

Center for American Progress



WITH THE *WASHINGTON MONTHLY*

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION
BROADCAST LIVE ON C-SPAN:**

**“THE DRAFT: INEVITABLE, AVOIDABLE
OR PREFERABLE?”**

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FEATURING:

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MARK SHIELDS: (In progress) – presumptuous of me to welcome you because it's the first time I've set foot in the building; nevertheless, that's what I'm told to do. And I am also told to apprise you, as you've never been told before, to please turn off your cell phones and your pagers.

We are live on C-SPAN, which is here, and we're here to discuss a topic that certainly inflames people's passions. There's no natural divide on it, left or right. And it just strikes me that what is most fascinating is that in the past 60 years the United States has been attacked twice on our own soil where Americans were killed by a hostile alien force, and in both cases the United States went to war.

In the first case the president of United States' four sons all served in combat. My home state of Massachusetts, two Republican senators, Leverett Saltonstall and Henry Cabot Lodge – Leverett Saltonstall's 19-year-old son Peter was killed in combat as a Marine in the Pacific. Henry Cabot Lodge, the other Republican senator, resigned from the United States Senate to become a tank commander fighting Hitler's hordes in North Africa. Contrast that, if you would, on the eve of going to war this time, the United States Congress – 535 strong – voted to go to war in support of the president's position. Of that 535 exactly one of them, Senator Tim Johnson of South Dakota, had a child in the enlisted ranks in the United States military. His son, Brooks is in the 101st Airborne. Those at peril are totally divorced from those in power. That is irrefutable. Whether it is wise public policy, whether it is prudent, fair, just, humane, practical, is open to our panel here today, and later for your questions.

And that – that panel, let me go immediately to introduce them. First, Phillip Carter on my right, your left, is a former Army captain who does regularly write on military and legal affairs for the *Washington Monthly* and for slate.com. His articles have appeared in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Legal Affairs* magazine. He's also appeared as a guest on MSNBC, Fox News channel and National Public Radio. He currently practices law in Los Angeles with McKenna, Long & Aldridge, LLP. Is that – that's a plug, okay. Commercial plug. Where he is a member of the government contracts and international law practice group. And of course he is the author of the subject, "The Case for the Draft" in the *Washington Monthly*, which got a lot of response, reaction, and endorsement, and criticism as well, so – which we're very happy to have you here.

On my left, on your right, is Lawrence J. Korb, who is a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress and a senior advisor to the Center for Defense Information. Prior to joining the center, Mr. Korb – Dr. Korb actually – was a senior fellow and director of national securities studies of the Council in Foreign Relations. He was council vice president from 1998 to October, 2002. He's been dean of the graduate school at the University of Pittsburgh and the School of Public and International Affairs. He's been a senior fellow at Brookings. There's very little he hasn't done, but he first

came on my own radar as the secretary of – assistant secretary of defense from 1981 to 1985, where he not only served with distinction but with a (modicum of?) controversy. And he is not a theoretician, nor is Captain Carter. He served on active duty for four years, a naval flight officer. And he retired from the Naval Reserve with the rank of captain, so we have two captains. As a former E-4 corporal myself, I'm in rather rarified company here today, and I'll be appropriately respectful and deferential. So let me turn to Captain Carter to open up our discussion.

PHILLIP CARTER: Thank you, Mark. Thank you all for coming out today. I flew in from Los Angeles last night and am glad to have brought good weather with me to DC.

I wanted to start by framing the problem as I did in this article, not as a matter of equity, which is what Mark alluded to, but as one of pragmatism. We have all heard the equitable arguments for the draft relating to who is serving today and perhaps who ought to serve, but our article aimed to make the point that regardless of how you feel about the equity issues, America might have to embrace the draft anyway. And so I want to ask a few questions and suggest some possible answers.

How did we get here? Well, first, where are we? Second, how did we get here with respect to military manpower? And third, what are some possible options for us at this point?

Where we are, according to several recent reports, is in a pretty bad spot. The G1 of the Army, that is the officer responsible for Army personnel matters, said in the February 21st *Washington Post*, quote, "Very frankly, in a couple of places our recruiting pool is getting soft. For the active duty in 2005, it's going to be tough to meet our goal, but I think we can. I think the telling year for us is going to be 2006." The same article quoted the secretary of the Army as saying, "We may not get exactly the number of people we want, but we're not sacrificing quality." Just a few years – few days later the *Baltimore Sun* reported that five months into the recruiting year the percentage of recruits in the active duty Army without high school diplomas has more than doubled from the previous year. David Segal, a military sociologist who I knew at the University of Maryland, said that's a bad thing. Why? Because there's a very firm finding that smarter soldiers are better soldiers doing their jobs and surviving on the battlefield.

The recruiting problems have been really affecting every component of the military, active duty and reserve, Army and Marine, that are doing the job in Iraq. They have not afflicted the Navy and the Air Force to the extent that they have the ground forces, but that's an open question. The reserve component has definitely felt the brunt though, and this is for two reasons. First, the demand within the civilian population to join the military has slacked off, and second, they've taken the brunt because they depend on active duty – soldiers getting off active duty to come in and join the Guard and Reserve. And so last year the Guard fell 7,000 soldiers short of its goal. This year, they're already 25 percent short of their goal.

And I wanted to end with a quote that struck me as incredibly telling. And the army's number two general said, quote, "What keeps me awake at night is this. What will this all-volunteer force look like in 2007?" And that's really the question. It's what will it look like, and will it be sufficient to meet the demands of our country?

Clearly, Iraq is what's driving all of this, and to a lesser extent Afghanistan. But Iraq is where we have somewhere between 140,000 to 150,000 U.S. troops, somewhere around 40,000 private military contractors, and then a number of other personnel working for the State Department, USAID, and other agencies. I think it's useful to take those numbers, though, and look at them through the lens of what some people say it would have taken to win the peace decisively because as we plan for the military future we ought to try to learn the lessons from Iraq to try and do it better the next time.

In 2003, the Rand Corporation published a study that said if you used Bosnia as a model, it really would have taken 258,000 troops to pacify Iraq. And if you use Kosovo as a model; that is, take the number of troops we had in Kosovo and do some fuzzy math to figure out the proportionate number of troops we would need for Iraq, it would take 526,000. And that number is right at the outer limit of what today's military can deploy.

The secretary of defense and the secretary of the Army have often said in the last few years when asked about the draft, "Well, aren't you running out of soldiers?" And they said, "No, no. We have, you know, 1.4 million active duty troops, we have another million and a half in the Reserves, we're far from running out of troops." The truth is a little different. First, you have to subtract the Navy and the Air Force, because unless you train sailors and airmen to fight as infantrymen, they're not really applicable to the problem in Iraq.

Second, you can't just send the entire reserve force over to Iraq. You send units with their equipment and with their leadership. And so if you add up all of the units in the Army inventory and in the Marine Corps inventory, you get a number of somewhere around 600,000 soldiers and Marines that you could put – that's boots on the ground – in deployable unit packages. And that assumes that you're going to retrain some artillerymen and they're going to retrain some others to be MPs and infantry, but that's it. That's the outer capability of the all-volunteer force as built today.

So it becomes clear that we could, if we wanted to, have put enough troops into Iraq initially to win the war decisively and win the peace decisively, but we could have done it once, and we couldn't have sustained it. We would have to keep them there for the duration of the mission. This is what my co-author, Paul Glastris, calls plowing the field with a Ferrari. Yeah, you can do it, but you can only do it once.

But this is not just about Iraq, and that's the real problem. You can't just send 500,000 people to Iraq. You have to deal with the myriad of other threats on the horizon. And I just listed a few in the flight over: China, Taiwan, North Korea, the tri-border area of Latin America, Iran, Sudan, Haiti, and anywhere else. Those are just the ones that, yeah, we see in the news on a regular basis, but in all honesty we don't know where the

next threat is going to come from and we don't know what it's going to take to meet it.

The long view of the 20th century suggests that every 10 or 20 years this country has had to send half a million to 16 million men under arms to a foreign land to do this country's foreign policy. And I think it's if not naive then perhaps a little too optimistic to think we'll be able to avoid that in the future, and that we'll be able to fight wars with only 150,000 or only 200,000 on our own terms because as many folks always said in the Army, you know, the enemy gets a vote.

So there's a demand for this large force. There is uncertainty in the world. There is a host of places that we may have to place deploy in the future. And there's a good argument that we're going to need a very large force to do it, especially if we deal with the sort of messy aftermath that we face today in Iraq. You then ask, what can our force provide? Well, when you add up everything in the active force and the Reserves, it's not that much. You know, the active force has 10 divisions – the active Army has 10 divisions plus a number of separate brigade combat teams. They have reconfigured those into these new units of action, but that's like taking a dozen egg and breaking them into two six-egg compartments and saying, oh wow, you have two brigades now. No, you still have 12 eggs but they're just in two packages. The Army has moved a lot of capabilities around but it's not yet clear whether they've created a lot of new net capability. And the Marines have only three active duty divisions. The active force has – or I'm sorry, the reserve force has a lot more, but when it's all said and done, they tap out at 600,000. So the question is, what do you do when you have a need for more than that?

And we suggest what are essentially five bad options. No one wants to consider the outer limits of these because they all have costs, but when we dropped the (unintelligible) and we decided that constriction might be the least bad option for the United States, you start out with allies. Allies are great to have. We fought with them historically. We would hope to do so again. But allies won't always agree with this country when it needs to go into harm's way, and so we have the capability to secure our country on our own if necessary.

Contractors. Contractors can do amazing things. They can provide you surge capability in an instant, but contractors have limits, too. They cannot do inherently governmental functions and they can't make up all of the capabilities across the board. There are also significant accountability and cost issues there.

Transformation. In theory, you could transform the Navy and the Air Force to do the work you need in Iraq. You know, you could decommission a few ships, you could decommission a few air wings, and you could take those individual people and retrain them. But what if you need them someday? You know, there is a naval threat from China, and every few years we have to put a carrier battle group in the Taiwan Strait or near the Taiwan Strait to deal with that. We can't afford to downsize all of our capabilities just to meet today's threat.

Fourth, we can increase the size of the active force. This has been bandied about

on both sides of the aisle. It has been suggested as the cure-all band-aid that we can just bump up the active force by one division, two divisions, three divisions, and we can solve all of our problems. Well, that might be true, but it's not clear that you can get the soldiers to enlist. All of the recruiting problems I sketched out at the start of this talk indicate that the Army has had an increasingly harder time bringing people in the door. And an economist will tell you that you can always spend an extra dollar to bring someone in. Well, at a certain point, do you really want the person who's going to come in because of that extra dollar, or would you be better off bringing in a young college student or bringing in someone else as part of a national service program?

And so that leads us to number five, which is national service. If this country is going to be a superpower and if it's going to take on obligations like Iraq, Haiti, Sudan, you name it, the all-volunteer model, as good as it is, cannot produce the sheer volume and capacity that this country needs and some kind of national service program may be necessary to provide the force that will support our country's goals.

MR. SHIELDS: (Inaudible.)

MR. CARTER: The nutshell of the article.

MR. SHIELDS: All right. There you go. For those of you who don't read, that was the nutshell. I heard you – I heard you all (inaudible).

And now to Dr. Larry Korb.

LAWRENCE KORB: Thank you very much, Mark. Phil, thank you for coming here and thanks for that great article. I'd like to welcome you all here to the Center. Those of you who are first time, I hope you'll come again, and if you don't have time please visit us on our website at americanprogress.org. I'd also like to thank all the people who helped us put this together today, Antoine Morris, Anna Soellner, and Rebecca Schultz. So thank you all and thanks for coming.

Let me begin by saying that if in fact you wanted to say how can you destroy the all-volunteer Army – and it is the Army, it's not the force – the Bush administration provides a textbook case. If you said, okay, you want to undermine the whole thing and undo 30 years' work, they've done it. So obviously it's going to be difficult to – to dig out of that hole. I'm reminding of a quote that Maxwell Taylor said when we were leaving Vietnam. He said, you know, "We sent the Army to be Vietnam to save Vietnam. We took the Army out of Vietnam to save the Army." And we may end up in a situation like that.

I would love to be able to devise a way for everyone to serve, sort of like I'd like to have a fair draft; fair national service; or, if you will, a fair tax system. But every time you get into the details, it becomes very, very, very difficult to do. And I feel, as a member of that Vietnam generation I share what Colin Powell said; that the way in which we brought people into that war was an anti-democratic disgrace. And I must say that

when I showed up in the Pentagon in the Reagan administration and looked around at all the people, I was surprised that all of these people who were big supporters of the war had not gone.

So what we're talking about here – I want to do two things. I want to talk about the program that Phil has outlined and then get to some of his premises. And as he pointed out, it's not a draft. It's national service for college-bound youth, which of course, you get one million young men and young women go to college each year, so there's three million other people who basically are not going to be part of this national service, so these three million will somehow be exempt. And when we talk about – he said that he wants people to go into the – do national service and military would be one option, it's you can't go to a four-year college without doing this. Well, what about people who go to community colleges? What about people who go to school to be nurses? Or what about older students, part-time students? What about seminaries? What about people who want to join the ROTC or military academies? What if, for example, he doesn't get the question, what about people who are gays and lesbians? How do you – how are you going to handle those?

And that gets to what I want to say, that the problem every time we come up with one of these ideas is you have so many problems that you then have to say, well, let's go and do something else. And again, another question, at least as I understand the article, he basically wants these young men and young women to go and to support not the (line in?) the Army, which is where we have the problem. Well, what happens if, when I want to go to college, I say – if I can remember back when I got my draft notice, and I had a high school – I was teaching in high school in New York, I had a deferment, and also I was going to graduate school. And my dad, God bless him, said, "There are no deferments in this house." And back then people didn't move out. And he said, "Go down and join the Army." I said, "Well, what about the Navy?" "Well, that's all right, too," he said. So while under Phil's scheme, what happens if people say, "Well, I don't want to go in the Army and military police or whatever it is, and the Navy and the Air Force?"

Also, you're talking about a cost, and Phil makes the point in there one of the reasons why we haven't added more active duty people and reserves is because of the high cost of personnel. But if you have these people, one million serving for two years, that's two million people you're paying, and I don't know how much you're going to pay them, even the ones outside the military. Maybe pay them – cost you \$50,000 a year to maintain them. You're talking about several billion dollars.

And even if I take a look at their numbers, I don't think it's going to deal with the problem they create because he says, well, we get 10 percent of this one million to go into the Army, that's 100,000, so we're only going to be adding a couple hundred thousand people to the Army, which doesn't fit with the problems that he's talked about.

Now, again, it's too late to do anything, but I think the president missed a terrific opportunity after September 11th. He knew, we now know, that he was going to go to

Iraq. Why didn't he come before the American people and increase the size of the Army to be able to do that? You could have gotten the people then, I think, to join. Now, of course, it becomes much more difficult.

Okay, let me spend a couple minutes talking about some of the premises that he spoke about. And he talked about the fact that if you count the number of people in the Army and the Marines and the active and reserves, it's about 1.3 million people. And he seems to indicate we can only somehow get 80,000 of those to go to Iraq. I think you can do better if you manage it. I mean there are things that you can do. They're finally starting to do them in the Pentagon now, rebalancing the active and reserve forces. But I do think you can do better than that. And if this war is as important as the president says, I think we've got to take a look at things like the two-year limit on Guard and Reserve. If the president were to go to the Congress and ask for that to be lifted, then I think you would have the debate which Phil mentions in his article about General Abrams who was so upset that we didn't use the Guard and Reserve in Vietnam that he designed a force that you'd have to use the Army, Guard, and Reserve, and then of course if the President would ask for that two-year limit to be waived, that would spark, I think, the debate that – you know, that we might – that we need.

He glosses over, but he does mention as one of his options the whole idea that somehow or another that this military that we have – this Army that we have is primarily poor people. And it's not. As you take a look at the thing several of my colleagues and I worked on for the *New York Times*, we looked at the casualties, and you find out that it's neither the very rich nor the very poor. And because of our great success in the '80s and '90s in restoring the all-volunteer military, the standards are pretty high. You had to have a high school diploma, you had to score average or above average on the armed forces qualification test. So by and large, it is not the very poor who are serving or being forced to serve.

He also talks about, and Phil mentions in the article, that gee, look how we were strained with just the Balkans and Bush was complaining about – you know, in the campaign about how bad the military was. That was nonsense. We weren't strained by what happened in the Balkans and that was really campaign rhetoric.

So what's the answer? Let me say two things. I think that the president was absolutely wrong in the campaign where he said we could never have a draft. You can't say that. If you need it, you've got to do it, okay. I mean you can't jeopardize national security. I mean even Ronald Reagan, who was a libertarian when it came to military service, told us in the beginning of his administration, look, I want this all-volunteer military to work, but if doesn't you've got to tell me. I cannot allow the security of this country to be jeopardized. And as I tell people, why do you think you're registering, you know, so you can make a trip to the post office? I mean what do you think the whole purpose of that is? That obviously you need to keep that in the closet.

And finally, I think, as we argued here in a study we did at the Center, you need to increase the size of the Army. It should be at least 100,000 people more, and if you

could do that I think you can handle the situation in Iraq. Now, as I heard Phil on an interview on NPR last week when he was talking about, well, the president is talking about going to Iran. Well, if you're going to Iran, then I'm all for a draft because if you're going to start doing things like that, then obviously you have a different situation.

So I would argue that you need to rebalance the force and you need to add more soldiers. And you've got – and I agree that obviously you should try and get the most qualified. It would be great if you had all high school graduates or all people scoring above average, but I do think you've got a little bit of maneuver because going into this it was 92 percent high school graduates going into the Army. The law allows you to take – you know, have 80 percent. And so I think you've got a little room for maneuver there. But let me conclude with this. You know, given the way in which this has been handled, I don't have a great deal of confidence that they'll do it right.

And finally, two other things. As I mentioned in one of the pieces that you have in your folder, drop this ban on gays in the military. And I mean this is foolish. We're throwing people out and then going to the IRR to bring them in. And I also think that this distinction between combat and non-combat for women makes no sense anymore because women can go into the military police, but not into the infantry, but you're in as much danger in the military police, in fact if not more, so I think there are things like that that you can do.

And then finally, I don't think it should all be money, but there are things that you can do for pay and benefits, and finally the Pentagon is doing something about healthcare for Guard and Reserve. They announced that they're going to allow people to do that. I think if they had done TRICARE for life for Guard and Reserve, That would be a tremendous boost to keeping people in.

Thank you.

MR. SHIELDS: Let me give Phil a chance to respond. And just two quick points I wanted to make that I think are relevant to both what Larry Korb and Phil Carter have had to say.

First of all, is that there's been much, I think, overstating hyperbole about the value and virtue of the all-volunteer force, and while I admire and respect enormously those who volunteer, I point out that under the draft one out of 10 draftees did not finish his tour of duty. Under the all-volunteer force it's one out of three has not. And under the draft, up until 1966, three out of four college graduates served, as did three out of four high school graduates, and that obviously is not the case today. And while it is not a mixture of – it is not extremely poor, I think it's safe to say, not only from empirical data, but from everybody's anecdotal experience, that the sons and daughters of senators and CEOs and network anchors and cabinet secretaries are exempt from – overwhelmingly exempt and missing from military service. So it is a war still being fought by the children of cops and secretaries and teachers and middle and working-class America.

But I do want to give you a chance to respond.

MR. CARTER: Thanks, Mark. The first place I'd like to start is to look at the issue of reserve readiness and mobilization, and how that's really been affected over the last four years. Reserve mobilizations, depending on which newspaper you read, are very visible or very invisible. And if you're in a small town and you've had your local armory tapped, then they're very visible. But what a lot of Americans don't know is that we've mobilized as many reservists since 9/11 as we have in the active Army. We've doubled the size of the active Army by mobilizing a cumulative total of 480,000 reservists, and that number goes up every week so it's hard to pin the tail on it, since 9/11. A lot of that's been for homeland security. Much more of it has been for Iraq and Afghanistan.

And so you get a sense of the scale of this problem and the practicability of just adding 40,000 or 80,000 more troops, when you look at how many more reservists that we've tapped. Now, the argument that I get back from every single general I interview is, great, that's what the Reserves are for. And they're right, that is what the Reserves are for. But when you have to go back and tap one Reserve unit three times, as they have with the Marine battalion in Los Angeles, or you have to go back and tap a civil affairs unit three times, you really start to look at which capabilities in the Reserves are maybe over-represented in the Reserves and are we overusing to the point where they won't be ready for the next time.

And Larry mentioned some force balancing that's going on right now in the Pentagon. That's been long overdue. We should have been doing this during the Balkans when we realized we were over-tapping MPs and civil affairs and military intelligence and Special Forces, but now we've waded our way into a thicket and we've got to do the best we can. I have a friend who says that the best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago, and the second best time is today. And so it's time that we plant these trees today in order to have the fruit in ten or 20 years.

The quality issue is one that I always get a little animated about, partly because I don't myself have a high school diploma, I have a GED, so the joke to my soldiers was always, I couldn't enlist, I had to become an officer instead. (Laughter.) And there's a grain of truth in that.

The problem is that we just use that as a proxy. We say high school diploma because that's a measurable thing that we can say – "Oh, do you have it?" – when someone walks into a recruiting office, but in fact there are lots of other proxies we should also be worried about and that I have seen some numbers to indicate they're not that great either. Physical qualifications of a new recruit are directly correlated to their propensity to finish their enlistment. If someone comes in broken, they're most likely to drop out of basic training than any other category. If someone comes in with a criminal background or a history of drug use, they're also problematic because they undermine or could potentially undermine unit discipline. And so we can't just track high school diplomas. We really have to look at the quality of these people who are coming in.

Now, I think the best way to increase quality is to increase the size of the pool. The problem is, as Larry aptly points out, society has not gotten behind that. It would have been great if President Bush stood up on September 14th before Congress and said, “Not only do you have to rally behind us as you did, but you are all going to have to do a part, and it may mean paying more taxes, it may mean serving in uniform, it may mean a whole host of things.” But he didn’t. Society has gotten that message.

I think the *New York Times* report on Sunday about creditors going after soldiers maybe tells us just how well society has received this message. A number of creditors have seen fit to ignore the Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act and to treat soldiers essentially as business-as-usually while they’re deployed. They haven’t gotten the message that we’re at war. Society has not gotten the message that we’re at war and they have gotten behind the effort. And so in the Army’s studies of parents and other people who influence the recruiting decisions, the sense is that these people are not supporting the enlistment decisions anymore, and that’s going to result in diminishing and diminishing returns for the Army as it tries to bring new people in the door. And until society gets behind this, we’re not going to be able to enlarge the pool, and at a certain point you have to ask, what happens if people volunteering? And I think that’s why we made the case for the draft.

MR. SHIELDS: Let me just toss out a theory to you and get your reaction. And that is, that over the past quarter century or generation, the liberals and the conservatives in this country have sort of tacitly agreed, one, to privatize the economy, which – deregulate the economy, which has been the conservative holy grail, and the liberal side it’s been to deregulate the culture; that is, that every individual decides rather than having society establish norms and values that are enforceable. Obviously, the abolition of the draft being a prime example. A second is sort of a tacit sense of, you keep your hands off my market, I’ll keep my hands off of your bedroom. And in that kind of a climate, if that is fairly descriptive if not definitive, is it possible that you can have a sense – I mean, did George Bush know what he was doing when he didn’t ask us to sacrifice? First war in 145 years that we’ve gone to without a draft and with three tax cuts – patriotism light. You put a sticker on your SUV, and that just shows, boy, I’m with the troops. I mean war demands equality of sacrifice. There’s been no sacrifice in this war except by those who are there, and their families and loved ones. I mean, have we got a changed America that a draft would just be a cause for civil rebellion?

MR. KORB: Well, I think what you have to understand is that when the draft worked in this country and worked well, and then when it didn’t. World War II obviously just about everybody went.

MR. SHIELDS: Yep.

MR. KORB: In the – the draft was discontinued in ‘45, brought back in ‘48.

MR. SHIELDS: Right.

MR. KORB: From '48 to the early '60s it worked very well because given the size – during the Depression we did not have many male children, and basically eight out of 10 males had to do something up until the early '60s because the military was bigger then, you know, with technology.

MR. SHIELDS: Yep.

MR. KORB: Where it fell apart was in Vietnam because even at the height of that war, only one out of six had to serve. And, you know, we went back and who do you exempt and who is clergy and – I mean, and all of them. So the decision I think was made, and I think quite appropriately, given the size of the military, given the size of the population, it's better to try and do this on a volunteer basis because then you don't have to, as Charlie Moskos would say, answer those questions of who shall serve when not all shall serve.

The other thing that happened was that as technology improved, the military became more professional. As the late Max Thurman, who was vice chief of staff for the Army would always say, this is not Joe and Willy and the dough boys anymore, okay. When you get someone who volunteers, the chances of them staying are about 50 percent. They also normally – and it's changed a little bit now, but normally people who volunteer sign up for four years, so you can train them and with 50 percent of them staying in, you can have a very, very professional force. A draftee is going to be only 10 percent stay, and they only stay for two years. Yes, there are some things they can do, but not all of the things.

Now, Mark, you mentioned a figure here which I think is important. You said, well, the draftees, only out of three, you know, wouldn't complete the –

MR. SHIELDS: One out of ten – one out of three I think –

MR. KORB: Yeah, one – okay, wouldn't make it, and with the volunteers more would wash out I guess is the –

MR. SHIELDS: (Inaudible.)

MR. KORB: Well, one of the reasons for that is since they're volunteers and if they can't cut it, you get rid of them. Draftees you can't. I tell people the old Klinger syndrome from M*A*S*H. These are people who want to get out so you don't let them. On a voluntary military when it's clear that that young man or young woman, even if they had all of the qualifications, don't seem to cut it, it becomes easier to get them out, and it's better for you in the long run.

You know, we talked about high school graduates. The reason for high school graduates, basically all of the research shows that if a man or woman completes high school, they're the type that won't quit on you during the enlistment. It has nothing to do with aptitude. Aptitude is the Armed Forces Qualification Test. But that's what the data

show; that if they're willing to stay all the way through school, they're not going to run home when things get tough.

So I mean – now, I agree with you. I mean, I can't believe that we weren't asked – this is the first war we've ever had, not only no draft, but tax cuts. What are people – you know, they're not asked to make any – and that's not good. I agree it's not good. The second thing is, this administration, whatever else you may think about it, was the most horribly prepared war I have ever seen, okay. Colin Powell told them, you know, General Shinseki, everybody told them, but they ignored it for whatever reason. Not only did they ignore it, they gave medals and stuff and promoted the people who messed it up. And so what kind of signal does that send to you? So yeah, we are – you know, we are in a mess and it may be at some point you crack the all-volunteer Army so much that you're going to have to do something else. But the fact of the matter is, it didn't need to be done. If you had people in there who knew what they were doing, you could have done it.

When we went to the first Persian Gulf War, we had 2.2 million ground troops. And the number of people in the draft pool was lower back then, okay. You could easily have done it, but you didn't do it, so we only had the 1.2 million ground troops that we went, and we couldn't use it. You could have easily done that. And if you had started it right after September 11th, you would have it now, but you didn't do it, and so yes. So, you know, my point is, yes, they've messed it up. Can it be fixed? Well, the longer we wait and the more adamant they get against fixing it, the harder it's going to be. I mean they're still fighting the Reed-Hagel bill to increase the size of the Army permanently.

And Phil made the point in there, well, manpower is expensive so they don't want to do it. But you don't have to take it out of the Army or Marine budget. Take it out of the damn national missile defense system or take it out of the F-22 to, you know, pay for these people. You can do that without, you know, increasing the cost that much.

MR. SHIELDS: I want to get your response. But first of all, you have to answer a question. That is, how did you get into law school without graduating from high school?

MR. CARTER: Oh, I have a college degree.

MR. SHIELDS: Oh, okay. Okay. I didn't want to meet the admissions director. (Laughter.) All right, that's terrific.

And just a very cynical question, and to respond to anything Larry said as well – any point you want to make – but we're now paying people to fight and die for their country. Why not simply hire foreign nationals? I mean there's a remarkable percentage of American casualties in Iraq, disproportionately, who are foreign-born, who are non-citizens, who joined the Marines or the Army in hopes of becoming citizens. But, you know, I mean, why not go the next step and say, look, let's just get – if the draft is going to be a problem, it's going to disrupt society, why not have the American Foreign

Legion?

MR. CARTER: Well, I think Max Boot (sp) suggested this in an op-ed a couple of months ago, and I read it and I sort of chuckled because I thought, well, you know, on the one hand we're doing this right now with subcontractors in Iraq –

MR. SHIELDS: Yeah.

MR. CARTER: – and it's not working very well. There are a whole host of operational concerns mostly relating to language, skill level, and education that make those units somewhat less effective than they could be.

And second, something struck me about it that it was immoral; that if something is worth doing, you know, as the old adage says, it's worth doing yourself. And if our nation is going to go to war, then we ought not outsource that simply because we have the money to, but we ought to embrace that cause as something that's worth doing, and worth doing absolutely right. So I don't think that's a good idea. And, you know, there are other reasons. You wouldn't want to set up the situation where someone who wanted to infiltrate the military could do so so easily. You might have interoperability issues between a foreign unit and a U.S. unit, even if you made them all learn English. But I think I object to it most on moral grounds.

MR. SHIELDS: Do you have a reaction?

MR. KORB: Well, as I said, I think everybody ought to serve their country. And I wish we could devise a system, but every time you get into it and you allow exemptions and stuff, you end up with this situation. And I think, again, remember, war in Iraq was not a war of necessity. It was a war of choice. And so, therefore, if you're going – I mean the comment that Rumsfeld made, well, we go to war with the Army you have. Well, if you're choosing when to go to war, why not wait until you get the army that you need to do to get the job? Okay?

Now – but they didn't. So now you have this other problem. And as Phil mentioned, one of the reasons you haven't – you can't get foreigners is because you basically didn't go through the UN procedures, you went to war under the wrong reasons, okay. I mean, you went to war for the weapons of mass destruction, the ties to Al Qaeda. They didn't do it – weren't there. Now we're going to spread democracy. You know, Frank Fukuyama had a column in the *Financial Times* a couple weeks ago, and he said the following: if George Bush had come before the country in September, 2002, before the Congress and said, we're going to war in Iraq so that they can have elections, he'd have been laughed out of the ballpark, and it would cost you \$300 billion and 1,500 lives and 11,000 wounded. He wouldn't have gotten the support.

And that's – you know, again, we're mixing up a couple things here. Yes, if it is war of necessity, you've got to do what you've got to do. But when you have wars of choice and – I don't blame just Bush. It's all those people in Congress who voted for the

darn thing, okay. Basically, this is a different situation. And when you look at all of the, you know, the pros and cons, I think you've got about another year, and if you don't significantly cut back in Iraq, your all-volunteer Army and Marines, if they keep on using them, is going to really be in very, very big trouble.

MR. SHIELDS: Okay. We're going to go to questions. I just have one final question for the two of you, and that is, you made a statement, and I quote, if you go to Iran I'm all for a draft. And you point out that Iraq was a war of choice. If you had a variation of what Phil is proposing or the reinstatement of the draft, would it affect and influence American foreign policy? That is, would decision-makers be less reluctant to send troops if in fact their own blood and treasure in terms of their own children and relatives were going to be exposed to that canon fire?

MR. CARTER: Well, I have a little more faith in Congress as an institution. I think they would respond to their constituents. And if more of their constituents had something on the line, I think they would be very responsive to that.

MR. SHIELDS: Okay.

MR. KORB: I think that if you had a draft right now, you would be out of Iraq, particularly when you send people there for the wrong reasons. The American people will not support their sons and daughters dying for spread democracy or whatever you want to call it. That's not what we bought into, and that's why you see the polls now saying they don't think the cost was worth it. So obviously if they had to bear the cost, yes, I think we would be out. So I think that if you had the sons and daughters, particularly of the elite who are exposed to this, yes, there would be a lot more hard questions asked before you had wars of choice. But again, it's a different subject.

We were not given the option. We thought it was a war of necessity in the way it was sold to us, which any, I think, objective person would say that that was certainly – was not true.

MR. SHIELDS: Okay. Now, we want to go to questions. I'd ask each of you as I call about you to wait. We have a person with a wireless microphone right over here who will reach you. And when you do, that person gets there, would you be good enough to identify yourself and your organization.

Right here, this gentleman here in the brown.

Q: (Inaudible) rising.us. I'm disappointed that a progressive group would frame the debate as expanding the army by 100,000 people with monetary incentives versus expanding the army – military with a draft – a new type of draft. I don't see that – either of those as a progressive choice, personally.

I think the real progressive choice that needs to be discussed is not part of the agenda and not part of your article is challenging the military industrial complex and that

approach to dealing with foreign policy. We have on our web site, democracyrising.us, an article about Seymour Melman, who talks about how the investment in the military industrial complex is undermining our economy, our civilian economy. Do you think we –

MR. SHIELDS: Kevin, do you have a question?

Q: Well, sure, yeah.

MR. : Can we have the question, please?

Q: The question is, don't you think that part of this debate should be challenging the approach that we're taking with the military industrial complexes and military force as our way of controlling the foreign policy?

MR. KORB: Well, I know the late Dr. Melman's work quite well. The military industrial complex was much more powerful in the '50s, and that's why Eisenhower gave that statement when he left office. I don't think that's what's driving our foreign policy now. I think what's driving our foreign policy is this vision of American exceptionalism and, you know, that we have the duty to spread these values around the world. I mean, I think that's what's driving it. In many ways that's more dangerous than the military industrial complex because you can sort of get a handle on that.

MR. CARTER: Well, yeah. What I would say is there is a supply side approach and a demand side approach to this problem, and I have sort of said that if you have a demand for a million or three million or five million troops, then you need to devise a way to create the supply. I think Larry would say, and you might say, that what you should really do is adjust your demand for adventures abroad, and I think that's a valid approach.

MR. SHIELDS: I'd just add one thing, and that is that I think we've seen just a total redefinition of what patriotism is. Larry and Phil are examples of a time when patriotism took a form of personal sacrifice; of giving up one's own comfort, safety, for the collective good. That is now in 2005 in America in Washington, DC, the definition of patriotism has become totally ideological. If you support an aggressive foreign policy, invading other countries, then you're a patriot. If you don't, you're not, by the ideological definition. And I think that's, you know – with absolutely no personal discomfort involved at all. It's simply taking a rather rigid ideological position and with no consequence for yourself.

Yes, right back there in the back of the room, this gentleman. Would you wait – there you go. Yep.

Q: My name is Sy Dericka (ph) from (inaudible) daily newspaper. My question is to Larry Korb. Norm Chomsky suggests that what we have in Iraq is really a colonial

war, and that's why the draft doesn't work – that colonialism has never been maintained by a draft army. What is your take on that?

And perhaps, you know, taking what Mark Shields said a bit further, could we have, let's say, you know, some sort of – I'm sorry, for the lack of better word – a mercenary army in the future with good incentives and so on to fight these wars? Thank you.

MR. KORB: Well, we didn't – they didn't think it was going to be a colonial war, but, in fact, it was. That's how we were perceived over there, and I can – that was a big mistake on the part of the administration and the Congress and the media for not challenging the idea. I remember Rumsfeld sent a group of us to Iraq in November, 2003, to “assess the progress” that was being made. And one of the things – I got over there and I was down in Al Hillah talking to what was then Saddam Hussein University talking. And one of the professors there said, “You know, you guys better stop emphasizing your big friends the British here. Don't you remember what happened when they came the last time?” And I think we find it hard to see ourselves, but that's how we're seen in that part of the world.

And, yes, if you want to run an American empire, the American people aren't going to support it. They thought they were – that Saddam was connected to 9/11. I mean, that's what they thought when they went in and they were led to believe that it'd be, quote, unquote, as Ken Adelman said, a “cakewalk.” So they thought, okay, fine. They did not see this the way that it came out. And I think even with a volunteer military if they knew what it was going to be, they would not have supported it.

MR. SHIELDS: Phil?

MR. CARTER: Yeah, you know, look. This is the way wars are going to look in the future. They're going to be messy. They're going to be unclear. They're going to be open-ended, and they're going to be complex, and they're not just going to be the adventures that end when you push Saddam out of Kuwait. And so I think what we need to do is capture those lessons this time so that we go into it next time with a more full understanding of what the true costs and time lines and operation is going to be like.

MR. SHIELDS: One of the Marine generals I have enormous respect for said before the war – in opposing the war said that Rumsfeld and others and the president did not grasp that we would be the first Western, Christian, pro-Israeli, invading and occupying Army of a Muslim holy land. And I don't know what part of that sentence – phrase they don't understand, whether it's “western” or “Christian” or “pro-Israeli” or “invading” or “occupying,” but my God Almighty, he certainly has proved to be prophetic.

Yes, right up here. Yep.

Q: I'm Mark Lewis (sp). I work for the House Armed Services Committee, but I'm going to ask this question as a private citizen. Dr. Korb, I'd like to look at some of the things you said. You're talking about adding up to 100,000 troops to do peacekeeping and stabilization tasks, if I read this document correctly, although you say you're not sure that had we known this was a peacekeeping and stabilization exercise that we would have supported the war.

My question is, given what Phil has laid out as the difficulty in the recruiting, and acknowledging the leadership challenges that didn't present them – or the president didn't take advantage of the opportunities to apply his leadership to the issue, it's today. You want 100,000 more troops. The Secretary of the Army just last week has asked prominent members, parents, prominent members of society, members of Congress to encourage young people to enlist. You've got any number of under 34-year-olds here in this room right now, and any number of under 34-year-olds working for you. What would such a prominent citizen say in that instance to get another 100,000 people to enlist?

MR. KORB: Well, and don't forget they just raised the limit to 39, if you want to go into the Guard and Reserve – a 39-year-old private. (Laughter.)

Look, I agree with you. The longer you wait and the less progress we seem to be making in Iraq, the harder it's going to be. I agree. I mean, I've been saying this for a couple of years. Okay. Can you do it now? I think you'd have a very difficult time in doing it. You might be able, you know, if you had started increasing, like, taking in 10,000 more, you know, each year you could have done it. I don't think you can do it now. No, I don't think you can do it now, so you'll just have to hope that you get out of Iraq where, you know, as General Cody said, substantial reductions by the middle of 2006.

The other alternative is you could waive the two years on active duty for the Guard and Reserve, go to Congress, which I think would be a good debate as to why you want to do it. And the – but I think if you go back for a third rotation with some of those divisions, you will do what – that's what did it in Vietnam, when you send people back the third time. Once is okay, second not too bad, the third time I think you would lose your people. You're not – your eight to ten-year people, you know, they haven't made a career choice yet.

MR. CARTER: Okay. Well, as General Gordon Sullivan says, hope is not a method, so I think you would have to make a very public pronouncement about why this war still matters. Whether you wanted to go in there or not in 2002, we are now in 2005, and I think the president needs to articulate the case that we have to win, period. And I think both Senator Kerry and President Bush said they would do that. You know, we're now a few months after that fact and neither one has.

Next, you need to really ratchet up enlistment bonuses. \$15,000 more is not enough. Private military contractors are paying \$150,000 to elite soldiers who will join

their companies. It might be worthwhile to consider bonuses like that or to consider things on the back end, such as a significantly more robust GI bill that would actually pay for four years of college at a place like Harvard or Princeton. Shorter enlistments are an option that I would advocate and push across the board, because I think we want to get in those people who are looking for something in between junior college and college.

And lastly, I do think you just need to push the message over – you know, this administration is good at pushing a message. Hammer it. This war is important. We must serve, all must serve. And it has to resonate everywhere, so that CitiBank knows it, Home Depot knows it, schools know it, and everyone knows it. You know, again, at the end I may be an optimist, but I think that that might do the trick.

MR. SHIELDS: I'd just add one thing and that is that the – first of all, the president since September 11th has never once – never once asked people to volunteer for the military, never. Throughout the campaign, non-campaign, any setting, he has never once asked young people to volunteer to the military.

MR. KORB: You know, we got – oh, I'm sorry – got Reagan to do a recruiting commercial.

MR. SHIELDS: That's right.

MR. KORB: So I think they ought to try and get Bush to do one or –

MR. SHIELDS: But secondly, I'd point out my list of personal heroes. At the top of that list is a man named Paul Douglas. Paul Douglas served three terms in the United States Senate from Illinois and long before John McCain, he was the authentic maverick. He infuriated the Chicago political machines, he was a Democrat. He fought for tax reform. He fought for civil rights at times. The day of Pearl Harbor, Paul Douglas was a full professor at the University of Chicago and president of the American Economic Association. He was also a Chicago Alderman. He resigned to – as a Quaker to enlist in the United States Marines Corps as an enlisted man. And he went through and at – he was wounded and crippled in combat at Tarawa and Okinawa. The last days of his life his arm was withered. At the time he did, and won the Silver Star, he was 52 years old.

Now, if the president's really serious, our leaders are really serious, we ought to create a Paul Douglas brigade and encourage members of Congress or those who missed Vietnam for one reason or another and missed the draft, to give them a chance to go back and go through that experience. (Laughter.) You go to 39; why not raise it to 59? But, yes, I – yes, over here. I'm sorry. Yep.

Q: Here's something you probably haven't thought of. Twenty-five –

MR. : And you are?

Q: My name is Luke Coon (ph). I work with a number of groups, including District Antiwar Network, Mayday DC, and various direct-action, anti-capitalist groups. Have you considered this possibility: that half the operatives and direct action groups, like the Earth Liberation Front and Animal Liberation Front will be men? Half of them will be draft age. So wouldn't it be likely that the draft would be fought using the same battle-tested tactics that they have developed against the logging industry and animal testing and would use them against the draft, that the kids who hate school and couldn't give a rat's patootie about college will fight physically to stay out of the draft? I know I would fire on anyone who tried to draft me. What makes you think half the country won't rebel if they bring back the draft?

MR. SHIELDS: Phil? (Laughter.)

MR. CARTER: No, that's a valid point. And our citizenry has rioted in the past when conscription has been levied on it. Again, I have more faith that my peers would not do so, but I know that some would resist. And, you know, you probably don't want them. You might very well take those individuals and shunt them into another kind of national service. Right now, we spend \$4 billion a year to maintain a baggage screener force in the tens of thousands, and I would prefer to shunt someone who was so unwilling to serve into the military into that force.

MR. : I don't want him going through my (dock kits?) for God's sake. (Laughter.)

MR. : Better there than in a foxhole.

MR. KORB: Well, you know, I think that if we were – I think Mark's point here about the president – in my view the president should have come out and said, look, I was wrong about weapons of mass destruction, the ties to al-Qaeda, but having said that, this is why it's important to stay through and this is what I'm going to have to do to do it; whatever he decides to do. Lacking that, you're not going to get any support.

Remember, I think people because we had the draft in World War II, and then we had it from '48 to '73, a lot of people thought it was sort of "what we normally do." No, we don't. Most of our history, we haven't had a draft. And the volunteer military, while it's not perfect, does have a lot of advantages. It's enabled us to take advantage of what people call the revolution in military affairs and be much more professional.

Remember, in Vietnam what we were doing is we were sending individuals and leaving units there in the ground forces. Now – and Bill pointed this out – we like to send whole units, and you can do that in a volunteer military, because people stay for longer periods of time, and they develop what the sociologists call unit cohesion, and they can be a more effective fighting force.

MR. SHIELDS: Over here in the blue shirt.

Q: My name is Chris Kroft (ph) from Congressman Tom Lantos's office. Mr. Carter, you mentioned there were 480,000 reserves mobilized since 9/11. I was just wondering if you have the numbers of how many reserves are mobilized now in Iraq and Afghanistan. Also – and Guard. And how many – how bad the reserves and Guard are missing their recruitment goals.

MR. CARTER: I have some of those numbers. DOD publishes a press release every week on Wednesday that –

MR. SHIELDS: Who did?

MR. CARTER: The Defense Department.

MR. SHIELDS: Defense Department.

MR. CARTER: That states the number of reservists mobilized for each service. And I believe the Army components total roughly 155,000 right now. It's hard for reasons of operational security to disaggregate that number down into how many are in certain places, but the good folks at globalsecurity.org have produced a list, which might enable you to do so.

The Guard and Reserve has taken the biggest recruiting hit, and the reasons that they depend on people leaving active duty to swell their numbers. When folks are stop-lossed or folks come home from a deployment and get out and say, "I don't want to join the Reserves and go right back to Iraq," they take a big hit. And they also have been taking a big hit on attrition and reenlistment rates because people decide, you know, after one deployment, two deployments or three deployments, I like serving in the Reserves one weekend a month, two weeks a year, but it's not for me if I've got to go overseas.

Now, that is a good thing. I mean, you have the Reserves so that they're capable to fight, and the war has been good for the Reserves in a number of readiness respects, but over time the attrition adds up and so their recruiting numbers are down by anywhere from 24 to 30 percent, depending on which segment you're looking at.

MR. KORB: You know, one of the problems we have in this is we have well established norms for deploying people – calling up Guard and Reserve – which they violated, again, because they never planned that it would be like this and they kept making it up as they went along. But by and large, if you take a man or woman in the Guard and Reserve and you call them up more than one – for one year out of every five years or if you take an active-duty person and you send them on – into a battle zone for, you know, one year and then don't give them at least two years at home, you're going to have problems. We haven't done this because, again don't forget, they thought they would be down to 30,000 troops by the end of 2003. That was the planning.

MR. CARTER: In Iraq.

MR. KORB: In Iraq, yes. I mean, that was the plan and we'd be out by the end of 2004. Those were the assumptions, you know, going in. And because they didn't, you had to go all of these other things, calling up people, keeping them on active duty.

I got an email from a young lady yesterday. Her husband is in a Reserve unit in Maryland and they're keeping him past 24 months. She said, "I don't know who to turn to. I've read your stuff." I said, "You've got to call your congressman because the law says they can't." This guy – you know. And then she wrote back and, you know, what this convoluted thing they're trying to do to him. I said, "No, no, no, they can't do that. No, they can't do that."

MR. SHIELDS: Just one point. Secretary Rumsfeld frequently says that the advantage we have of the all-volunteer force is those who are there want to be there, and that, you know, unlike the draft, which he was quite critical of. But don't we, in fact, have de facto draft with stop loss orders? I mean, when you – if I sign up for three years, sign up for four years, and your time comes to be separated and they say, no, no, you're going to be – 45,000 at a time. You're going to be kept on for another year. I mean, aren't you – aren't we essentially tacitly drafting, but the only people we're drafting are the people who've been good enough and patriotic enough to volunteer in the first place?

MR. KORB: Absolutely. Yeah. The bag – and that's – this young man there said, you know, it wasn't the progressive solution. Look, that's one of the things I pointed out in there, this back-door draft is wrong. Okay? You're double penalizing people with stop loss and in calling up, you know, people in the IRR, and, you know, people who don't realize that, you know, if you take a commission in the U.S. military even when your obligation expires, unless you resign your commission they can call you back. And so you've got people, you know, being called. Yeah, I mean, that's wrong. I mean, that is absolutely wrong to do that. And it is unfair to those people who have been good enough and patriotic enough to volunteer.

MR. CARTER: You know, here I disagree, though. I don't think it's quite right to call a stop loss and stop move and all these other policies a back-door draft. A draft is different because it doesn't have that element of self-selection. It doesn't have – you know, I'm a contracts lawyer. I'll spare you that lecture, but there is something very different about someone who volunteers and then a subject of fine print or statutory requirements, and cutting a swathe through society and, you know, essentially pulling in the millions that we need that way. There are equitable differences. There are also, you know, just the simple difference of volunteering.

I think at the end of the day, though, what you have to ask yourself is what's better in terms of what's more effective, and what's fairer. Do you want to call up a guy like me again or do you want to call up someone who's in college and hasn't served at all? And I think that those are personal decisions that every voter should make and that Congress should then have a healthy debate on and should express that preference.

You know, Congress has stood mute during a lot of this, and I think that a lot of this, as Larry said, needs to be reviewed, if not through a review of that two-year policy, then in each appropriations (activated?).

MR. SHIELDS: Right here. This gentleman with the white shirt.

Q: P. J. Crowley, a fellow here at the Center for American Progress. To Phil, don't we have really a disconnect between the strategy of preemption and the capability of a military force to carry it out? So in favoring a draft, you would be, in essence, advocating for a continuance of the strategy of preemption as opposed to adapting your strategy, funding more nonmilitary dimensions of national power so that you will not overuse your military in future efforts in the war on terror?

MR. CARTER: I think that's a very good point. I think that one of the assumptions we state up front in our article is that if you be – if you want to be the world super power and if you continue on this glide path, then you must adopt a draft.

Now, we advance that argument because that's the direction our country is going in now, and we, you know, take our country as it is, not as we might like it to be.

MR. KORB: Thank you, Mr. Rumsfeld.

MR. CARTER: To adapt – to adapt the secretary. But I think you have to question that assumption, and I think you have to ask yourself again on the demand side, do we want a foreign policy that requires this large of a military and this much military adventurism? It may well be more effective to use the soft power that Joseph Nye talks about or other tools of national power. I think that's a very good point.

MR. KORB: Well, you know, the – Bush put out his national security strategy in September, 2002, so he has not basically funded his own national security strategy, and that's the problem. If you're going to – and it's not just preemption. It's preventive wars which says, you know, nobody is against preemption. If somebody is about to attack you, you don't have to wait. Preventive war basically says, you're going to attack someone who has the capability to do you harm. And that's – boy, you'd better have a much more robust military if you're going to do that.

MR. SHIELDS: Right here. Yeah.

Q: Hi. Dick Class with the Veterans Institute for Security and Democracy. Thirty-two years ago this month, the last American combat troops left Vietnam and the height of the war was probably '67 through '71-'72, so that was only about a five-year period. And that broke the U.S. Army for a decade or longer. Have we reached a point in Iraq that no matter what happens, even if we don't undertake any more adventures or any more unnecessary wars, that – and even if we pulled out of Iraq within the next 12 months that the damage that's been done with stop loss, et cetera, is basically going to haunt us for another five to 10 years?

MR. KORB: Yeah, I think there's a very real possibility of that. If you look at the figures right now as Phil has mentioned and several of the questioners that he talked about, you're having recruiting problems. Retention seems to be holding up pretty well. But when we list stop loss, when people come back again, like the 3rd ID – Third Infantry Division, when it comes back after its second tour, what's going to be the retention rate? Yeah, you really could.

I would say this. You will – when you leave Iraq, the Army that you take out will not be as good as the Army you sent in, and the question is, how less good will it be?

MR. CARTER: Here again, I've got to disagree. I think on balance the Army after Iraq is going to be better than the Army that went in. However, I think that once we leave Iraq for good and you remove that mission that is holding these units and people in, I think we're going to see a serious attrition problem. The junior officers I've talked to, the folks that are likely to get out at the end of their four-year period of service have said that they're staying in because they're committed to the call and they don't want to leave their privates and sergeants led by someone else who they don't trust.

When that mission goes away, I think a lot of them are going to get out because they're not going to want to do PowerPoint briefings and administrative requirements that are the, you know, bailiwick of the peacetime Army. But a lot of people are going to stay in and they're all going to have a patch on their right shoulder, and they're all going to know what it's like to be shot at, and their equipment and their systems are going to be tested. So I think on balance, the Army may be a little bit more ready, but it's going to lose a lot of good people.

MR. KORB: Well, I think it's hard to debate that because you don't know what the retention rate would have been before that. The retention rate was very good before we got into Iraq. So you had a very good retention rate, so a lot of people didn't just serve four years and then leave because there was "no war."

Now, I agree with you in the sense that people may be hanging on, and then they will leave when this is over. But my point was that if you look at the people you're taking in now, they're not as qualified as the people you used to take in, particularly in the enlisted rank. And so, therefore, when this is over you – the people coming up will not be as qualified or, you know, not be as good. And I think that when these people get out because the war ends, a lot of them probably would have stayed if they had not been going through – you know, through Iraq. But I guess we'll have to wait and see on that.

MR. SHIELDS: Right here, front row.

Q: James Joyner, *Strategic Insights*.

MR. SHIELDS: Wait for the mike. It's like – I'm sorry. Would you say it again, James?

Q: I'm sorry. James Joyner, *Strategic Insights*.

Mark, you keep pointing out how this is so much unlike World War II in terms of elite service, but actually in terms of members of Congress there are five of the 535 members of the House and Senate who have children in Iraq right now. Presumably, they have more grandchildren than that and that's a much higher percentage than as society as a whole.

MR. SHIELDS: I disagree. I've called every office. I called every single –

MR. : There was a report in *USA Today* a couple days ago.

(Cross talk.)

MR. SHIELDS: – asked them if they had any relative – any relative. And that was –

Q: It was in *USA Today* like a couple of weeks ago. I'll get you some –

(Cross talk.)

MR. SHIELDS: And there was one. No. Since we went to war, Marilyn Musgrave has been elected. Duncan Hunter's son did join.

Q: Right.

MR. SHIELDS: He's the only one – the only one to the best of my knowledge who has joined since that, the –

Q: Five current members of Congress have –

MR. SHIELDS: – Chair of the Armed Services Committee.

Q: – a child in Iraq right now, which is a much higher percentage than in society.

MR. SHIELDS: Well, the measure was – and I – because I think it's a valid one, is enlisted ranks.

Q: Okay.

MR. SHIELDS: Because 86 percent of the casualties are in the enlisted ranks, as we've just learned.

Q: Right.

MR. SHIELDS: I mean, so, you know, that –

MR. CARTER: Well, I've got to disagree with you here, Mark. I mean, Duncan Hunter's son is a lieutenant in the Marines.

MR. SHIELDS: Yes, he is.

MR. CARTER: I mean, he sees a fair amount of –

MR. SHIELDS: No, no. And I said – and I singled him out. But I mean, I can go through all the people who endorsed this war, thought it was a wonderful war.

MR. CARTER: But look, the larger issue is does Congress need to have its blood on the line to do its job? No. Congress can do its job without having its sons and daughters in harm's way. If Congress exercises meaningful oversight of the executive branch and does their job in accordance with Article I, that's all there is to it.

MR. SHIELDS: I won't argue with you about –

MR. CARTER: I don't –

MR. SHIELDS: – being a captain in the Army. I will argue with you about Congress that when there isn't any accountability, when there isn't any distribution of risk, when there isn't any distribution of peril, it becomes a far more academic and hypothetical argument about going to war. And that's what the case was as we went to war. I don't know if anybody in the room covered the debate in 1991, which I did, before we went to war in the first Persian Gulf. It was a thoughtful, serious, reflective debate. This one was a sham. It was not a serious discussion. It was a rush to war. It was Democrats who were cowed, and it was Republicans who were preening on the verge of an election.

Okay. Yes. Yeah, right behind. I'm sorry.

Q: Simple question. Peter Chepuchavage. I'm a securities lawyer. Do the Iraqis draft people?

MR. KORB: Yeah, they used to have a draft.

Q: No, now.

MR. KORB: Now? No.

MR. SHIELDS: No.

Right there. Right behind him, yeah. This gentleman.

Q: Scott Goodstein with militaryfreezone.org. I appreciate everybody's candid and honest approach on this panel on the realities of a draft. I wish our Congress had the same candid and honest approach to this. Two issues I'd love you to comment on. The first one is the Rangel bill that – and Congressman McDermott from last year on the realities of a draft and talking about the inequities of a poverty draft and an education draft, meaning that most people are actually joining the military for GI bill reasons or hopes of a brighter future.

The second reality that I'd like you to comment on – well, and with that is the October 5th vote that they all took right before the election and basically politically said everything that this panel has not said, which is there's no reality of a draft, and don't worry about it because our election is a (problem?).

The second piece of this question is, the involuntary draft is happening right now – or involuntary recruitment is happening right now with the Now Child Left Behind Act, Section 9528. If you could comment on the fact of students' private information going to military recruiters to try and bump up the numbers and what your thoughts are on that.

MR. KORB: Go ahead. You go first this time. (Laughter.)

MR. CARTER: Okay. Yeah, I think you hit the nail on the head with the Charlie Rangel bill and the vote on October 5th. I mean, you don't have to be a serious scholar of politics to know that any vote on October 5, 2004, is going to be made with an eye on the election of November, 2004. So when I sat on a similar panel with a member of Congress last month, she was very clear that her vote on that bill was absolutely dictated by her need to be reelected four weeks later. And to some extent, the Republicans scheduled it that way, so I don't know that that was necessarily a gauge of congressional sentiment on this issue, and I don't think that they had a good debate on the issue either.

Regarding No Child Left Behind, there was a time when this country used a lot more than just recruiters to bring people in the military and into the service of our country generally. You know, engineering and math departments in every college and university used to be funded by the military and by the Defense Department because we needed engineers to go to work for Boeing and to go to work for other places; wanted to design the satellites and design the planes that would make our nation strong. And, you know, that was part of our grand strategy during the Cold War, which was to bring every element in this country to bear on the war effort.

I think some of that is missing today, and I think that while recruiting at high schools may seem a little untoward, it may be necessary to enlist more parts of society in this effort if we're truly serious about winning because you can't just ask a small cadre of volunteers to do it over and over. Today's burden is deep, but it's not wide. I mean, you have only a few communities in the United States feeling the burden of this war, and I just don't think that's right.

MR. SHIELDS: I agree with him on high school access. I mean, I agree that recruiters ought to be eligible to –

Q: (Off mike.)

MR. SHIELDS: I don't – do I agree on giving out private phone numbers? Not if you don't give them out to anybody else. I mean, I don't – I'm not talking about that, but I do find it objectionable that at certain prestigious high schools there are no recruiters allowed or permitted, and at working-class schools the recruiters are oftentimes the jobs program.

I'd just ask you one question, Captain, and that is the same Congress that postured and pretended on that October 5th vote on the draft, you put all confidence in as far as making foreign policy. That's, I think, interesting. I just wondered where the demarcation line is.

Go ahead, Larry.

MR. KORB: Well, let me say a couple things. I agree with Mark that they should be allowed to go to all the high schools. Now, I don't think you ought to give out private information, but I do think it's wrong for high schools and colleges to bar recruiters. I think they should be there and, you know, kind of let people know what the opportunities are in the military.

I give Charlie Rangel a tremendous amount of credit for bringing it up. I think –

MR. SHIELDS: Fritz Hollings.

MR. KORB: And yeah, that's right. It was Rangel and Hollings – for bringing it up to get it out on the table. In reading some of the stuff that Congressman Rangel has said, I think he overemphasizes just the poor as we try to show the casualties. Not the very rich, but it's not what you might think. It's the very, very poor.

And I think the vote obviously – but, see, there I think where you make this mistake, even though you say “We would prefer not to have a draft, we may not need it,” you cannot say “No.” And that was wrong in the campaign. You can't say “Under no circumstances will I have a draft.” What will you do if there's some more attacks or, you know, China talk – you can't say that. And to me, that's ridiculous.

MR. SHIELDS: Bobby Muller.

Q: Bobby Muller, Alliance for Security. Let's get down to the bottom line. What's the breakpoint? At what point, given the upcoming rotation of troops back and if we sustain the current level of commitment we have, does something have to give?

MR. KORB: Well, that's –

(Cross talk.)

Q: You said a year. Now I'd like to know what Phil's thinking on that.

MR. CARTER: Mid-2006 is the breaking point it – that I see on the horizon. Not so much because of the active force, but because of the Reserves. I think that's where we start to run out of viable Reserve units, and we really start to have to slap together units which at that point are not much better than a conscript unit.

MR. SHIELDS: And our time is expired. We thank you. We thank Captain Phil Carter, Captain Larry Korb, and all the good folks here at the Center for American Progress for bringing this discussion. I hope that you'll continue it wherever you are. Thanks for being with us.

(Applause.)

MR. KORB: Congress should have a debate like this.

MR. SHIELDS: Huh?

MR. KORB: The Congress should debate like this.

MR. SHIELDS: Exactly. Exactly.

MR. KORB: Or the administration.

(Chatter.)

(END)