

Republican Perspective

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by John Littig

Disparate Treatment

Chelsea (nee Bradley) Manning freely enlisted in the U.S. Army and served as an intelligence analyst in Iraq. Manning, who was openly gay, was bullied earlier in life and this continued in the Army.

He has been diagnosed with gender dysphoria. This means, as I understand it, that he thinks he is or should be a woman. Notice that I use the biologically correct but politically incorrect masculine pronoun. This is because Manning is and forever will be genetically male even if he receives “gender reassignment surgery,” which he has not yet. So with that digression, back to the point.

Manning’s military job gave him access to a wealth of classified material which he found troubling. This included material known as the Iraq War Logs and the Afghanistan War Logs, secret U.S. State Department communications, assessments of Guantanamo detainees, and a video showing unarmed civilians being shot and killed.

Manning turned over this trove of damaging information to WikiLeaks. Of course the demonstration of America’s inability to keep secrets is damaging to our relationships with other governments and to our ability to secure the cooperation of civilians in enemy terrain.

Manning’s crimes were discovered, and he was arrested and tried by a court martial. He was found guilty of espionage and other charges and sentenced to 35 years in prison. Immediately after his sentencing, Manning announced, “As I transition into this next phase of my life, I want everyone to know the real me. I am Chelsea Manning. I am a female. Given the way I feel, and have felt since childhood, I want to begin hormone therapy as soon as possible.”

Manning’s espionage earned him support among anti-war activists, who saw him as a “whistleblower” rather than a criminal. His announcement as “transgendered” gained him support from LGBTQ activists. A double helping of sympathy from the Left. On Jan. 17, 2017, President Obama commuted Manning’s prison sentence.

Eddie Slovik had an extensive criminal record, which caused him to be classified 4F, unfit for military service. But in 1944 Uncle Sam needed warm bodies, so Slovik was reclassified 1A and drafted into the U.S. Army. In August 1944, Slovik found himself in the infantry in France.

When Slovik arrived at his assigned rifle company, he promptly informed his company commander that he was not cut out for combat and requested to be reassigned to a support unit behind the front lines. His request was denied and he deserted the following day.

Slovik worked his way to the rear, where he found a non-combat unit and turned himself in. Officers there urged him to return to his infantry unit but he steadfastly refused, preferring a court martial for desertion rather than a combat assignment.

Slovik was tried by a court martial, found guilty, and sentenced to death. He had thought he would only have received a dishonorable discharge and prison time. He wrote a letter to Supreme Allied Commander Dwight D. Eisenhower, begging for clemency.

In the hard winter of 1944-1945, Eisenhower was concerned with low morale and a rising desertion rate. Ike confirmed the sentence, and Slovik was shot dead by a firing squad in January of 1945.

Poor Slovik---he should have been born seven decades later and claimed to be female.