

# Women's duty to protect nation

by Stephanie Wright

It looks like it's time to start talking war again—which means conscription.

The invasion of Afghanistan by Russian troops poses a threat of further communist expansion into the Persian Gulf which would ultimately mean a cutoff of the United States' Middle East oil supply.

This threat has prompted the President with the support of the Pentagon to call for both men and women between the ages of 18 and 20 to be required to register with the government so that in case the need arises for a draft a list of eligible candidates will be readily available.

The readiness of a country to defend itself at any time is a concern for everyone; yet very few want to voluntarily participate in the process of maintaining a strong military. As a result of this apathy, the enactment of an all-volunteer military in 1973 was met with a drop in enlisted men. Since then, no single branch of the military has been able to meet its quota of officers or servicemen for the last couple of years.

At the present, the call for registration seems to be a reasonable precaution. We Americans should be ready to protect our Middle Eastern oil supply so that we can continue to drive our cars, heat our homes, run our factories and keep the overall economy from worsening any further. Then, too, the containment of communist expansion is also important.

These are pressing problems for a nation trying to maintain a balance of power between another nation and itself. However, this is not the only problem that our nation now faces. For the first time the question arises, should the burden of protecting our country lie solely with the male population? Recent demographic statistics have shown that over the next few years the male population will decline by as much as 25%. With this being the case, it is time we Americans faced reality and utilized our female population in all areas where they can function on an equal par with males.

The thought of war and death can frighten any sane person, so who says pain and death are only meant to be felt by the male species? Women experience pain during childbirth and some even die. With the advent of abortion rights, childbirth is now a choice that women have the right to determine. The right to fight and die for one's country should also be left up to the individual.

The women's movement has given a woman the opportunity to stand up and make many choices that before she thought herself incapable of making. To fight and die for one's country is to some the ultimate political choice that women have yet to be given the right to determine.

Should women be required to register for the draft and if so should they be required to go into combat? Many Americans are pondering these questions, and probably the greatest concern rests on those whom it will affect the most—the young men and women be-

tween the ages of 18 and 20. Recent opinion polls among young men and women show that a majority of both agree that women should be required to register for the draft. However, the majority of both also agree that women should be restricted from combat.

The changing attitude toward the roles women should play in our nation is the reason that such a question on the registration of women for the draft has occurred. The once delicate, indecisive, and docile feminine image given to women has changed since women have gained entrance into the work world and have taken up non-traditional jobs.

Furthermore, the fact that women are performing in these jobs and doing excellent work is further evidence of the misplaced role assignment that society had given its female population. The acceptance of this fact has given rise to the idea that women's roles in the military can also be broadened to include non-traditional areas. To some, this may mean combat.

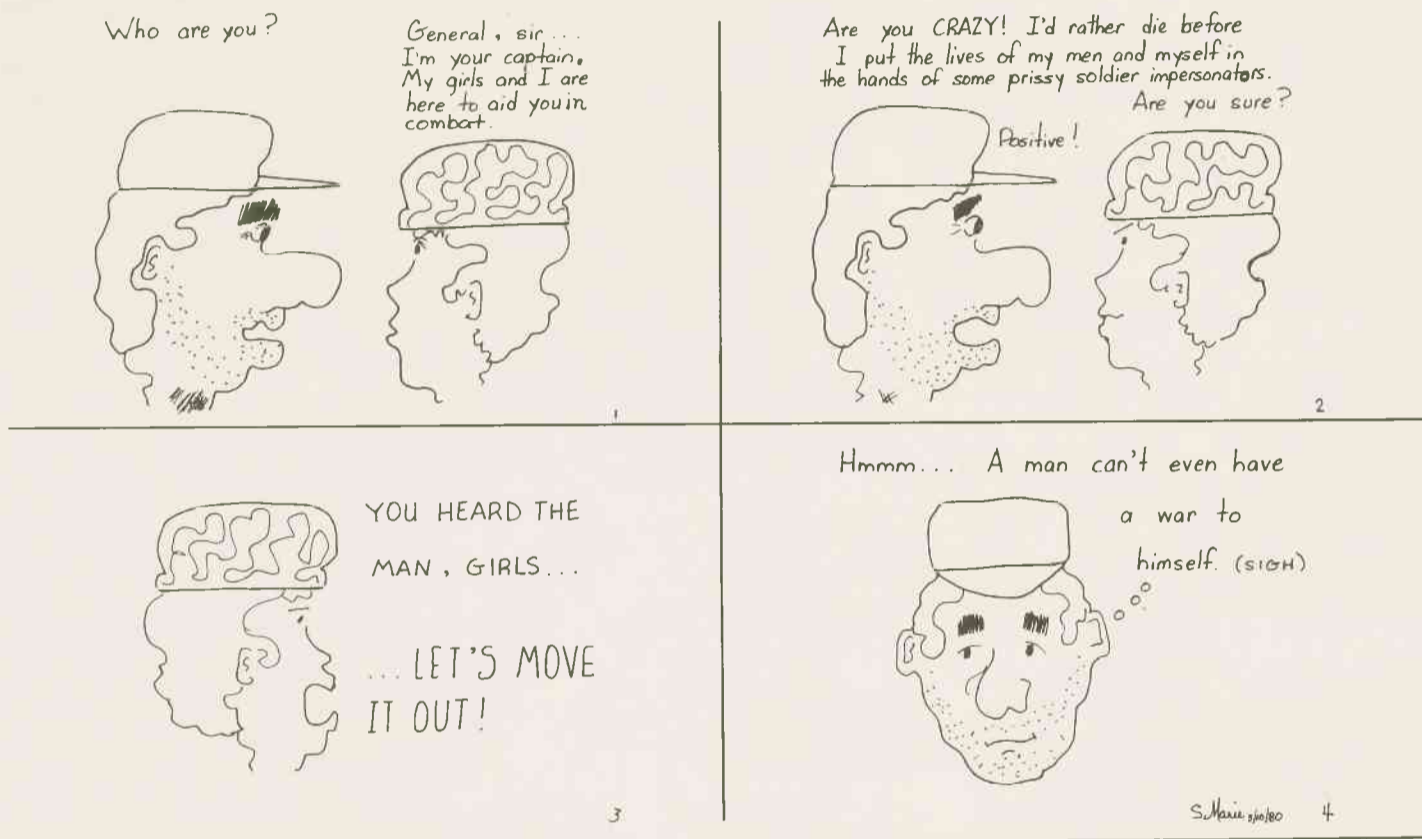
Due to the women's movement some changes have been made in reshaping the thinking patterns of our society, but as a whole the still prevalent feeling is that women are the weaker sex emotionally, physically and psychologically and therefore their presence in any branch of the military would prove to be a disservice to our country. The reason for the belief in these feminine weaknesses is that society is structured on a male-dominated basis which purposely restricts the development of women.

Because of this structure, we as women perceive and believe that there are certain things that we can't do or shouldn't do merely because we are women. The perpetuation of such fallacies by our male counterparts is responsible for our status as second-class citizens. This status has instilled in our minds doubt of our ability to provide, think, and fight for ourselves. Until we as women overcome these fallacies, we will remain second-class citizens within our own perspective as well as that of our male counterparts.

Women must become more responsible for their well-being, and that means for the well-being of the country as a whole. If conscription is reenacted to include women, then we must do all that we can as citizens striving toward the elevation of our status to protect this country.

Just as many of us have decided to establish careers so that we will no longer have to rely on the support of males, we must also broaden that career choice and responsibility to include an aspect of life that has for hundreds of years affected our lives. War is politics and as long as we limit our political careers we will continue to allow men to wage wars.

We have maintained the houses of our nation for years and there have not been any wars among housewives in communities or states. It is now time for women to take a bigger step and move from the house into the military where our services are just as badly needed.



# Mike hates apathy; inmate seeks pal

To the Editor:

Warning: this is an irate letter. It ought to be printed in red ink that emits an odor of smoke.

Subject? Student indifference. The **Banner** has sometimes served as a medium for student criticism of the administration, faculty and staff. This week, I'd like to give the gavel to those who are usually the defendants.

One of the most important ways a college community coheres and thrives is through the public presentations of its students.

The two most impressive displays of our community's spirit that I've witnessed in my two years here have been last winter's productions of "Sirens" and "The Owl Killer" and the Bennett basketball team's Feb. 19 demolition of Meredith College.

On both occasions, the partici-

pants "clicked" for the greater good of the Bennett family.

As the **Banner** recently reported, the acting, pacing and staging of the plays were so polished that the Bennett Players received an invitation for a command performance this month at NCCU. The invitation was joyfully accepted by the casts and interpreted as a rave review and much-deserved reward.

Unfortunately, the night for the Durham performance has passed, and no Belle's feet tripped lightly across the NCCU stage.

Why? Because, allegedly, members of the casts were involved in sorority activities and could not honor their commitment to NCCU as well as their considerable debt to Mr. Moffitt, whose professional skill infused the productions.

Having taught at four colleges—

large, medium-sized, and small—I can assure you that it's rare to see campus drama conducted with Moffitt's expertise.

Isn't it possible to be a **soror** and an **honoror**, too?

But the drama situation only involved the frivolity of a **few** whereas the woeful attendance at recent Belle ballgames concerns the conspiracy of **many**.

There were approximately 35 fans at the Division III first round tournament game in Goode Gymnasium Feb. 19. I have made a "generous" estimate of the crowd. Among the press of partisans were members of the administration, faculty and staff—groups often accused of shunning student activities.

The seating capacity at Goode is probably about 400. To paraphrase a sports cliché, 365 students came disguised as empty seats.

Even more wore this unique masquerade costume when Bennett won an exciting consolation game at UNC-G Feb. 23. Eschewing party dress, the President of the College and the public relations director were there. Of course, there is a vast distance between Bennett and UNC-G, and a long trip can be perilous on a false spring day.

Coach McDougle didn't complain about the feeble turnouts at either gym. In the case of Goode, he explained that his team hadn't played especially well at home this season and perhaps this problem had cooled student enthusiasm.

Some students found the 50-cent charge for the Feb. 19 encounter prohibitive. Doubtless, a few Belles didn't have half-a-buck. But most Belles did—al-

though they were reluctant to confess to the possession of such a vast sum.

Most students might not have had 50 cents on Feb. 19, but I did notice that several vending machines had been depleted of their most popular treats. In addition, there was no dearth of cars being driven by ladies on campus. Belles were also wearing cosmetics and listening to records that Tuesday.

I had no idea that Cokes, Van-o-Lunch cookies, gasoline, grooming aids and the latest albums were now being distributed **gratis**.

Believe me, instructors aren't as affluent as they look. I'd like to know where I can get mine.

Being arrogant enough to suppose that actors should honor their obligations and that most Belles do actually have 50 cents, I'll compensate for my nastiness by telling you what you missed in Durham and Goode. I believe in sharing.

The Players missed the following chances: to make more magic; to meet new people; to further career aspirations; to enhance the prestige of the college; and to advance the already estimable reputation of Elliot Moffitt.

The masqueraders missed the entertainment generated by a team that was "smoking."

They didn't see a gallant performance by senior Andre Dixon during her last home appearance; the nifty moves of Elwanda Blue; the pickpocket-like defensive play of Valerie Callender and the crisp assists of Denise Wilder.

They didn't have the pleasure of watching Rhonda Bradley's aggressive rebounding and scoring. Nor did they relish the sight of Coach Mac yelling at a team that

at one time had a 30-point lead.

There must have been a great deal of free entertainment on campus that night and some burdensome homework as well. But I did detect that most of the students in my largest class on Wednesday hadn't read their daily assignment.

After all, plays and basketball games are frivolous, fleeting things, lacking the deep permanence of Greek unity and television.

Michael Gaspeny

To the Editor:

I'm an inmate in one of Ohio's prisons, forgotten to the outside world, it seems. I'm without friends, letters or visits. I'm lonely.

I'm writing this letter in hope you will print it in your paper and maybe from your readers I'll find a friend and letters. I'll write anyone who cares to find out about me. If they just send in their name and address, I'll write the first letter. Please write.

I do appreciate any help you can offer to this matter. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Johnny Finnefrock  
149-481  
P. O. Box 69  
London, Ohio

Why will the 1980 census ask everyone if they are of Spanish/Hispanic origin? Because it will indicate for the first time just how many Hispanic people reside in each area of the U.S., down to a city block, and will help locate areas that require bilingual education and other special programs.

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