

as in the armed services were virtually unanimous that New Zealand's exclusion of US warships was unacceptable behaviour by an ally. Acquiescence in nuclear discrimination would only encourage new trouble for US warships in more important harbours. The line had to be drawn to establish that other allies would pay a price if they were to emulate Wellington.

New Zealanders such as Pugh complain that their country was treated more roughly than larger more important allies have been treated. That is perfectly true. Greece, Spain, France and other American allies have given the United States much more pain over the years than New Zealand. But the reply to New Zealand complaints is: "Tough luck. It is a hard world out there."

Small, relatively insignificant friends without much to offer have to expect less consideration than large, more important allies. During the ship visits dispute New Zealand leaders were seen to be troublesome and insulting, and they gave the strong impression that the US was unwanted down there. An alliance which had been taken for granted in Washington was pulled out for review, dusted off and thought about a bit for the first time in decades. The conclusion was that the balance of burdens was on the US side and the benefits on New Zealand's. The American security commitment to New Zealand became politically unsustainable; after some warnings and no sign of any willingness by Wellington to backtrack, it was simply suspended. New Zealand got

its moment when—in the words of the poet—it leapt into the eyes of the world, and Washington quickly went back to more serious security issues.

THE SECOND BOOK, by Peter Jennings of the Australian Defence Force Academy and published in New Zealand, suffers none of the defects of the English book. It is clearly written, well researched, and highly informative about details of the ANZUS military and intelligence relationship. Jennings concludes that New Zealand has lost a lot from the breach, and gained little. It is not becoming self-reliant as nationalist politicians promised but simply more dependent on Australia, which he predicts will be a tougher big brother than the US ever was. Jennings reaches the blunt conclusion that: "The defence policy of the New Zealand Labour Government can therefore be accounted a failure."

The problem with Jennings' analysis is that it focuses entirely on the military aspects of the dispute, leaving out the politics. For while New Zealand servicemen tend to share his conclusion that the Lange warships policy was a failure, or worse, politically Lange's policy was highly successful—so much so that the opposition too has embraced anti-nuclearism. The nutshell explanation: New Zealanders have no sense of a security problem. Pugh nicely captures the point: "If the US insisted that to be rescued by the cavalry you should be prepared to see the horses from time to time then this was understandable, though New Zealand had no requirement for the cavalry."

Peter Samuel wrote for Australian newspapers for 25 years, then settled in the United States where he is a national security correspondent for the *New York City Tribune*.

Women in Combat

by Babette Francis

Weak Link: The Femininization of the American Military by Brian Mitchell; Regnery Gateway, 1989.

THE WINTER 1989 issue of *Defender*, the National Journal of the Australian Defence Association, published an article by ADA member, Helen Fletcher, entitled "Women at War". Fletcher, a graduate student in Psychology at Melbourne University, works at the Gippsland Institute of Advanced Education. Her article, a plea to place women in combat jobs, is pure

feminist polemic in which the underlying assumption is that the primary function of the armed forces is as an equalising mechanism for the roles of men and women, and not for the defence of Australia.

This book, recently published in the United States, should put to rest the mythology of female adequacy for combat roles. Brian Mitchell, who served seven years as an infantry officer is now a reporter for *Navy Times* newspaper. It is the definitive book on how radical feminists have caused military officers to cower in fear and to acquiesce in policies that make the integration of females a higher priority than combat readiness.

The service newspaper *Army Times* editorialised: "Mitchell has dared to utter every male soldier's darkest doubt: that the American Army will come apart when women start dying in combat."

In *Weak Link* Mitchell argues:

All of the services have double standards for men and women on all the events of their regular physical fitness tests. Young male marines must perform at least 3 pull-ups to pass the test, but women marines must only hang from the bar with arms flexed for 16 seconds. In the Army, the youngest women are given an extra three minutes to complete a two-mile run. All of the services require men to perform more sit-ups than women, despite the much-vaunted strength of the female midsection.

He shows that the rifles and pistols selected by the US Army are not the best but those that are lighter-weight and more comfortable for women to handle. He concludes: "American soldiers are unlikely to get the weapons they need if it makes life more difficult for women."

Attrition rates (the failure to complete an enlistment contract) are consistently higher for women than men. A high attrition rate reduces service strength, increases personnel disturbance and makes maintaining the armed services more costly because it cheats the taxpayers out of their investment in training. Women in all the services are hospitalised two to three times as often as men. In the course of a year, 10% to 17% of all servicewomen are pregnant,

and some units have at times reported pregnancy rates as high as 50%. It would be instructive to compare attrition rates for men and women in the Australian forces.

Mitchell reveals what convoluted and contorted semantics the military use in order to conceal the fact that women do not meet the same standards, take the same training, pass the same tests or endure the same trials and discomforts as men. The officers refer to "dual standards" as a euphemism for double standards. They talk about "equivalent training" when it is self-evident it is not equal training. When awards, honours and badges are passed out, everyone knows the women have not met the same requirements, but no-one is permitted to say this out loud.

Official publications of the services are filled with propaganda promoting a favourable view of servicewomen. Commanders are required to endorse and enforce equal opportunity in the military. Units are assigned equal opportunity officers to watch over the climate of relations between the sexes and report violations of policy, much in the way the Soviet military has Communist Party officers assigned to units to keep commanders politically straight. Personnel are required to attend equal opportunity training, during which EO officers preach the sanctity of sexual equality and the folly and immorality of belief in traditional sex roles. The definition of sexual harassment has expanded to include the open expression of opposition to women in the military. Officers and senior enlisteds are

kept in check by their performance reports. A bad mark can mean a career is derailed.

US Federal law specifically excludes women from combat jobs, and Congress stoutly rejected a determined effort by President Jimmy Carter and the feminists in 1979 to repeal the prohibition. The spirit if not the letter of the law is violated by redefining "combat" so narrowly that many army women are assigned to positions formerly considered combat jobs. The policy of renaming combat jobs as "combat support" jobs and then assigning women to them has continued ever since.

To put a veneer of plausibility on this duplicitous policy, feminist agitators and the media have deliberately propagated the myth that women in the Israeli army are treated just like men. The fact is that members of the women's component in the military, called Chen (which means charm) are barred from jobs involving physical strain, adverse environmental conditions, or combat. They serve as clerks, typists, nurses, teachers and social workers, but definitely not as pilots, sailors, truck drivers or combat infantrymen.

Mitchell concludes that:

The American military has been used by a political faction with no concern for national defence—for no other purpose than to advance feminism So long as the military remains mostly male, the hounding of the services will never cease. To expect feminists to settle for less is to gravely mistake both their will and their intent.

Then there is the special treatment for women who have

children. An Army wife complains about another differential in treatment between men and women:

Since when is the military supposed to be Big Brother to thousands of women in uniform who choose to have babies and expect the government to accommodate them in terms of long-term paid leave, not only after the child is born but also before? After the child is born, these women demand to be relieved of guard duty, overnight field training and other duties which would prevent them from going home at 5 pm sharp. This coerces the active-duty males to take up the women's slack as well as do their own work. The governmental pampering of active-duty women has really caused a morale problem in the services. My husband, a platoon sergeant and military instructor, tells many horror stories of taxpayer-paid abuses committed by these women. And it is unfair—the men's responsibilities and work loads increase while the females get time off and special concessions with no decrease in their paychecks.

The American experience is relevant to Australia. Here too there has been a feminist putsch to redefine combat roles so narrowly that women in the services are undertaking jobs formerly classified as combat-related. In discussing the Australian situation with Michael J. O'Connor, National Executive Director of the Australian Defence Association, he suggested that in Australia we have no option but to have women in the

armed forces and the police because there are simply not enough qualified men available. If this is correct, then the urgent problem is to ensure that more suitable men are available—perhaps we should re-establish school cadet units. No country can be adequately defended by a female army, or a substantially female army, against an invading male army.

The armies of all potential enemies (of the US or Australia) are almost exclusively male. The Soviet Union's 4.4 million armed force includes only 10,000 women, and they do mostly clerical and medical work. There is no evidence in all history for the proposition that co-ed combat assignments in armies and navies will promote national security, improve combat readiness or win wars. The only two nations that used women in combat in modern times, the Soviet Union and Israel, have both abandoned the policy because it doesn't work. We should study their experience and acknowledge the truth of the reasons.

But perhaps the deepest problem if we put women into combat roles, would be that we

would, logically, have to train our male soldiers to fight "enemy" women. Our major loss would be the violation of our own biological instincts and the essence of civilisation itself. In no animal species do males fight females—a sensible prohibition on the part of Mother Nature as no species could survive if males fought females. Every civilised impulse in men leads them to protect women and children. Do we really want to train our sons, brothers and husbands to be able to bayonet women? This training has to be undertaken in cold blood—not the heat of battle. Can we train Australian men to run with bayonets fixed and stab dummies made in the shape of women? Psychologically I don't think it can be done—but if we did descend to this level of barbarism, it would do enormous damage to our national psyche and we would have lost whatever it is we were trying to defend.



Babette Francis founded the Endeavour Forum and is a regular contributor to *Quadrant*.

Quadrant

NEEDS YOU!

SUBSCRIBE NOW

