

2009 FALL SYMPOSIUM
Soldiers & Citizens
Military and Civic Culture in America
November 7, 2009
Robsham Theater, Boston College

SESSION 2: United We Serve: The All Volunteer Force, National Service and Democracy

Panelists: Col. Charles Allen, United States Army War College
Larry Korb, Center for American Progress
Paul Rieckhoff, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America
Cullen Murphy, *Vanity Fair*

WU: I'm delighted to welcome you to the second session of our symposium. Motivated in part by the belief that the members of our society should more equitably share the burdens of protecting our democracy, there have been calls for a resumption of the draft and/or some other form of mandatory national or community service. While attractive, perhaps, from the standpoint of fairness and civic virtue, a return to conscription, most informed sources agree, is unlikely. The concern remains, however, that it is unhealthy for a democracy when only a small percentage of citizens literally puts their lives on the line in defense of the nation. Also of concern is that fewer of our civilian elites in government, business, education, finance and a host of other areas, have military experience or children, grandchildren or other family members liable to serve in the armed forces. And the same is true for our elected political leaders – the very people who determine whether, when and where to go to war.

In terms of strengthening our democracy, did we make the right decision when we gave up the draft? And in assessing the correctness of that decision, how do considerations of civic obligation stack up against notions of individual liberty? These are among the issues that will be explored in our next session. The moderator for the session is Cullen Murphy, editor at large for *Vanity Fair* and former managing editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*. Cullen is the author of the award-winning 2007 book, *Are We Rome?: The Fall of an Empire and the Fate of America*, which compares the politics and culture of ancient Rome with that of the contemporary United States. And by the way, copies of that book and others are on sale in the lobby. I'm also proud to add that Cullen is a former board member of Mass Humanities. Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in welcoming our moderator, Cullen Murphy.

MURPHY: Thank you very much and welcome to the second of our panels today. I'm delighted to be here with our three distinguished guests. And I won't go through the biographies in any detail – you have them in your books – but just so that we can keep the characters straight, to my left is Larry Korb, one of the preeminent analysts of the U.S. military, especially when it comes to manpower issues. He's a former Naval officer and a former Assistant Secretary of Defense and is currently at the Center for American Progress in Washington. He's just back from two weeks in Iraq, I believe and thank you for your help on my book. (laughter)



KORB: That's why I'm on the panel.

MURPHY: And you promised two more. To Larry's left is Paul Rieckhoff, who is the founder and executive director of the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America. He is a veteran of the Iraq War and remains in the infantry in the New York State National Guard. He's also among the relatively few who have joined the military after graduating from an elite private college. It used to be commonplace, now it is rare. Paul is a graduate of Amherst College.

M: (inaudible) (laughter)

RIECKHOFF: There's another one?

MURPHY: There's a lot more than that. And to Paul's left is Chuck Allen, who is doing extraordinary duty today. We're going to try to get you on the third panel, too –

M: Chuck, you've been drafted. (laughter)

MURPHY: That's right.

ALLEN: I'm a volunteer always. Remember that. (laughter)

MURPHY: He got a \$40,000 bonus. Chuck, as you know, is a professor at the Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania and 1978 graduate of West Point. You can find his very interesting and wide-ranging commentaries on the *Washington Post* website. So our topic today is called United We Serve: The All Volunteer Force, National Service, and Democracy. And I just wanted to begin with a very brief personal note, thinking about my own family. My father was in the military, as were his two brothers. They both enlisted before World War II. Of course, they would have been drafted had they not enlisted, but this was several years before. Like virtually all men of his generation, he served in the military as did virtually most men in the following generation. When it comes to the children of those people, the story begins to change. I turned 18 just as the draft was transitioning into the draft with a lottery, which then transitioned into the all-volunteer force.

I was at the lottery stage, my number was not picked, I was the oldest in my family of eight children. Two of my siblings enlisted in the military, one in the Air Force, one in the Navy, in the all-volunteer force. And one of them actually made a career of that. And that one has now gone on to another career as a military contractor. I've thought about this for a number of reasons. One of them has to do with just who goes into the military these days. Some people think it's unusual to come from a family with eight children, and I think it's unusual to come from a family that lived in Greenwich, Connecticut and have two people who went into the military. So as I've thought about my own family in the military, it raises a lot of questions because in some ways, in a microcosm, are many of the issues that we're here to talk about this afternoon.

In a broad sense, I'd like to pay attention to two issues that involve the all-volunteer force, national service, democracy. One is the effect that the current changes in the

way we bring people into the military, the effect of that on the ability of the military to do its job. That's the first and primary question. And the second has to do with the effect of these changes on the larger society. The military is the largest single institution in American life and its core purpose may be to protect the nation's security, but it has all sorts of other ripple effects that we can't ignore and that the military does not ignore. So I'd like to begin, basically, by asking Larry Korb to give us a history lesson. Looking out across the room, I know that many people here did not live through the period when we had a draft or the transition from a draft to the all-volunteer force. So just for baseline purposes, could you get us up to the present point?

KORB: Thank you very much and it's a great pleasure to be here. To understand how we got where we are, you've got to go back to 1948 when we, for the first time in our history, had a peacetime draft. World War II ended, the draft ended, everybody got discharged and then people recognized that with the Cold War, we were going to need a significant military presence, so the draft came back. And it worked reasonably well for about 15 years because of – primarily because of the low-birth rates during the Depression. So virtually, in the '50s, eight out of every 10 males had to serve in one form or another, either in active duty or in the reserves. We also had a much larger military because with technology – had not advanced and we were much more man-power intensive. What happened was that it began to fall apart in the '60s when the war babies came into the population and we had a very unpopular war.



Now let me relate something from my own experience. I was the first one in my family to go to college and then I went on to graduate school and I'm in graduate school in the '60s and I got my draft notice. Well, you could get a deferment if you were in graduate school. I was also teaching high school in New York City during the day, so I could get a double deferment. My father, who's the World War II generation, said there's no deferments in this house. I mean, do you think you're better than the paper boy? I mean, what is this? And some of you can relate to that – the first one to go to college. He said, go down and join the Army. I said, well, how about the Navy? Well, that's all right too, but go down. I didn't even know the Navy flew at the time, but anyway, so I ended up as a Naval flight officer. When I got into government in the Reagan Administration, I looked around and people we call the neoconservatives – Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle, Dick Cheney – they all didn't go.

And then, of course, why didn't they go, because what happened was, since even at the height of Vietnam, we only needed one out every six, anybody who wanted to could really get out. My favorite story is Dick Cheney, which I discovered quite by accident because in 1968, after I got out of the service, I applied for an American Political Science Association Fellowship to work on the Hill. I didn't know it at the time, but one of the people who also applied and got it was Dick Cheney. They told me well, you've been out of school too long. You've got to go back to graduate school, you know, so – where had I been? I'd been in the service. Anyway, it turned out that the guy who made that decision, 20 years later, came to work for me. I didn't even remember it, but he thought he wouldn't get the job and he expected –

and so what happened was, here was Cheney. And I think he typified what happened.

He's exactly my age. OK, he gets his draft notice, he applies for a deferment because he's in graduate school. Well, as the war heated up, they took that away. Then they said, but if you were married, you could get a deferment, so he got married. And then they took that away. Then they said, if you were married with a child – and this is hilarious because I ended up getting his Selective Service record – 13 weeks after they said, if you have a child, you can get deferment, he goes down to the draft board with a pregnancy certificate. Now that's typical of what people did. You've got President Clinton, our vice-president, Biden, Cheney. And then, of course, if you couldn't get any deferments, you use political influence to get to the head of the National Guard because Johnson had made the decision not to mobilize the reserves. So it was very unpopular. As the war became more and more unpopular, people started demonstrating.

Now when Nixon decided to run for president in – he started in '67 and '68, the war really went downhill, he said, elect me and I'll end the draft. They didn't stop and say, which is better for military preparedness or readiness or anything. It was a political decision. So basically, they ended the draft and Nixon kept his campaign promise and by the end of his first term, we had ended the draft. There was a lot of resistance from the military. In fact, they called – they're going to mercenaries and they're going to break the links between the society and the military. And basically, Secretary of Defense Laird said, look, we're doing it. That's it. If you don't like it, get out of here. And they did it. Ironically, now if you talk about going back to the draft, they don't want to. So that goes back to your first panel, in terms of the way they resist changes.

Now let me emphasize this because I think it's very relevant to what we're talking about today. When we went to a volunteer military, we basically made a decision that we would keep particularly the active army comparatively small. And we did that for two reasons. One, now that you ended conscription, you had to pay, as you guys mentioned the first time – you had to pay market wages. When I went into the service, I got the same pay my family did in World War II in the '60s. It was 80 bucks a month, enlisted, \$222 for officers. That was it. And so now we're going to have to pay market wages. The other is, the Army has the most difficult time recruiting because it doesn't have as many transferable skills as, say, the Air Force or the Navy does. So we're going to have a comparatively small active duty Army. We are going to have a guard and reserve that's going to serve as the strategic reserve.

They are going to be a bridge to conscription if, in fact, we have a long war. That was the deal. That's why we make register when they turn 18. Now it was discontinued by Rumsfeld, the first time he was Secretary of Defense. Carter brought it back, President Reagan campaigned against it. And in my first year in office, I had to persuade the President to keep it. I took the lead on that issue, which was one of the few I ever did, you know – going right to the President and the National Security Council. And one of the arguments I made to him, and remember, he was a libertarian, OK, and there was also a cost for this and I said, Mr. President, if you get into a long war, you don't have enough people. And you cannot use the volunteers over and over. We had a policy – for every year you

served in a combat zone, you should have two at home. If you were in the guard and reserve, you weren't going to get called up more than one out of every six. And it's not just a readiness question, it was a moral question.

So Reagan kept it, much to the chagrin of a lot of his supporters. Now what happened was it took us a while, but the volunteer military began to work pretty well. And we got good people and patriotism was restored in the '80s and we found that getting people to stay in longer was more important than the draft because you turn over too much and you would spend a lot of money on training. Some of you will relate to this – when I tell this to students today, they look at me with a blank stare. The Army is not Joe and Willy and the Doughboys anymore. It's a very sophisticated thing. You want to train people.

So it was working very well. Now what happened was that after 9/11 and the two wars that the President decided to get into, we didn't take the next step. And it wasn't just the President, there was nobody in the country. Charlie Rangel introduced the resolution, I don't think even he voted for it, to bring back the draft. But my point is – and I think what we've done – and we can get into this if you want – it's a little bit off the topic. You've really caused a lot of damage to your military, particularly the ground forces, by using them over and over. When the Fort Hood thing came about the other day, everybody was wondering, who did it? We didn't know who – the allegation. I went back and several reporters called me. I looked at the First Cavalry Division, which is down there. All of their brigades have deployed at least three times.

And several of them had 15 months and then 10 months at home. One only had six months at home after 14 months, OK? And they were sent back. So we went to the volunteer military, but we forgot one of the components, and that to me says something should be in the debate. Now I happen to think that if President Bush, when he decided to go to Iraq when the job in Afghanistan was not finished, had said, we need a draft, I'm going to have to activate – American people would have asked a lot more questions. And I think that would have been healthy in terms of why we went and how we went and then they would have felt part of this. But as General Eaton, who was the first person who was in charge of training in Iraq, put it, he said, we went to war, you guys went shopping at Wal-Mart.

MURPHY: Thanks, Larry. That's just the kind of background we needed and I want to come back to the draft issue in just a moment. Chuck, you want to say something and I want to ask you something, too. So let me ask you something and then you can just fold it all in. You started at the Military Academy just at the transition point between the draft Army and the all-volunteer force. And it was also a really tough time for the military. When we were talking last night, you were talking about how the military was broken. So I wonder if you can just talk a little bit – from your own personal experience – what was it like being there at that transition point and then you wanted to add something else.

ALLEN: I'll start from my beginning and I'll get to your point, how's that? The experience that Larry had with going to through the draft back in the Vietnam era, I got out of high school in 1973, but in the mid-'60s, I had a family of African Americans in Cleveland, Ohio, two



uncles that been drafted and one first cousin who had joined the Air Force to avoid the draft. I'm married to a Caucasian woman from Oregon. Her family, 15 people, between first cousins and parents and siblings – no one was drafted, no one went to Vietnam. So that discrepancy between our society and what I experienced in my community and what she experienced is pretty evident. The second piece is when I came out of high school in 1973, I did have a draft card for one year and went to West Point in 1974.

So we were transitioning between this conscription Army to an all-volunteer Army. And that point of trying to go take folks that were drafted and were still in service and try and transition them into a volunteer force was very, very difficult. My first years of active duty was in a place called Schweinfurt, Germany, which had a lot of issues with discipline, racial problems, etc. and not very combat-ready. We tried to transition, we had a hard time. It got to the point where we had a recession and a new President came in, we made some changes to the policy to get a force that was capable in order to meet our national security needs.

MURPHY: And Paul, you're entering the service at a completely different time yet again, where the all-volunteer force is now established, it's working in some real sense. Can you talk a little bit about that and also about your motivations?

RIECKHOFF: Sure, I enlisted in 1998, after I graduated from Amherst, so it's always good to come back to Massachusetts, especially as a native New Yorker after the Yankees won the World Series last week. (audience gasps) I know, I knew that was going to happen, but I woke you up, right? It was a time – settle down. (laughter)

M: Wait until next year, right?

RIECKHOFF: Yeah, we can talk about the Giants later. But when I joined the military in 1998, I remember the president of Amherst College sitting down with me going, you're doing what? You're going where? It was when everyone was going into consulting, everyone was going to Wall Street. Prior to 9/11, people thought the National Guard was just a bunch of people who drank beer and hung out and threw darts. And it was a very different understanding of what the military was. I didn't know I would go to Iraq. I had no idea where I'd end up. You always kind of hope for your chance to prove yourself. You don't want war, but you wonder if your generation will be called and how you'll respond. And I quit my job on September 7, 2001 on Wall Street, was still a drilling reservist, left downtown and was going to go to South America and maybe go to Ranger school, do some other stuff, never thought four days later, I'd be back at Ground Zero in my military uniform serving in my hometown.



So that definitely turned my world upside down. I volunteered for Afghanistan, didn't go, eventually went for about the first year of the Iraq War with the 3rd Infantry Division. Getting to the core of the point, I think what I want to tack on to what Larry said is that we've got an unprecedented divide in this country. The civil/military divide is something that we focus on at IAVA on a regular basis because you've never had a country so disconnected. Less than one-half of 1% of the population has served. In World War II, I think it was as high as 12, 13%

sometimes, Larry? So you could very well be in a restaurant or in a classroom and have no one else that has a personal, direct connection to this war. And that has dramatically impacted the way that everything is understood in this country surrounding the military, surrounding service, surrounding the wars – everything from how we understand PTSD to the press coverage of what’s happening on the ground.

You just don’t have that connection, that level of understanding – the same is true on Capitol Hill – that you had in previous generations. And you’ve asked the same people to go over and over again. More than half a million folks have been deployed more than once. I think about 40,000 have been deployed four times or more. I’ve got a young staff sergeant that works on my staff in Washington named Todd Bowers (sp?) who’s been working for us on Capitol Hill for years. He is in Afghanistan right now on his fourth tour since 9/11. He got three weeks notice. He is a civil affairs reservist and got three weeks notice. So the churn on our military and the families is really unprecedented. And there is often a feeling that we are at war and everyone else is watching American Idol. So it’s really created a tremendous challenge for this generation in bridging that gap and just communicating our most basic issues.

We spend a lot of time on Capitol Hill educating Congress about the very basic differences between the enlisted and officers, between the National Guard and the Active Duty. You get freshmen congressmen come in who themselves have served at a very small percentage, an unprecedentedly low percentage. And they need that education about what the Department of Defense is, what the VA is, what it means to be a veteran, what is veteran status. This is a huge challenge for this generation. And I think that these folks are working every day to show that they can be the next greatest generation and we’re fighting this unprecedented divide. I think we’re also fighting some stereotypes that have come out of the Vietnam War and we’re going to continue to do that, especially after something like the Fort Hood tragedy where we’ve been urging everyone not to jump to stereotypes or scapegoating troops and don’t jump to stereotypes or scapegoating Muslims.

I mean, there’s got to be a real balancing of the dialogue. And when you have so few people that really understand even what Fort Hood is all about, it does create this real tension or unease or panic. And I think what you’re seeing – the silver lining here, is that these veterans are stepping up. This new generation coming out of Iraq and Afghanistan are incredibly dynamic, they are smart, the new GI bill is sending hundreds of thousands of them back to school. Here at Boston College, I’m sure there are folks who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan and are now enrolled in the new GI bill. But I think we’ve got no shortage of challenges. And now, even as we have a discussion about Afghanistan, I would argue, it came a few years late. Rachel’s going to be on a panel later. She was trying to push forward a discussion on Afghanistan, I think, before the country was even having that discussion. A couple years ago, we called it Forgotistan because everyone was so focused on Iraq. And now, I get e-mails and Facebook messages on a daily basis from my friends in Iraq, saying, does anybody remember we’re over here?

So a huge part of our work as a veterans organization is bridging that gap and connecting people in new ways. Sometimes that means partnering with a rock band.

Sometimes that means using Facebook and Twitter. But with Veteran's Day coming up on Wednesday, that is our biggest time of the year to try to bring people together. And I think with the Fort Hood tragedy, it's one thing we're trying to emphasize, that we can unite around these folks and their families, regardless of how you feel about the war. And that's tremendous progress from Vietnam, is that I think the general public, no matter how they feel about the war, have learned to separate the war from the warriors. And that's a testament to the country, it's a testament especially to the Vietnam veterans who stood up when we first came home in 2003 and 2004 and said, look guys, don't take it out on the troops. That is a significant step forward from what we saw in previous generations.

MURPHY: And Larry, you had a comment –

KORB: Yeah, I want to make two comments – sort of the good news and bad news about what Paul has said. Let me do the bad news first. During the 2004 campaign, I was on Bill O'Reilly's show – that's what we have to do in think tanks, you know? And we were talking about Bush's military service or lack thereof. And O'Reilly said, well, what difference do you think it would have made had he gone to Vietnam? I said, I think he would have recognized, like a lot of us who went there, that you don't go into a foreign country and expect to be greeted as liberators. Now maybe that would have changed, but I think that experience is missing and had he had that – and of course, you know, Eisenhower wouldn't get into Vietnam, OK, because he recognized what it was like.

Now the good news, though, is I think because of this guilt feeling that it's only the brave men and women in the service, this comparatively small number, they've been – Congress and the people have been much more generous in providing benefits and stuff than they did after Vietnam. When I got off active duty, Vietnam vet – the GI bill was 100 bucks a month, you took care of everything else. That was it, OK. Now if you look at the Webb-Hagel bill, two Vietnam veterans, boy that – really, President Bush had threatened to veto it, but they got it. And I think that that's a good step that we can separate, as Paul said, the men and women who do this, whatever our feelings about the war. Vietnam, they couldn't. They basically – if you were part of the war and people didn't like the war, you were somehow or another a part of it. But I do think, because so few people have served, they are more willing to do what needs to be done.

MURPHY: So among the three of you, you've surfaced a good number of issues. A lot of them have to do with the civil/military divide, as you called it, Paul, and others have. So let's try to come at that in a number of ways. So first, there's the issue of the draft. And I'm bringing this up, not because people are seriously proposing bringing a draft back – I don't think they are – the Army doesn't want it. I believe that in the latest Gallup Poll, something like 80% of Americans don't want it. And yet it keeps arising, perhaps because of symbolic reasons of various kinds. And there's a certain amount of guilt, I think, that puts the issue on the table. There's the Rangel argument about, if we were more connected to foreign policy, we would be more careful about certain kinds of things we do. There's an equity argument, there's the role of the military in creating a single society argument. So it's very complicated. And the question I want to ask has to do with, is any of this nostalgia, or when we had a draft, were we actually accomplishing something important? It seems like an

interesting benchmark question that would allow us to think about the current circumstances. Do any of you want to take a stab at that?

ALLEN: I think I'll start. I think the draft initially was a question of numbers: how many do you need to have in order to accomplish a mission or a task in the area of operation or theater? And as we went to the voluntary army – Vietnam had already ended – we didn't need those same numbers. We noticed that we also, after Desert Shield/Desert Storm, we'd downsized the Army from 800,000 down to under 500,000. We didn't need the numbers. So the nostalgia for the draft, I don't think exists with the Army. We moved to the all-volunteer force, we were much more selective in who we brought into the force. By the current demographics we have for the population, between 17 and 25, the sweet spot for US males, only about 27% meet the criteria for joining the Army without any kind of waivers. Generally, our mental category's above 50%, so we have a much more educated population that's in the Army.

The retention for people who are volunteers is higher. You don't have to retrain them. These are all good things. And with the technology that we have in the force and our recounting from the reports from the field, our soldiers are run very, very, very well. So why would we change from something that we are comfortable with to something that we're not comfortable with? And the point will come up again in terms of why do we use the military – are we structured correctly? Is it the first weapon of choice or policy of choice and that's the issue, I think.

MURPHY: Paul?

RIECKHOFF: I would say there are a number of reasons why the way we're doing things is not smart. I don't think it's sustainable. I think you're going to see breakdowns across the force in effectiveness, in morale, in healthcare, in equipment. You're going to see the erosion of this force over time and you've already started to see that. But I think there's a moral question. I really believe this is about the soul of our nation. The military is fantastic and the military is comfortable with the all-volunteer military and it's great for the military. But is it great for America? Is it great for America to have people going back for fourth, fifth, maybe eighth or ninth tours and most of the country is living life uninterrupted? I don't think so. I think that there's got to be some kind of a social backstop. There's got to be some kind of a connection to the cost of war in order to maintain the health of our nation.

I've served in the military and I've seen how good our professional military is and they are incredibly capable and competent and educated and all those things. But I've also walked through Manhattan and not been able to find anyone who's served in this war. And it's a real problem. And I think it's started to bubble up more and more within the military. There is a sense of resentment, there is a sense of we and our families are in this alone. And although we have made tremendous progress in a lot of areas, we've still had the Walter Reed fiasco. The GI bill was fantastic, but they really screwed up the administration of it and only got 11% of the checks out when they should have. So we've got to still fight every year for a robust VA budget. There's still a long way to go and I guarantee you, if everybody's sons and daughters were involved, our work wouldn't be so hard on Capitol Hill.

KORB: Let me make two comments. I think Chuck is right. In terms of the percentage of people who serve, it's hard to get as many in World War II. I mean you had – 16 million people were in the service in World War II. The population of our country was about 140, 150 million. Now it's 300 million and you're talking about an active duty force of 1.4 million. So in normal circumstances, you're probably better with a volunteer military and you're not going to get the elites. When I was in government, I used to have to grapple with this. Fortunately, in the '80s, we were not involved in these type of wars and they said, well, what about future congressmen. I said, well, even if you had a draft, how do you say, are you or you going to be a – you wouldn't know, you know, if you did it by the lottery system and we wouldn't need that many.

But I do think, now, you should do it because you're – not only it's immoral, and I think – not leaving people home at least two days for every day in a combat – what are we, as a country, to do that? Also from a strategic reason, you read the debate about Afghanistan and when President Obama met with the chiefs and they said, you want to send – General McChrystal wants 44,000 more troops? We don't have them if we're going to keep these kids home a year before we send them back. So it's hurting you. And I think the fact that people register and do the lottery system – even if you didn't go, it would wake you up to say, I could go. And people would say, well, do we really want to have quote, unquote “a surge” in Afghanistan?

Is that the policy that we want? But it's almost like we're spectators at the World Series. We root for a team or something, but we don't – unless you've bet a lot of money or something, you don't have any skin in the game. And I think it's important for us to have that connection. I am absolutely convinced, if President Bush said, OK, we're going to go to Iraq and I'm going to activate Selective Service System. People would say, wait a second, why are you going? Let's see that – only six senators read the whole national intelligence estimate. You can bet yourself that if their constituents would have gone, they would have read that whole thing and saw what the case was for or not for. So I think that's where I look at it. I don't know if you'd get all the future leaders and things like that.

But I do think what you would do is get people to think about what we're doing. I mean, you can argue pro or con about Afghanistan, but really, we see the majority of the American people are not for it. Well, if President Obama sends 10, 20,000 more troops, what will they do? Well, as long as it doesn't bother them, probably not much. Can you see running ads on TV like they're doing in the healthcare debate type of thing for people? Do you want your son or daughter to fight for Karzai? I mean, that type of thing, people would start asking a lot of questions.

MURPHY: So you make the point about much of society not thinking that they have any skin in the game. Of course, they do. And you also brought up the subject of elites. And this is a great place to be bringing up the subject of elites, at a great university. On Wednesday, I believe, Boston College is going to be dedicating a memorial. There was a news item the other day about Harvard University having a ceremony for its Medal of Honor winners. It was news to me that Harvard – after West Point – Harvard has the most Medal of Honor winners of any institution of any institution of higher learning in the country. Of course, they're not recent. And



(laughter) so the issue here has to do with the relationship between elite higher education and the armed services or maybe you could say, what relation? In some ways, there's a relation in the other direction.

A great proportion of the officer corps has actually been educated in private universities, has advanced degrees and so on. Not so much in the other direction. And I wonder if you could talk somewhat about this particular state of affairs because it speaks to what is the future of American leadership.

ALLEN: Right here, locally, in Boston, I know we have Commonwealth Avenue as opposed to Cambridge. And I've talked to folks who are both professors at Boston College and Boston University. They have an ROTC program here on your campus of 9,000 people. We have 70 folks in ROTC and it's a satellite program for Northeastern University. Do the math. Same thing over at Boston University. You had a program of 29 to 30-some thousand personnel, our ROTC program is very, very small and your students don't self-identify as being part of the military. Why is that? There is a gap between people who serve and those who we serve. We don't acknowledge that, and that's a challenge.

MURPHY: Paul?

RIECKHOFF: I think we've got to look back at the history of it as well. When you look at some of the elite colleges that were some of the most active around protests involving the Vietnam War and many of them sought to remove the military influence from these liberal campuses and what I think, in the end, they ended up doing was removing a liberal influence from the military. So now, instead of having 10 guys from Harvard, you've got another 10 from Tennessee State and you've got a geographic distribution that's much different. So you've got this history from Vietnam. Amherst was famous because the graduates stood up and turned their back to McNamara when he spoke there on graduation day. And there's a lot of these types of stories in the elite universities. But then, they kept them off-campus in part because of Don't Ask, Don't Tell.

So they've dug in – places like Columbia have really been pivot points in this discussion. But now, it seems like there is a trend to reconsider those positions. At Amherst, for example, they recently allowed ROTC back on campus. Jim Wright, the president of Dartmouth College, himself a Vietnam Veteran and a Marine, deserves tremendous credit. He really opened up Dartmouth and awarded scholarships for wounded vets coming back. There are plenty of vets in the elite schools now – especially in the graduate programs – the law school, the Kennedy School, the others. And many of them are going to take advantage of the GI bill. And I know that they're starting to create, I think, some real outreach. I think there's a recognition that the military is going to be involved and these colleges are already involved in every element of our society – why not this one?

And there are some incredible leaders that are coming out of – there are kids graduating Harvard that are still going into the Marine Corps. There aren't too many of them, but they are there. And they deserve respect and I think we deserve to really focus on the leaders at those institutions who've taken those stances that were probably a little bit tougher four years ago. When Jim Wright started this, I

don't think that everybody was completely on-board. But I really do, again, think it's going to be critical to the way our country is linked to foreign policy, linked to the military, linked to service, linked to the cost of war. And it's overdue.

KORB: I was looking at your campus newspaper earlier today and I noticed you're going to have Jack Sheehan come back here on Veteran's Day. Jack is a retired Marine General, graduated from here in '62, was a Vietnam hero, went on to basically a top job in the military. And one of the great things about him is when the war in Iraq was going bad and President Bush was trying to get retired military people to come in and take the job as – we want you to handle Iraq for me – and they asked Jack, and he said, well, you going to do anything really different? And he said, no. He said, I'm not going to take the job, OK. And that's the type of person that you need. I do think if we can get rid of this idiotic Don't Ask, Don't Tell, that would take away the excuse for it. I never did see any reason for that policy and you had a great discussion of it earlier. But if you read some of the things the president of Harvard was saying, well, I want to recognize the ROTC graduates and we'll have General Patraeus and all this kind of stuff, but I still can't go to the ROTC because – so let's drop it. And that would be – and I think the proponents of that need to make that as another argument. You get America's elites back into the military.



MURPHY: Interesting point. In just a moment, we're going to open up for questions. And so while you're thinking about that and also reminding yourself that the questions are going to be questions, I have one question for our panel. Paul, you used the phrase, the soul of a nation in referring to really, what is at stake as we grapple with some of the issues we've been talking about. And not long ago, I came across a quotation from Rousseau, from *The Social Contract*, where he says, "As soon as public service ceases to be the chief business of the citizens and they would rather serve with their money than with their persons, the state is not far from its fall." This is really not about the all-volunteer force as much as it is about what is the obligation from the rest of us. What obligations does a citizen have if he or she is not going to serve in this particular way? And this is an issue that's bubbling beneath the surface and breaks above the surface of the debate. So I wonder if all three of you could talk about it, perhaps beginning with you, Paul, and perhaps with some discussion of the various national service ideas.

RIECKHOFF: The obvious answer is vigilance, right? Getting involved in your country and what's happening. When the Fort Hood shooting happened – my office has got 22 people in it. Every single person knows somebody at Fort Hood. We were all wondering which one of our friends were there, trying to figure out which folks we had served with. We've got a board member and his wife that live in Killeen and work on Fort Hood at the blood bank. There's a woman who works in our development team, her parents are at Fort Hood. We felt it and we were riveted to it and we were scared and really just so hit in the gut by it. And when we brought our team together, we said, you know, this is why we do the work we do. Our community needs us right now. The country needs help understanding this right now. They need to know what to do. And folks flooded the blood banks. That was an obvious move.

But then just today, we sent out an e-mail to our 150,000 members directing them to support a group called TAPS. It does tragedy assistance for survivors. There is a tremendous demand being placed on the community-based non-profits in this country right now and they are dramatically under-resourced. Most of them didn't exist prior to 9/11. Some of them were started in garages and online, by mothers or Gold Star Mothers or vets or just people who care. And they need support. People need to understand, the VA does not have it covered. The VA, the DOD, the community-based non-profits have to work in cooperation with the American public to support the folks who are serving. And we say over and over again, it doesn't matter where you stand on the war, your political affiliation, who you voted for, we all have a moral obligation to support the folks who serve.

And you don't have to be a veteran to support the veterans movement. You don't have to have served. There's a lot of things you can do. You can donate money, you can come out to a Veterans Day Parade on Wednesday, you can contact your Congressman and tell him you're going to be watching how he votes on military issues or veterans issues. You can watch the news. I'll take that, to be honest with you. A lot of folks are really so disconnected that I think that you have to take that step forward and understand that veterans and other folks are going to give you a hand on what you can do and with the Internet, it's never been so easy. We can give you a menu list of options. You can send an e-mail to five friends and you did something that mattered and you did something that made an impact. So I think what we need everybody to do is get involved and understand it's not just somebody else's kids. It's not just something you see on TV.

It's not some reality TV show, it's something that impacts every single one of us. And when you think about veterans issues, it's not just veterans issues. There are public health issues there. How it's going to impact our criminal justice system, how it's going to impact drug and alcohol abuse rates and homelessness rates and our readiness to respond to – God forbid – the next 9/11. It's not just about Iraq and Afghanistan and I think we've got to understand that it's all woven together and it impacts every one of us and at the end of the day, there's something that everybody can do. And I would tell you, if you want to know what that is, go to iava.org and we can give you e-mail updates and give you some options. There are other nonprofits there that need your help as well and it's not just money. There are a lot of different ways you can get involved. And to be honest with you, with the Internet, it's never been so easy.

MURPHY: Chuck? Go ahead.

ALLEN: I think it's an interesting question. I think it's pretty key because we have, again, 1.4 million people uniform that have all volunteered to serve. They self-selected. So they're doing this for a number of years. If you count my students in Carlisle, they've been in Army for 20 years, you can count 20 years from today. So something like Desert Shield/Desert Storm, Kosovo, Somalia and Bosnia and Iraq a few times. And they've continued to serve over time. A very interesting population that wanted to serve their nation. And if you had that distinction where they serve and they feel that no one else is serving, that becomes a challenge. We also have this tendency, again, to use our military as the element of national power of choice. And

we complain ourselves that there should be other elements of national power of the state department that can do things for nation-building, etc.

And that doesn't exist. Dr. John Nagl makes a comment that there's more people in the Army band by MOS than there are in the State Department. If you want national policy implementation, (inaudible) develop that is whole government, then you ought to have people serving in other elements that can do that. So you don't have to join the Army or the military in order to serve the nation. And I've been part of a number of volunteer organizations in my life, so I think from my perspective, service of the people is pretty important. You ought to have a skin in the game for the nation as a whole, between working for a Peace Corps, other activities, I think that's part of the requirement we have as citizenship is to give back to those who we've had a chance to work with over time. We should be able to do that. So I would implore you as parents and as cousins to try to get your children and your siblings to do something for someone else.

MURPHY: Larry?

KORB: I think the key thing is, for today's young people, we need to get them to think about being part of something that's bigger than yourself. The military's obviously one thing, the foreign service is another. I'm pleased to report that after my son was working up on Wall Street, I finally got him to go to join the Foreign Service. And basically, this whole idea that you owe the country something because the country's been so good to you. There's Teach America, there's the Peace Corps. And not only will it help connect, but it will help you. I think that's the thing we have to do. What the military does to people and all these other things, it makes you better, I think, in the long run. And we need to get that message out that by-and-large, there are a lot of things we need.

There's a lot of neighborhood things, there's things you can do, go into teaching and stuff like that. The one good thing about this horrible economic situation is getting people to think about these other things for a while and I hope we can continue to capitalize on that. And during the '90s, we did cut the military because the Cold War ended. We cut it about 25%. Under the leadership of people like Jesse Helms, we just about decimated our State Department and AID. Look at the number of AID workers we had in Vietnam. It was like 30 times more than we have now. We've mentioned earlier, I went to Iraq. That's the problem, you have these provincial reconstruction teams.

Well, where are the AID? Well, there are none of them. And those are the things – and finally, we're starting to move in that direction. The State Department's going to hire 1,000 more people. We have to keep doing that and make sure that we use all the tools of our foreign policy so we won't have to rely as much on the military.

ALLEN: Now I have on more point here. I was stationed in Germany my first five years, so I was waiting for the Russians to come across the border. A field artillery person with big cannons and assigned for 24 nuclear weapons. I knew my mission, I knew my responsibility. Ten years later, I'm in Joint Task Force-Bravo in Honduras, Soto Cano Air Force Base. I'm the director of operations for six nations in Central America. What am I doing? Well, we're building roads, schools, clinics, doing

medical relief operations in place. And how do I feel about myself at that time? Besides blowing something up, we're building. We're building a nation. Doesn't have to be the Army. We did it because no one else could. There's plenty of opportunities for service in this world.

MURPHY: So this would be a good time to open up the floor for questions.

RIECKHOFF: Wow, I was worried there'd be no interest. This is good.

MURPHY: And we've got plenty.

ALLEN: There's a microphone up top there. Go ahead.

MURPHY: So why don't we start up on the upper right?

Q: Yes, thanks very much for coming. I think about public policy-making and unintended consequences and sitting through the first panel, I wanted to raise the question with them and I'll raise it with you too. It seems to me that a lot of the issues that were addressed earlier, with respect to diversity and proselytization, which is a function of imbalance and another unintended consequence of not having sufficient personnel, the repeated deployments, and something not mentioned yet by anybody – the need to make up for the difference in personnel by privately contracting and making war a profit function and engaging businesses in wanting war because it's an opportunity to make money. What struck me is that a lot of these things would be addressed if we brought back the draft. And I wonder why there's pushback from the Army to conscription? It would address so many of the problems that its absence has caused us, as an unintended consequence. And I wonder what the group feels about that.

MURPHY: Well, that's a clear question. So why the pushback?

RIECKHOFF: Because nobody wants to go.

MURPHY: We've gotten (inaudible) answer already, but –

RIECKHOFF: Because nobody wants to go. I mean, let's break it down. It sounds great in abstract, but is anybody going to send their kids right now? I get this question a lot and I think it really is about the fact that people don't want to send their kids. There is no initiative on Capitol Hill. With regard to the contractors, there has been some progress, but that is another area where I think we've really insulated the American public from a cost of war from a financial standpoint, from a casualty standpoint. Senator Webb and Senator McCaskill did stand up a Truman-style commission to oversee contractors and to look into them. That's long overdue. But I think it really just comes down to who do you want to start with? Who wants to be the ones to send their kids in the first round? And right now, there's not a lot of appetite for it in this country.



KORB: Let me give you a statistic. In the first Persian Gulf War, one out of every 10 people on the battlefield was a private contractor. In Iraq and Afghanistan, it's

more than one out of two. The other thing that's happened – it's a little bit off the subject here, but we never plan for these wars to be long. We assumed we'd be greeted as liberators. In fact, the first time I went to Iraq in November 2003, the kids all thought they'd be home by Christmas. That's what they were told and of course, that didn't happen, we try to make it up on the fly and then we use the contractors. And not only – Paul's point – did it get people away from the casualties, but the other thing is, you've got people doing things that only the government should do. I mean, there's certain things that only the government should do. It's one thing to have the contractors cooking the food and fixing the planes. It's another thing, you have them out there with – armed and things like that.

So I think we need to kind of go back and take a look. Had we then – go to Iraq, OK, we're going to go, this is a critical thing, the President decided he's going to go, all right, we're going to start the draft because then if things don't go well, we can fill in, you wouldn't have had to use the contractors. But nobody wanted to. And again, it's both political parties. I mean, nobody wants to bring up the D-word. It's almost like T-word. Taxes. You lose if you mention taxes. Look at what happened with Jersey and Virginia, where I live. No taxes – how you going to fix the problem? No taxes. You see what I mean? The same way, you know, the D is like the T word – it's politicians are afraid to bring it up.

ALLEN: I was an inspector general in Germany in the late '90s and I did an inspection down in Bosnia and Kosovo and what we found back then is that for every soldier you had in theater, you had a contractor. That same number applies in Afghanistan now and also in Iraq. So this thing that you would have your daughters and sons enlist for, a technical skill or a housekeeping skill. What do you want them to do? And in this room, again, look at yourselves and look at your families. And who would you send out of your family to go serve? If you can't do it and decide it here, how can we decide for the nation to do the same thing?

RIECKHOFF: I think there's one element than really gets underreported, and that's the fact that it poaches some of our best people. Having this competitive aspect where a contractor can pay somebody well over six figures, tax-free in the combat theater, we're losing some key people, especially special forces operators and folks that we dump a lot of taxpayers' dollars and a lot of time and investment into. They're going to leave the military and really erode some of our most critical assets over time. And that is, I think, one of the real underreported elements of the contractor piece.

MURPHY: Sir, up in the upper left?

Q: Yes, my name is Lawrence Clifford (sp?). I'm going to direct my question to Secretary Korb, but your other colleagues are welcome to respond to it. Secretary Korb, I'm one of Jim Almonds' boys from the community in the Air Force and I know you know him. He's been dead and gone 16 years, but I know you remember him. So my question – a very direct one – in the sense that Jim Almonds might ask the same question, back when we had the draft, I wonder what the average intelligence quotient would be versus the average intelligence quotient today in the basic enlisted force, Air Force, Navy and Army. AFOQT, which I know (inaudible) business, is not available to a psychologist, a clinical psychologist, to examine and

make comparisons between the Vietnam era and the present. The obstacles of getting that kind of information are the same obstacles that they throw at you all of the time. But when I was a commander, I did not command dummies. They were smart, they were intelligent.

On the face of it, if you have a draft, you have a wide range of things that deal with diversity, intelligence – I just can't believe what Colonel Allen is saying to me because the facts of the matter are is that there's been tremendous trouble in enlisting people into this all-volunteer Army since 2001. How do you make up for those quotas? Something doesn't make sense to me. It just seems to me that on the face of it, the Congress of the United States, the President of the United States and the American military should be saying, we need the draft. There's got to be basic talent differences between 40 years ago and the present.

MURPHY: Let's ask – it's a good question, we've got the point. So how do today's armed forces stack up?

KORB: Interestingly enough – and Senator Webb, I know, is one of the people that they've tried to get up here. Jim Webb pointed out that in 1964, the military we sent into Vietnam was the most highly qualified in terms of educational and aptitude we ever had. Why? Because basically, you had, up until the early '60s, a reasonably fair draft. People would join rather than be drafted so they could select where they wanted to go. The Navy and the Air Force really had draft-motivated people. Now what happened basically – then when we went to the volunteer military – went into the tank. When I came into government, 40% off the people in the Army were Category 4. And finally, we were able to change that, but when we first went to the volunteer military, A, the Army wasn't enthusiastic about it and B, basically, they didn't know how to do it.

Remember the ads? Today's Army wants to join you. You were getting the wrong kind of people to come in and they were under pressure to meet the quotas and so they took people – they took anybody who they could get in. The question, really, now, is if you had a fair lottery system and take a look at the people that you would get in the lottery, I think they may not be as good as what you might have had in the '90s when we downsized the military and raised the standards, but they'd be a heck of a lot better than what the Army got from 2004 to 2008. In fact, as was pointed out earlier, in terms of the number of criminal waivers and stuff that they were giving, the Army gave – in 2007, I believe it was, 8,000 people with felony convictions – they took them into the service just to meet – I don't blame them.

And I think history will not judge kindly the military leaders, the chiefs of staff who didn't say, look, I am not going to send that man or woman back again unless then get enough time at home. You can fire me if you want but you've got – how many people have registered in the Selective Service? What are you going to do – why have you been doing it all these years? So I think you pull them in to be able to fight the war. Then if you can get out of these things, you go back and you have a peacetime all-volunteer force. But the data shows – and it's very interesting. Back in 1964 – and Jim pointed out very well in his book, that was the highest qualified military we ever had by any standard.

MURPHY: Chuck, Paul, do you have anything to add here?

RIECKHOFF: I think that one thing that I see throughout the military and in talking to my friends and staying so closely connected is that the people that we did let in during that lurch, I guess, for lack of a better word, become problem children. And they take so much command time, when you've got to deal with that person with a felony conviction or the person who doesn't have the technical competency or is overweight or whatever the variable is – age – where we made these really extensive waivers. They have become problems that I think will be with us for a long time. But we're not in the same situation we were a year-and-a-half ago because the economy dropped out. Recruiting has dramatically improved in the last six months. And they are in pretty good shape when it comes to recruiting right now.

KORB: And retention has also improved because people can't get a job.

RIECKHOFF: Retention is also very – yeah, yeah. And the economy is the number one driver there.

ALLEN: I think the point about the Vietnam War, back in the 1960s, we had McNamara's 100,000, which was again, allowing Category 4, mental Category 4 personnel into the Army, which we did by a matter of policy decision, which is not good. I think as you look at the past number of years, we've had a requirement for 80,000 some soldiers enlisting every year. We've kind of met that goal, but we've modified some of the standards, with waivers. We've also provided more economic incentives and bonuses along the way. So it's expensive to do that. We've also retained quite a substantial amount of our enlisted force and we put a special critical skills retention bonus in place to maintain our officers. We're trying to target, again, good people to hold in. There are issues and there are problems and I think – it's one of those things that kind of ebbs and flows. You're never consistently at the high standard, you have to negotiate and manage those soldiers that you have. You've got to lead and make the determination to see who stays and who goes. And that's the responsibility of the leaders that are in the Army.



MURPHY: Question up here on the right?

Q: Yeah, George White (sp?). I'd like to – this symposia opened with a quote from Jefferson and a question of values. And I'd like this panel to come back to that if they could for a minute. And what I mean is this. When I grew up in Detroit, military values and the values of my community didn't seem so far apart. And then as the Vietnam War heated up and then someone mentioned My Lai, but there were lots of other things – and guys coming back talking about it – the gap between the democratic values that I got out of high school and what seemed to be the values of the military in operation seemed to be getting wider and wider. And so I guess my question is, could the four of you come back to that? And also, I think Amherst is as good a place as any, but we need to remember, the Vietnam War was engineered not by the guys that made cars with me and Fords – that war was engineered by Bill Bundy, from Yale and Mac Bundy, from Yale and Harvard. That was a war that was put together by really, really, really smart people with advanced degrees. And look what we got. So anyway, I would like you to come back to values if you could.

KORB: In listening to your question, of course, remember David Halberstam's book, *The Best and the Brightest*. I happen to believe – and of course, we can never really be sure, but I have talked to Secretary McNamara before he died and to Ted Sorensen about this – that if Kennedy had not been assassinated, I don't think we would have gone in. In fact, they were talking about getting out. I think it was Lyndon Johnson who theoretically served in World War II, but really didn't and his own insecurities that kept on doubling down. The other interesting thing –

Q: – advise.

KORB: What?

Q: No, no, no. I know we still (inaudible) but he was advised by Mac –

KORB: Well, well – no, wait, wait. They – it – when they gave him advice, OK, his instinct was, tell me how I can do this, not should I do it. That was a different question. And it was the same people that were with Kennedy. And it's really the President. You're going to have people around you give different advice. And again, I think that's why it was important. Kennedy, obviously, was a hero in World War II and was a very, very, very secure person. I can't prove this but in 1970, I was on a panel with Gada Smith (sp²), the Yale historian. He argues that if Nixon had won in '60, we never would have gone to Vietnam. So we don't know, because remember, Nixon – and God knows he had enough problems, but he opened up the door to China, cut the defense budget, ended the draft and got us out of Vietnam. Now a lot of people think it took him too long, but that's a different issue.

MURPHY: So what about the other question? The values question. Chuck?

ALLEN: Is your point that our values are lesser than the American society values? I don't understand the question.

Q: Well, I think that quote, unquote “military values” – I mean the critique of the military is in part why – it's not just the D-word, it's that those values – not just loyalty, but when you get an order, you carry it out. And to some extent, in democratic polity, it's a discussion, it's a debate, it's a dialogue. I know you've come to closure, but I think that's what I'm saying, that how quickly does that window close, all right? And as a critique of quote, “military values.”

ALLEN: I think our basic military values – again, for the Army, we have our own set here, but we believe in the supremacy of civilian control of the military. And so the debate goes until the civilian leader decides. We provide the advice that we can based upon our own technical expertise and the way we know how to do business, but we provide that advice to civilians who make the decision. And once that decision has been put forth, there's an obligation as senior leaders to execute the policy as vigorously as possible but also to assess the consequences, to evaluate the risk, and as you go along the execution, to be able to provide feedback in terms of what's working and what's not working, do the risk management and risk assessment. That's our obligation – not just to salute and walk away – salute, pay

attention, execute and provide feedback and then make awareness of the intended risk.

RIECKHOFF: Yeah, I think I'd push back a little bit on your assessment of the military values. The military that I've served in has been one that has had extensive discussion and analysis and that has encouraged – especially in the asymmetric warfare that's going on right now in Iraq and Afghanistan. A young sergeant team leader has never had so much responsibility and decision-making capacity as they do in this kind of a fight, which is not run by generals. It's run by squad leaders, it's run by platoon leaders and platoon sergeants. That discussion, and I think especially under the change in command climate, with Petraeus and with Gates, especially, I see as a very productive thing, and much different – to be honest with you – from what I've seen in the civilian environment.

I'll take the military decision-making process over when I worked on Wall Street any day. (laughter) And when it comes to the values, I think that's a real hard thing for us to accept as soldiers coming back, where you were around these people who have an understanding or embrace this idea of loyalty and duty and respect and selfless service, especially to go from that to going back to Wal-Mart or going back to a college campus where so many folks are focused on the new Jay-Z album. It's very difficult to be that young person coming home, who I believe has a totally different value set and appreciates everything from a cold beer to the right to vote in an entirely different way. So these folks coming home, I think, are going to strengthen the values of this nation in a lot of ways.

MURPHY: We have time, I think, for one more question, maybe two, and so –

Q: I'll keep it short.

MURPHY: Go ahead.

Q: I was an Army officer, Vietnam War era, '65 to '67, later a military affairs reporter. So I have a question that bridges Korb and Murphy, I think. You talked, Secretary Korb, at the beginning about the neocons and their actual lack of experience in the military which led them into a lot of what I consider hypocrisies of the Rumsfeld idea that – OK, we're in a war, why isn't the armor there? Well, war is hell sort-of-attitude. You haven't talked much about the PTSD and all of the veterans coming back and their problems. And I bridge that to the *Are We Rome*, because it seems to me that we've been led into a situation for political reasons that don't take into account the human reasons of the suffering of the military. And you can argue it politically, but I'm talking about, where are we as a nation and did it drive you crazy as a military officer, to go into an administration where you were dealing with a lot of people who basically didn't have that experience? You get my drift?

MURPHY: You seem sane now. The question has to do with – so when you were serving in the government, being in a context where most people did not – that you were working with did not have military service background, was that frustrating?

KORB: I think what it was – the people, because they didn't have that background, basically were much more cavalier about using military force than those who had

seen it. Now it doesn't mean you should never use military force. I think it gets back to the other question and also, the hypocrisy, which really bothered me. I thought the war in Vietnam was a mistake. But what my father said – that was it. And the same way, these guys all supported it. And it really bothered me, you support it, but you don't go. That's what bothers me, OK? And I think, going back to Vietnam, I really admire those who went and those who said, I think it's immoral, I'm not going to go – send me to jail or whatever you want to do. Those people, I think, stood up for it. What really bugged me is the people who were for it and then played games and all of that.

That's what bugged me, and as I say to this day – and it's not a Republican or a Democratic thing. President Clinton, President Bush, Vice-President Cheney, Vice-President Biden. How old is Biden? Where was he? He was married. Oh, OK. See? In terms – those are the type of things that – yeah, that bothered me.

MURPHY: So in just a moment, we're going to need to wrap this up. And let me – let's try an experiment, which I think could work. If you promise to ask a 10-second question, why don't we take three of them. And just ask them in sequence and we'll just wait to answer them and whoever wants to come up to bat for each question can do it. So three questions, 10 seconds.

Q: What a great idea.

MURPHY: OK, go. You're next.

Q: Quick question. We always talk about the draft as a military draft. Is there any merit in thinking about a draft that's not merely military but civilian military that applies to everybody. Let's take cost out of the equation and let's think about it as a concept.

MURPHY: OK, civilian draft. Two.

Q: OK, what I'd like to know is, why do we have – like I have 18 years in VA. I've worked for the VA for 18 years. I would like to know, with our age increasing and our health increasing on a national level, why we have to maintain the limits of ages going into the military? I think a lot of good people with a lot of experiences could benefit the military. I understand the whole discipline and the whole training and everything too, but I think that the age limit should be done on a case-by case basis. It doesn't mean that somebody who's 45 doesn't have something really important to offer to the Army or the Navy or somebody. And I think people – and I agree. I grew up in Boston, I didn't have a –

MURPHY: We're going to stop. Because you're at 23. But we have it. Age ceiling, yes or no? Third question is over here.

Q: Good afternoon. My question is for Paul. Are you going to be deployed soon? Do you think you will, knowing how outspoken you have been for the past several years?

KORB: I knew we should have quit while we were ahead.

MURPHY: All right, so we've got our three.

RIECKHOFF: Do you know something I don't know?

MURPHY: And Paul, you've got one directed to you, so –

RIECKHOFF: No idea. I haven't resigned my commission, so theoretically, they can call me back. Some folks think, because I've been so outspoken, it's going to be less likely, other folks think more likely. So your guess is as good as mine. I agree with you 100% on the age. You can be, I think, 42 years old now and join the military, which is high, but I think we have never had a national call to action. And I believe a true national call to action should involve all these other civilian components. We need folks to build houses, we need folks to do micro-lending, I mean, we need a variety of things in this country – not just for overseas, but for what's happening in places like Katrina, areas impacted by Hurricane Katrina. So I strongly encourage folks to think about service in a variety of capacities.

It can be the Marine Corps, it can also be the Peace Corps. And there was a lot of talk early on about a National Service Academy. I know Senator Clinton supported it. It seems to have died on the vine, but I think that's a fantastic idea. And I talk to a lot of young people and I try to encourage them that there are ways to do good and still make a living. You don't have to go to Wall Street. There are other options. Wall Street may be fine. I did it. I didn't like it, but there are a lot of ways to serve and I think the President's got to drive that discussion and continue to drive that discussion, not just because it's good for our country, but I would also argue, it's in our strategic best interest. You cannot fight a war with only bombs and bullets. We keep saying that, but it still seems like this country is focused on troop numbers. I do not want to hear about troop numbers anymore. I want to hear about civilian assets and State Department assets and reconstruction assets. We've got to push back as a nation on this false choice about troop numbers. Troop numbers are not an antidote to the violence of the 21st Century. And I think that's what we've all got to really push going forward. (applause)

MURPHY: In a way, Paul, I think you've hit all three balls there. Civilian –

RIECKHOFF: Sorry, I thought I was supposed to hit all three –

MURPHY: It's OK, we – and what a great note to end on. So thank you, all three, for your contributions to a really great discussion. (applause)

END OF SESSION 2

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