

Strengthening America through Mandatory Military Service: Helping preserve civil liberty

It is my honor to serve the country as part of the newly elected president's policy team. This position paper is meant to discuss the plan of mandatory military service as proposed by the President of the United States. He has made it a central plank of his program for national renewal of citizens of the United States. The president is proposing that citizens of the United States need to serve in the military one year before the age of twenty-three. The greatness of our nation comes in part from the policies that were instituted by our founding fathers and we can observe common themes of life and liberty. This liberty is not a natural liberty meaning that people are allowed to do anything please but rather a civil liberty. John Winthrop has aptly defined civil liberty as “a liberty to that only which is good, just and honest.”¹ Laws are created to help people do what is good, just and honest.

Firstly, mandatory military service can bring people of diverse backgrounds together. This is a great opportunity for citizens to serve the country together and learn about the sacrifices that brave men and women made for this country. Military service brings people together when dealing with threats from other countries. This can help the civil liberty of this country because civil liberty can only exist in the community. The unification of these people can strengthen the community, leading to the stretching and preservation of civil liberty in America. More knowledge of the military and the country can impact the younger generation by making them more aware and can also inform them as voters of the issues of this country. In today's world fake news is spreading all around the internet, especially through social media and influencing the younger generation to make political decisions.

¹ See John Winthrop's On Liberty

Secondly, military service can serve as a bridge to adulthood. The citizens will be well equipped with skills that are useful in the future. Many skills can be obtained in the military that cannot be obtained anywhere else. For example integrity, teamwork and leadership. When young men learn these skills, it will not only help them in the military, it will help them for the rest of their life. These skills can help the men who are a part of the army in the workplace as they mature. Recently, I had the opportunity to meet Walter Krause, a veteran who served in the Vietnam war who says that the military really taught him how to serve others in the community. He still serves the community many years after serving in the military by volunteering at the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen. He also talked about how the military drafting system used the lottery system, and it made kids from poorer backgrounds fight in the military. However, this proposed draft by the new president makes people from all backgrounds fight in the military making the military process a lot fairer. Although it was hard for him to fight in the army, he is proud of his achievements and all the skills he was equipped with while fighting in the Vietnam War.

Mandatory military service can help the military in terms of numbers. If a war were to break out, the military would have more resources to fight. When the Second Selective Service Act of 1948 was in action, it helped the country because there were too many global commitments for the country. The act was extended because of the Vietnam War and the Korean War. New and dangerous weapons are being made by other countries. We can defend these threats by having a stronger and larger military to improve our national security. However, there are some skeptics of this plan.

Skeptics of the president's proposed plan might say that it violates free will. It is not violating the free will of the citizens, it is helping the future of this country and the national

security and it is also protecting the civil liberty of this country. Civil liberty entails responsibility and it can be their responsibility to serve their country. Furthermore, since the president is proposing a one year term of service, these men can serve and then pursue other interests on completion of the term. The military can also help them choose a career path, especially if these men are unsure of what to pursue. Mrs. Lewis, whose husband served in the military, shared how the military draft helped her husband choose a career after his experiences in the army. As a young twenty year old from a limited educational background Mr. Lewis had very little idea on how to support his family. His service in the military broadened his horizons and he built a successful career as an electrician. Critics would also say that not everyone is fit for service, which is why these men would undergo military training to prepare them for the military. The military can train these men to fight. Furthermore, they will only be serving for one year and if they are not interested in the military, they do not need to serve for a long time.

Mandatory Military Service can have many benefits for the United States of America if executed correctly. This act would consist of drafting anyone regardless of their social status or background. The act can also help men gain respect and honor from fellow citizens. Abraham Lincoln rightly stated , “For it has been said, all that a man hath will he give for his life; and while all contribute of their substance the soldier puts his life at stake, and often yields it up in his country's cause. The highest merit, then, is due to the soldier.”²

² See Abraham Lincoln’s Closing Remarks at Sanitary Fair in Washington D.C.