

Women in the military

Re Women Under Gun In Military: Magazine
— May 19:

As a former member of the British Army, I did not find the report on the harassment of women in Canada's military surprising.

This sort of behaviour began in the British Royal Navy a few years ago when female personnel were integrated with male sailors on some of our front-line ships. This resulted in sexual harassment and assaults, lewd behaviour and unwanted pregnancies. This clearly demonstrates the sheer stupidity of placing service women in combat units with men who are hardly noted for their reserved, gentlemanly demeanour.

It would appear that Canada has failed to learn from this absurd experiment in social engineering from other countries such as the United States, where placing women in combat units has proved to be an unmitigated disaster. But then, we must be politically cor-

rect, in spite of the disastrous results such policies bring.

I do not relish the idea of going to war and facing the possibility of shooting or bayoneting a woman — even if it is her “right” to be there.

William J. Gibbons, Toronto

Ah, the VP life

Reading James Tannian's Growth Industry Or Infestation? (Facts & Arguments — May 20) caused me to take a second look at the number (some might say hoards) of vice-presidents working (some might say not) where I work — VIA Rail.

I've come to realize that hundreds of them are employed in a highly specialized and indeed a very useful manner. To wit: They ride the VIA 1 Club Car service back and forth between Toronto and Montreal so as to inflate the passenger head count and create the impression of fully booked trains.

Where would we, the humble engineers and conductors, be without these armies of dedicated bureaucrats who sacrifice so much for so little? All for little more reward than a brass desk thingy with Vice-President of Something or Other on it. We salute them all.

Someday when VIA's legions of vices move on to the Senate or wherever it is VIA executives go, maybe I too will be called upon to do my own vice-presidential duty in the Club Car. Maybe I'll get a brass desk thingy and a personal laptop so I can annoy the paying passengers. And who knows, maybe somebody like James Tannian will write unkind things about me in The Globe.

Daniel J. Christie, Port Hope, Ont.

The divine Ms. M

Re Unpredictable Icons Can Still Rock When They Want To (The Arts — May 16):

Being one of the diehard **Joni Mitchell** fans who knew all the songs on her GM Place set, I wanted to point out a couple of inaccuracies in Mr. Dafoe's otherwise thoughtful and entertaining review.

She performed only two songs from the unreleased album *Taming the Tiger*. Three of the set songs — *Black Crow*, *Amelia* and the title song as well as the first encore, *Refuge of the Road* — are from her 1976 album *Hejira*. She did one song apiece from 1974's *Court and Spark* and 1975's *The Hissing of Summer Lawns*.

Also, I wish I could agree that the audience was polite. Certainly there were those of us who rose to our feet and applauded with deep appreciation for the preceding song. But there was the goon who had to shout, “Do some old songs!” and the cretin who felt moved to chant, “Dylan! Bob Dylan!”

I was so inspired and moved by Joni's set that I left immediately after it was over and have no regrets. I consider my life richer for what she has so generously contributed to it.

Robert Holliston, Victoria

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