their service.

Some of the leaders, who publicly profess to see nothing wrong in putting young women in harm's way during wartime if that's what it takes to get Patsy and her friends off their backs, and who privately concede that hers is a recipe for disaster, are in full panic in the wake of the Tailhook scandal. Not since P.G.T. Beauregard and his green Confederates sent Irvin McDowell's Union Army flying from Manassas back to Washington 131 years ago this summer have so many senior Union officers been frightened and intimidated.

The Navy aviators at the Tailhook convention in Las Vegas were naughty. No argument from here. Their first explanation is irrelevant, that a young woman who accepts an invitation to a weekend designed for boozey pillow fighting — even the name of the organization is a double entendre — ought not to complain when an intoxicated aviator lays a "hook" on the nearest "tail." It's crude, vulgar and unacceptable behavior, and Navy fighter pilots ought not to treat their groupies the way

rock musicians treat their roadies.

The secretary of the Navy has already walked the plank for the incident because he did not provide "the proper leadership," and now the chief of naval operations is about to step up to the plank. Rep. Beverly Byron of Maryland, a leader of the movement to train our daughters to be killers, is said to demand that every Naval officer "involved" be thrown out of the service (Mrs. Byron was recently thrown out of Congress herself, so she is familiar with the punishment).

But the real crime against America is that the "leadership" of the Navy has been so cowed by Mrs. Schroeder and her radical feminist allies over a legitimate complaint that the leadership is acquiescing in the neutering and feminization of the nation's fighting force on the seas, which is not a legitimate goal. These senior officers are putting up no argument against what they know to be wrong. Assigning women to combat inevitably lowers fitness standards and hence fighting standards. Not even Mrs. Schroeder argues that it doesn't. No army or navy can set out to be an equal-opportunity employer; the sole ultimate purpose of both branches of military service is to kill its country's enemies.

George Bush, whose thin blue blood protected him from the toughening influences of the "old Navy," fits right in with the lace-panty Navy as the commodore of the Kennebunkport Yacht & Country Club. The panel he appointed to study the likely effects of women in combat is trying not to find evidence to thwart the radical-feminist agenda. Elaine Donnelly, a courageous dissenter on the panel who is doing the work that senior military officers should be doing, inquired the other day of a female officer who was captured in the Persian Gulf war: Had she been molested by her captors? Well, yes, but it was no big deal. Just a little "vaginal and rectal manipulation," she said, the sort of thing every girl who ever went to the movies with a "creep" is familiar with. (Lucky for her she was sent to Iraq and not to a Tailhook party.)

Some of the milkleg Navy officers are naturally mad at Miss Donnelly, accusing her of invading the "privacy" of a woman who says the invasion of her body by a stranger is no big deal. The Navy doesn't want to rock the boat. A lot of admirals who know better are just trying to get through to the end of careers with their PX privileges intact, to enable the missus to buy cabbage at 10 cents a pound cheaper than she could get it at Safeway. It's a lousy bargain for the country.

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— H. Joachim Maitre

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MEMORANDUM

TO: ~~Randall A. Jones, Esq.~~ DATE: August 5, 1992
FROM: John A. Lucas P.O. Box 951 Knoxville TN. 37901
Col. John W. Ripley

One of my partners was thoughtful enough to provide me with copies of Col. Ripley's testimony before the Congress and of your rejoinder. I confess to being somewhat bemused by your reference to Col. Ripley's supposedly "turgid" writing style. If you find his style to be turgid, it may be because while you were honing your writing skills in high school, John Ripley was busy leading United States Marines in ground combat against the North Vietnamese Army.

Before engaging in public criticism of Col. Ripley, you might have found it edifying to read about just one day in his life, which was memorialized in *The Bridge at Dong Ha*. You should read it. Then you should get down on your knees every day of your life and thank God that He made men like John Ripley who are willing to risk their lives and shed their blood to protect other people.


J.A.L.

191/6397
cc: Col. John W. Ripley