

A Chance at National Unity

Today we present to you a topic that has the opportunity to enhance our national identity as a cohesive whole and allow us to connect with one another on a deeper level of understanding. C.S. Lewis once said, "There are far, far better things ahead than any we leave behind" and that is what we intend to demonstrate as we go forward with this new proposal from our newly elected president. He has made it the main focus of his candidacy to require that every male citizen serve in any branch of the U.S. military for at least one year before they turn the age of 22. Now, we understand that there will be many questions and concerns pertaining to this new law because it is such a paradigm shift but we can assure you that as we go forward, we will be able answer the majority of those questions in such a way that will allow your mind to be at ease. This change may not be easy, and there are those who will protest against it, but allow us to convince you that this will be for the greater good of our nation.

In an effort to understand the concerns of our people, we spoke with two veterans who served in 1973, the final year of the draft. As we interviewed them, we began to see how greatly military service impacts the people whom we care for the most. Some walk away unscathed and develop more maturity and a better sense of who they are as Americans. One man said, "As my basic training came to an end, I knew the real work would begin. I was nervous in the best way possible, and so unprepared for how it would truly change my life." He spoke about how, after he was honorably discharged, he became more aware of his responsibilities as an American citizen. He acknowledged that there is so much more value in our title as an American, and the sacrifice behind what it takes to give us the free country we live in. As he answered a few of our questions, the topic of how he felt about the unity developed by this conscription came up. Something many countries have fought for is this unbreakable union among their citizens, and we believe that if the majority are able to learn from one another and train together, they would be able to share some experiences, allowing them to relate to each other on a deeper level. They would be able to understand these sacrifices that have to be made, helping them begin to appreciate those who serve our country, forming that unshakable unity.

Later on in the interview, he also mentioned how there are many useful skills gained by those who discipline themselves in the areas they are assigned. Often as people are discharged, they find themselves in jobs similar to their Military Occupational Specialties (MOS). Research shows that the training provided goes beyond what most people assume, they are provided with

some of the highest forms of education that allows them to excel in the areas in which they are placed. They feel a sense of teamwork and responsibility for those whom they are working with, they learn how to better manage stressful situations as they walk through some of the most efficient problem-solving methods. We would also be able to see more equality within the people knowing that everyone, no matter their social class or experiences, has seen and felt what it was like to be in the military. However, there was one thing he was concerned about, and it was how the people would feel as their free will was violated. We were able to see how that would be a problem, but we can also see how easily it could be used for better developing that unity and equality. This would give them something to bond over and not say it was unfair that some were drafted whereas others were not.

As we began to interview our next hero, we chose to select a female even though this new law wouldn't directly involve her. She made a choice to go into the U.S. Navy with a hope to help maintain the active military service. She believed it was a good idea to require a constant flow of people to go in and out of duty, keeping American forces ready to respond quickly if necessary. She also loved the fact that it ensured higher levels of governmental participation, it allowed the citizens to be more tuned-in to the government's actions with the thought of all the young lives at risk. This would allow them to be more concerned with the decisions made, causing them to speak up and have a voice in the voting processes. All this being said, she also worried that not everyone who would serve was actually fit for serving. We asked her if she remembered how placement for the M.O.S. was developed and she said that the majority of soldiers were placed in the assignments which were best suited for them. Not everyone will be on the front lines, there are many positions that are behind the scenes and just as important.

Concluding the interviews, we were able to better understand the concerns of our people and we know there will be some risks involved with this. We also can see the brighter future ahead, the lifelong bonds that will be created and many people finding lifelong careers. We see Americans going out and seeing the world and beginning to actually understand our rights and responsibilities, not just the fact that we are entitled to them. Robert F. Kennedy said, "Since the days of Greece and Rome, when the word 'citizen' was a title of honor, we have often seen more emphasis put on the rights of citizenship than on its responsibilities." This just may be our chance at maximal national unity.