Nixon Legacy Forum Transcript:

Ending the Draft
The Creation of the All-Volunteer Force

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Richard Nixon Presidential Library in Yorba Linda, California

Participants-
Annelise Anderson: Researcher for the Nixon Presidential Campaign (1968)
Martin Anderson: Director of Research for the Nixon Presidential Campaign (1968), Special Assistant to the President (1969-1971)
Jonathan Rose: Special Assistant to the President (1969-1973)
Bernard Rostker (Moderator): Director of the Selective Service System (1979-1981)

Sandy Quinn: Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen and welcome to the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, which has been here 21 years. I am Sandy Quinn, I'm President of the Richard Nixon Foundation. The Foundation works and collaborates side-by-side with the federal government, the National Archives to operate our great institution and to do programming together.

This program, like all of our Nixon Legacy Forums, are co-hosted by the National Archives, so we're proud of that, because the material becomes primary research and is available to everyone - scholars, authors, writers, reporters, and the general public, forever . And we help by putting it on our website, which, by the way, is www.nixonfoundation.org. And you can see this program and all our other programs by checking that website and doing a diligent search and you'll find it. So I'd like to introduce a couple of people, a couple of our board members: one, Jim Cavanagh who is here today with his wife Esther. Jim, please stand.

We have Colonel Jack Brennan. Jack was the Marine Military Aide to the President and later Chief of Staff when he returned to Orange County, Colonel Brennan. We have Hubert Perry, who was a longtime board member here, Hubert. He's now Director Emeritus, fancy title. Hubert and his father were among the President's close friends and Hubert has a distinction of not only helping us at the Foundation for decades, but also of going to Whittier College with President Nixon and

sitting on the bench with him during football, though Hubert says he played, he was quarterback, but I don't believe it.

Thank you Hubert for coming. A couple of other people. Longtime Nixon aide, who was with him almost from the very beginning of his political career and traveled the world with him at his side, Marge Acker. Marge, where are you? Is Loie with you? Is Loie there? Yes, and Loie Gaunt, to the same... She started with President Nixon when he was Senator Nixon.

Even before that. Loie Gaunt. Longtime friends of the family both. And I am delighted to introduce the man who coordinates these very successful series of Nixon Legacy Forums. We've had about 14 of them, we've had them all over the country. We continue them, we're accelerating the program. The next one is February 1 at Stanford University, where we join with former Secretary of State George Schultz, who, in the Nixon White House, was instrumental in implementing the President's plan to desegregate the schools in the South. And he will participate with us along with a distinguished panel on February 1 at the Hoover Institution and if any of you are up there during that time, check our website and please join us.

All of these programs are free. They're open to the public. Most all of them have been covered by C-Span and they become a great archival record of the wonderful things the President did. Most people think of foreign affairs in China. And indeed those were extraordinary accomplishments, but in addition to that was an incredible record in domestic affairs, which gets little note, until Geoff Shepard came along and said, "Why don't we start doing something about this?"

Geoff himself was a Whittier College Nixon Scholar years ago. Richard Nixon gave him the check. He later went to Harvard Law, and after that he became a White House Fellow. And after that he went to work at the White House as Deputy Director of the Domestic Council staff. And our Nixon Legacy Forums for the last two years have focused on domestic affairs.

We're going to start branching out into some other areas, but I thank the good work of Geoff Shepard, who is the Chairman of the Advisory Committee for our Nixon Legacy Forums, a good friend, and a great admirer and loyalist to the 37th President of the United States, ladies and gentlemen, please welcome Geoff Shepard.

Geoff Shepard: Thank you Sandy. Hello and welcome to our Legacy Forum. As Sandy has indicated, I've had the pleasure of helping produce these for a little over two years, and it brings together the people who generated the documents to talk about the documents that are here for researchers, so we have a group of people today who have done other forums and we're thrilled with this one.

And I am thrilled with this one in particular, this has to do with ending the draft and going to the all-volunteer force, because I have very clear memories of what was going on and just to remind you of those days. There's a group of men who were born in the 1940s, and they and the women they loved remember everything, every decision they made when they came of age to key off the effect on the draft.

You had to register when you were 18. I remember there was a rumor of a kid in my high school, Long Beach Wilson, who hadn't registered. And word like that gets around. I went to Whittier College. One of my roommates didn't like the idea of serving, went to Canada. He's still there. I went from college to Harvard Law School and I joined Harvard's ROTC unit.

It was thrown off campus in 1968 because of a vote of the faculty. And none of the college kids were in the ROTC unit, it was all graduate students because you were more subject to the draft if you were in graduate school. And then of course when I graduated from law school, mine was the first class to get J.D.s, doctorates of law.

Before that is was always a Bachelor of Laws. But some draft boards took the position that you already had a Bachelor's degree from college, a B.A., so if you were going for a second Bachelor's degree you weren't making satisfactory progress. Now, we had plenty of people who volunteered to go in the service and served very honorably.

We had plenty of people who didn't know what to do then, but the idea of taking a year off beyond college, before you went to graduate school, that was a non-starter because you wouldn't be making satisfactory process. The idea of switching and going for two masters degrees. At one point if you were married, you had an automatic deferment.

And then a little bit later on you had to have a kid. And so you have this group of people going through life where every social decision there were making kind of keyed off the effect of the draft board, and

some draft boards had more people than others. So you had an unfair situation on top of everything. That's what makes today's forum so interesting, because these are the people who were there at the time who helped the President to end the draft.

I mean, as he was ending the war the need for people came down dramatically, but the draft still hung over everybody's head. And it was from age 18 to age 26. And then they switched from that to the all-volunteer force. And here to moderate that transition, we couldn't have a better individual, Dr. Bernard Rostker, who was head of the Selective Service later on in 79 to 81.

Served in the Army and the Navy in manpower positions, and then finally as Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. He's written, and we'll hear about this during the course of the presentation, the definitive book on ending the draft and going to the all-volunteer force, "I Want You: The Evolution of the All-Volunteer Force."

So, it gives me great personal pleasure and great personal interest to introduce to you today Bernie Rostker, who will introduce our panel. It's good to see you. Bring the panel out with you.

Bernard Rostker: Is the panel coming out now? Please. I have become kind of the self-appointed historian of this period. My involvement really comes after, in terms of managing what these folks brought forward.

In today's presentation. I'm going to set the stage as to the coming of the all-volunteer force and the campaign of Richard Nixon, and then I'll have a few words to say about the beginning of the movement to the All-Volunteer Force during the administration of President Nixon, and then at the end I'll come back and talk a bit about what happened after this period in terms of the success of the all-volunteer force.

Looking back, there were probably five reasons that the country was right to move to an all-volunteer force in the early 1970s. First, the norm through American history was a volunteer force. Previously we had had a federal draft only during the Civil War, World War I, World War II, and then during the early years of the Cold War. The second was the size of the population had grown so substantially that there were very many more people who were in the pool of eligibles than the country needed, and that led to a great dilemma and was caught in the title of one of several commissions that reviewed the status of

selective service in the draft, and they had a report which was titled "Who Serves When Not All Serve?" Third was the Vietnam War, which had grown very unpopular and because of the increased draft calls during the war, the draft which many men had been able to avoid now became an essential feature of their lives. Fourth was what one historian had called a rational and intellectual basis for a volunteer force, and that was provided by the economist Milton Friedman, who told the American population that it was morally correct not to serve. And finally, because of Vietnam, the Army had lost faith in the draft and was ready for a change.

So, let me give you a sense of, before Vietnam how the draft had really become less of a problem for most Americans. In 1962, we drafted only seventy-six thousand young men. We had four hundred and thirty thousand draft-eligible men who had education or occupational deferments, and additionally there was 1.3 million who had been deferred because of paternity. On September 10, 1962, President Kennedy extended those deferments to anyone who was married. There was strong support for selective service.

It was reauthorized every four years. But in 1964, presidential candidate Barry Goldwater expressed his intention to eliminate the draft. President Johnson responded with a DOD study, a Defense Department study, on the draft and before that could come out, the Vietnam War heated up and the Defense Department took a strong position that a volunteer force was unfeasible and the cost would be prohibitive.

In 1967, Richard Nixon, then a candidate for the Republican nomination for President, named Martin Anderson, who at the time was an associate professor of Business at Columbia University, as his director of research. And in April, Martin sent Nixon a memorandum arguing for an all-volunteer force. He prepared a more extensive memorandum in July. It was entitled, "An Analysis of the Factors Involved in Moving to an All-Volunteer Force." And we have to discuss that campaign, that memorandum, Martin and his wife Annelise. And I turn it over to you.

Annelise Anderson: Okay.

Bernard Rostker: I will return at the end of the discussion of the campaign to set the stage for the administration and then return at the end of the discussion to talk about what happened after 1973.

Annelise Anderson: Thank you Bernie. In December '66 it really all began. Martin was teaching at Columbia University at the business school, and he and I were invited as guests of another faculty member at the business school, and another of their guests was George Anderek and his wife. George Anderek was a young man who had been hired by Nixon's law firm.

And during the dinner, Marty and George Anderek got into discussions of politics. Marty was arguing, as I recall, that Richard Nixon would be the best Republican candidate to be nominated and win the election in '68, and George Anderek said, "Well with views like that, you ought to be working for Nixon himself, for my boss." And we left the dinner and nothing happened for a few days and then Len Garment, who was a partner in Nixon's law firm, called Martin.

Martin got this telephone call and Leonard Garment said, "Why don't you come down and talk about this? We've heard that you're a professor at Columbia and that you have some views that are consistent with those of Richard Nixon." So Martin was intrigued and he took the subway down to Wall Street and started meeting with a group that included Len Garment and Pat Buchanan, John Sears, Ray Price, and Alan Greenspan.

And they would meet about once a week at the law firm and talk about the issues and the policies that Nixon ought to be focusing on as he developed plans for his presidential campaign, which hadn't really even begun. In 1967, March 1967, at one of this group's regular meetings, they brought up the issue of the military draft and what position Nixon might take on this. What should his position be in the campaign? Should he stay with the idea of universal military training? That's what Eisenhower had been for and Nixon had supported that position, or should he propose changes to the current draft system, which was getting extremely unpopular, given Vietnam and the seven year window of vulnerability under which it placed people.

And Martin was familiar with the debate about the draft and had just finished reading an article by Milton Friedman that summed up the arguments in favor of ending the draft. And so nobody thought, that sat around that group, that universal military training was a particularly attractive idea to present in a campaign, but Nixon obviously needed something new if he was not going to support the position that he'd been supporting for 15 years.

So Martin offered to put together a paper on ending the draft. The group was skeptical. They didn't think this was such a great idea, but a few weeks later the paper was finished and then a more detailed paper, July 4, 1967, was presented to Nixon, giving the pros and cons of ending the draft.

Nixon read it, he said it was very interesting, and nothing happened. A while later, it turned out that Nixon had been very interested in this and had sent out about 30 copies for comment to his friends in the military and political world. And during the four months following July, he got comments were coming back.

Still, Martin didn't hear anything. And then on November 17, 1967, Nixon was returning to New York City from Washington on an Eastern Airlines shuttle and Marty was with him, he had been on that trip, and the other person who was with him was Robert Semple, who was a young reporter from the New York Times who had been assigned to Nixon's campaign, which wasn't considered real top priority then.

So Robert Semple was a relatively junior reporter, and he and Marty switched seats so he could sit next to Richard Nixon on a plane and started asking him questions, went through all kinds of issues, and then said, "Well, what do you think, what would you do about the military draft?" And Nixon smiled and said, "I think we should eliminate the draft and move to an all-volunteer force." Nixon proceeded to elaborate that idea and that was the conclusion of the paper that Martin had presented to him. And there he was, making that public, and the story ran on the front page of the New York Times, that Nixon held this position on the military draft, and he elaborated it and explained why he favored doing so. And it had taken four months, but there it was.

During the campaign, Nixon did not make the draft a major issue. He didn't give a major speech on it, at least not until October. And by the time October 1968 came, the polls were showing that Nixon and Hubert Humphrey, who had received the nomination after Johnson withdrew, were extremely close, and Nixon decided on a policy blitzkrieg and he called a staff meeting and announced that he intended to make ten policy speeches, one a day for ten days, on new issues, and they would be on the radio and he asked for suggestions. And the staff is pretty tired at this point and it was hard to come up with ten new things to do. And after a few suggestions, Martin said, "Why don't we do one on the draft?" And Nixon looked around and

said, "Do I hear any objections? Is that all right?" And nobody said anything and so he said, "Fine, let's do it. Next issue."

And so on October 17th, Nixon gave a CBS radio address, nationwide, on the draft. And that's in, it was later published in a book that he put out of his speeches that he very much wanted to put out during the campaign. And so that, that was really the major public communication of the idea.

Ray Price wrote the draft and he and Martin worked on it, Nixon edited it and worked on it also, and early in the speech Nixon said, "We have lived with the draft so long that too many of us now accept it as normal and necessary. I say it's time we took a new look at the draft, at the question of permanent conscription in a free society." And he ended the speech with these lines: "So I say it's time we looked to our consciences. Let's show our commitment to freedom by preparing to assure our young people theirs." So that's basically the campaign story.

Martin Anderson: Yeah. Let me just add a couple of things.

Annelise Anderson: Okay.

Martin Anderson: Because there were a lot of things that happened. One of the fascinating things was that he was the only one who wanted to do it. Well, I had a lot of friends and really good people at what they were doing. But they took one look at what I was doing and what the President was doing and they didn't want to do it.

And we just watched that coming along. And then toward the end, it was very close at that time. People haven't paid much attention to it, but he was very very quiet. In fact, he probably thought he was going to lose. And they kept going back, and then the interesting thing that came out there was, "I'll say one here I'll pass this around." One of the things that he did, he stood up and he said, "You know, I've been doing the right thing, I've been doing things that no one has said to me was really terrible." And I talked to him and said, "Well, you know we should look at the service and what we want to do."

And he said, "Yes, that's exactly what I want to do. I want to see if anyone can tell them what we have been doing. We've been doing wonderful things." And Annelise went to get this and you were...and two other people if I remember right. And what they had done, they

only had about 15 times. It was all over. This book came done. They, this book filled by ten years...

Annelise Anderson: Well, there are in this, what Nixon asked for, he said, "I want a book that summarizes my position on the issues." And he said, "I have taken positions on over 200 issues." So we had the research staff, oh 200, we know what the assignment is.

Martin Anderson: When he took them, he waited. It was 7 days, which is amazing that he had written the whole thing in that time.

Annelise Anderson: He got the book. We obviously used excerpts from things he had said before. We weren't writing any new positions. This was Nixon's book, Nixon's words. So, we have foreign, domestic policy, all together, something like 227 issues, including something on the military draft.

Martin Anderson: Except for one thing. Then he said alright when he heard about it, it was good. And we brought it in with him. And he looked around and he took one look at it and said, "That's terrific. It's exactly what I've done and we will do that." And he told me to put it on, put it on top of everybody that was using it.

"Drop it on them," he said, "Okay, go ahead." And these people were after him. They were going after him because he couldn't do it. He took one look and they looked at it and it went very quiet.

Annelise Anderson: So the press, the press all got a copy.

Martin Anderson: The press walked away, and they only had about twenty, how much time was it now? It was very close.

Annelise Anderson: Well, it came out on October 17th or 18th was when the press got it. We had only had the assignment for about five or six days. So it was done very quickly.

Martin Anderson: Then what he did, he was sitting there, he said, "Alright, that's terrific. I want to do another one." And we nearly died on that one because we were supposed to do it again and he did it again and this is the other book he did before everything happened.

Annelise Anderson: Before the election. And this is major speeches, including the speech on the military draft that he gave on October 17th on CBS radio. So those are... and that basically stopped the

press, which was claiming that he hadn't taken any positions on any issues. And we knew he had and so did he.

Martin Anderson: We knew that, but we didn't know how he was going to do because he was very quiet. And all I can remember now is that on 31, he won and so did the other people. And it was dead front. He just barely made it. And he did. And just as he won the whole little thing. Then it became us and we can talk about that, but that was one of the main things that he did when he came in, he was going to do it.

And what we found out, rapidly, a lot of people didn't want to do it. They did not want him to go out, they didn't want him to be there. He shouldn't do it. Stop it. And the one person that hadn't was him. And basically what he said was, "Look," he said, "This is what I'm going to do." And everybody just looked down.

Now what happened to this place when nobody paid much attention to it? He talked to him, I talked to him, and we had done everything except there was nobody that wanted to do it. And he said that, you know, and basically what he said was, and I was talking to him, that he couldn't get people to do it. So he ordered this idea that what he will do, he will try to do it.

We'll have a book for him. And we put in. We get fifteen people, that'll work for him and will take him there, the whole idea.

Bernard Rostker: Let me set the stage then for this transition to...

Martin Anderson: By the way, he knows it better than anyone in many ways. Go ahead.

Bernard Rostker: Let me set the stage then for this transition. So Richard Nixon is elected president on November 5th. And five days after the inauguration, January 25, 1969, there's a meeting of the National Security Council. And as part of that meeting, the major part of the meeting was the Vietnam War, but as part of that meeting, there's a discussion about two issues that are interrelated. One is the reform of the Selective Service system, the draft, and the other was the possibility of moving to an all-volunteer force. The Administration, in effect, was selecting a dual strategy. They would try to reform selective service and if the final decision was not to go to an all-volunteer force, they would have that.

And they would set the groundwork for an all-volunteer force that could replace selective service and the draft. So President Nixon directed Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird to begin immediately, and I'm quoting from a memorandum, "To begin immediately to plan a special commission to develop a detailed plan of action for ending the draft."

I would say Laird was less than enthusiastic about doing this. He felt that he had a war to win and that this could be a distraction. And so he sent back to the President a memorandum which said, well, this is a good idea, but Defense had started to study it and he'd let the President know what the results of that DOD study would be when it was finished in about a year.

Martin Anderson: Could I ask one more question on this subject. That's a fascinating one. He told Reagan...Nixon. Nixon. He did not want to do it. He wanted to get it done and he wanted those fifteen to go on. We did something that no one had ever done, we said that fifteen of the people were really good. They wanted to do it. The other fifteen said, "No. We don't wanna do it."

Annelise Anderson: Five –five- five- in fact. It was 15 altogether.

Martin Anderson: In there was that we don't know what we're going to do. And they went on for 1 year and they went back and forth and they argued back and forth and they did the damnedest thing, as to what they were doing and how they were gonna do it and where we're gonna do it and then, at the end, he won.

Bernard Rostker: Well, let me set that stage. So on February 6, Nixon again wrote to Laird and he said he was going to set up a commission, which Martin will talk about in some more detail. And that became the Gates Commission. And he would be happy to have Secretary Laird read and advise him after the commission was over as to what his views on the commission were.

In other words, he told Secretary Laird, if you don't want to do it, I'll do it myself, and I'll take it out of your hands. And so that's how it progressed, but there was another part to this and that was the issue of the draft. And so the second part of reforming selective service fell to the staff. A major consideration was how to deal with the long serving Director of Selective Service, General Lewis Hershey.

And that fell to Jonathan Rose who was on the White House staff, and Jonathan will talk about that dual strategy and how he and his colleagues addressed the reform of selective service, and then the replacement of General Hershey, all of this occurring in 1969, 1970, 71. And then I come along at the end of the decade and actually became the Director of Selective Service responsible for building a standby draft, which was one of the mechanisms that was recommended by the Gates Commission.

So why don't we talk about the….

Jonathan Rose: Why don't I pitch in on the year of '69 because Marty was the keeper of the flame to get the all-volunteer force done, get the commission appointed, give Nixon ownership of it, and Nixon and Marty drove that through. Marty is also right that there was a whole group in the White House and in the Congress and in the selective service that thought, A, this was a distraction; B, they weren't sure they were for a volunteer force at all, and C, they kinda like things the way they were.

And that's where we kind of came in April of that year. You'd wonder why Pete Flannigan, who was the deputy campaign manager, ends up with Selective Service reform on his plate. Well, it was an office I used to call "of the miscellaneous" because we had White House high level personnel appointments and we had also things ranging from NASA to the Federal Communications Commission to selective service, and this was sort of the first up problem that we had.

And obviously people realized that the first job was to see what you could do with regard to reforming selective service because Nixon also saw that as a short-range matter, the long-range goal was to get rid of this entire system, but the short-range goal was if you're going to have it, at least have a system that seemed fair to people and equitable and not as capricious and arbitrary with deferments and some people serving, some people not, and no particular rationale as to why some were chosen and not others.

And that rapidly led that same National Security Council meeting where they decided to go for the volunteer force, they also adopted as an interim measure the goals of the Marshall Commission that Johnson had appointed to get rid of the deferment system - students, fathers, all of the kind of patchwork set of deferments and to have a national lottery that would expose people for one year at a fairly early stage so they could determine whether they were going to be drafted or not

and then get on with their lives, because the fact was the system as it was constituted was turning up about four times as many people as was needed and the way the Hershey regime got rid of them was to give them deferments and, on any kind of a basis, basically excuse people, whereas Nixon's idea was that we ought to let the people know who were going to have to serve and on a rational basis, let the people know who weren't going to have to serve. And that let us into a series of things in '69, while Marty was pushing through the consensus of the Gates Commission on the volunteer force, which is a whole story in and of itself, we were having to deal with the fact of... First, Kissinger and Al Haig, who were very much in the center of the national security scene, and Laird, all were somewhat suspicious and worried about exactly how all this was going to work, but finally Laird came back with the notion that you're not going to really get anything done here unless you push for it, Mr. President, all out.

And this was before he could get the volunteer army, he had to get his draft reform, and in order to do that he had to get legislation from Congress because they had put in the draft law by this time that you couldn't go to a national lottery, that the President couldn't implement that without specific congressional authorization. And Hershey tried to muck up the situation by saying, well yeah, we can come up with a more random way of doing this, but it would've been just a different, equally confused system and the more he tried to explain it, the less any of us could understand it.

And at the same time, there was this sense among the White House staff and Laird himself that the Defense Department was getting stuck with Hershey's image and the whole selective service system was being viewed as an arm of DOD, when in fact it was being run by Hershey rather independently. And he, of course, had a great relationship with a bunch of characters that people here probably don't remember, but Mendel Rivers, Eddie Abear, who were leaders in the House Armed Services Committee, and Senator John Stennis, Richard Russell in the Senate, and Margaret Chase Smith was another one. All of whom had severe doubts about, there were a group of Republicans that thought a volunteer force was a great idea, but these other people thought the volunteer force probably was not such a great idea.

And also, draft reform was a questionable thing in their minds. So it took a lot of pushing, and Laird, I think, has to be given a fair amount of credit for getting the legislation through in the fall of 1969 that permitted us to go to a lottery, but that was to be administered still by Mr. Hershey.

Hershey was another problem, which was a separate problem, and in the middle of that whole legislative fight, Bryce Harlow, who was the head of the legislative unit in the White House said to me, "Well, John, you got a perfectly simple problem here, all you have to do is remove Lewis Hershey." And I thought well that was akin to firing J. Edgar Hoover or something of that sort and about as equally simple.

And I happened to be out in San Clemente and I was told I should tell this story, but I was in a men's room out in the Western White House, standing next to Bob Haldeman, and I said, "Bob, you know Bryce Harlow's solution for solving this whole problem of getting the lottery implemented is just to fire Lewis Hershey.

He said, "Well you know, Johnny, you should tell Bryce that's a great idea and he should implement it." And it took, it actually took us from October, when a meeting was held with the President and Pete Flanigan and General Hershey in which he was told he was going to be promoted to Manpower Mobilization Advisor and removed as Director of the Selective Service, til the following February to get him actually, in fact, removed.

And it also cost Secretary Laird a fourth star, and he and the Army nearly gagged over that, giving General Hershey a fourth star, but he was finally removed. And I also found, simultaneously, at the same time, a man named Bill Hopkins, who probably none of you have heard of, but he was in the White House since Calvin Coolidge's time.

He came up and showed me a memorandum from Jack Valente to Lyndon Johnson, and it was called RE: Removal of General Lewis B. Hershey. And the suggestion was, what you have to do is appoint him to a high powered advisory post and give him a fourth star. So this was not a new idea apparently, but in any event it did get implemented, the legislation got passed, and then that winter, December 1st, I think, 1969, we had the lottery. And contrary to the ideas of a lot of people who wanted a truly random lottery to be held, Hershey insisted that what we had to do was go back to World War II and have the huge fishbowls out there with balls in them, and the balls would be drawn out for the particular months and days that were going to be drafted in the order in which people would be drafted.

Well, it turned out that the drawing was held, but it was rapidly proven by a lot of statisticians that the drawing was not random because the balls had not been inserted randomly, and the fact of stirring them

around a few times with a paddle didn't make them random. So we got, kind of laughed out of the park for the way we had run the lottery to start with.

And then the lottery itself got superimposed on this entire Selective Service System that General Hershey presided over of local boards, which some of you may remember, where each local board ended up with a quota of people it had to deliver each month. And for the first month or so while we were trying to figure out, sort of shell-shocked, what was going on, we had local boards drafting people from number one to number 360 depending on who they had available to go.

They didn't pay any attention to the fact that drafting somebody at 360 in the first month of the year made the idea of a lottery look ludicrous, so we had a public relations problem and a general problem of administration, which we only managed to solve by virtue of the National Security Council getting into it with us.

And we finally with defense, got a system established whereby, we got a team of people over to Selective Service to figure out what was going on, and then we established national ceilings of numbers that could be called and got the agreement of the Defense Department to accept the fact that they were going to get under deliveries in particular months, because we would only go to number 10 in February say, and nobody above that could be drafted by any local board and that's kind of how we solved that problem. And meantime Marty was working with the Gates Commission and he can tell you about that.

Martin Anderson: Yeah Let me just say that what they have said is really tremendous, as to how often it happened. The main person that did it was Reagan... Nixon! He's the one who did it. It wasn't me and it wasn't these other people.

We had different ways of doing it and how it was going. He is the one that wanted it done. And towards the end, they didn't say a word, they just went ahead and they did it. Now one of the things that happened, I'm looking back on it now, what 40 years. And virtually everyone loves it now, the people who are doing it.

Annelise Anderson: Yeah, I think that a significant part of the Gates Commission was the way Martin advised Nixon to set it up so there were five people for the draft, five opposed, and five who were neutral. And we had some very strong people like Milton Friedman and

Alan Greenspan who were opposed to the draft and had written articles about it and spoken about it and so forth.

A couple of generals, Lewis Norstad and Gruenther, I think his name was, who were very definitely opposed to the draft. There were other people who were considered people of integrity and thoughtfulness, who were good analysts, but who were neutral on this issue, and hadn't decided. Mel Laird - after Nixon told Mel Laird that this commission would report to Richard Nixon, to the President, and not to the Secretary of Defense.

But he asked Mel Laird who he thought ought to be chairman and Tom Gates was one of the people at the top of Laird's list, according to Bernie's history.

Martin Anderson: And we did just one thing. We actually did this. So we'll pass this around. But this is what everybody got.

Annelise Anderson: Right. That came out after the commission and it was widely published.

There was also a paperback. So, Nixon and Marty and Gates met, and Gates said, Gates had been Secretary of Defense and Nixon wanted him to chair this commission, and he said, "Mr. President, you don't want me. I'm not a supporter of the all-volunteer force, I'm opposed to it." And Nixon said, "Tom, that's exactly why I want you, because I know that if you decide it's a good idea, that then it really will be a good idea."

And so this Commission went to work and there was a lot of opposition. There's one famous exchange in which one of the generals who was opposed to...

Martin Anderson: You shouldn't tell them that one. (laughter) Go ahead.

Annelise Anderson: Well, I guess not. I think though Bernie says it's in the paper so, that actually there are minutes of these things.

Annelise Anderson: Go ahead, go ahead.

And so, the general says to Milton Friedman, "I don't want to have to fight a war with your mercenaries." And Milton Friedman comes back and says, "Well, General, I don't want to fight a war with your slaves."

And so this is sort of the conflict that an all-volunteer force would be mercenaries, of course many of them were already volunteers, and then otherwise they were unjustly forced to serve the United States through conscription.

And finally, in February 1970 this group reported, we have a picture and I think that there's a picture of the group reporting with Alan Greenspan and the generals and all the rest of them and Marty's there in the background right against the window there. And Nixon already had underway, the report of the commission was unanimous in favor of an all-volunteer military, and the report to the Congress was already being written because that was what Nixon wanted to do, and of course, he knew what they were going to advise him.

And so they proceeded to do it, and it took, the Vietnam War was winding down, which had been one of Nixon's purposes. The number of people drafted declined steadily and draft calls reached zero in January 1973, and in July 1, 1973, the authority to draft, induction authority expired. And there was no more draft, and there hasn't been since then, we've had an all-volunteer military.

Bernard Rostker: The vehicle for bringing forth the all-volunteer force was a series of pay increases. The Gates Commission had analyzed the labor market and had determined that they believed it was feasible within reasonable budgetary costs to increase wages, first term pay, and that this would be the basis for the all-volunteer force.

And so as, between 1970 and 1973 there were a series of pay increases and it was the response to the pay increases that allowed the increase in accessions, and six months before the draft was to expire, it was clear that they were making their numbers, and for the last six months no one was called. So, the notion was that people would respond to a fair and equitable wage and would find this acceptable, and that that's in fact what happened.

I would be less than candid to tell you that it was all smooth sailing It was not. A volunteer force is very fragile. It requires a great deal of attention. And I served in the Carter administration in the late 1970s and the situation became very precarious, so that by the end of the 1970s President Nixon actually wrote, "Now, seven years later, I have reluctantly concluded that we should reintroduce the draft.
The volunteer army has failed to provide enough personnel at the caliber we needed." And that was Mr. Nixon's judgement in 1980.

Within ten years, concerted effort by the Reagan administration, several pay raises that went into effect at the end of the Carter administration, but took their effect during the Reagan administration, resulted in a volunteer military that went to war in the Gulf. And the performance of the military in war in the Gulf was so superb that almost no one who had argued for a continuation of the draft just a decade earlier would make that argument. The generals and admirals to a man became great supporters of the all-volunteer force. The harshest critic in the Congress was Senator Sam Nunn, and he became a supporter of the all-volunteer force.

Now, the next great test of the volunteer force came after 9/11 when we went to war in Iraq. One of the members of the Gates Commission, Tom Curtis had written to the chairman, Mr. Gates at the time, and said "I'm now convinced you could have a volunteer force in peace time. But I can never imagine that we could have a volunteer force going to war." And that's why in the succeeding years, it was important to have a standby draft, which I was charged with building and managing in 1979 and 1980.

Well, we in fact went to war, two wars, and we've been in those wars for longer than any military conflict in our history, and the superb performance of our military is directly related to the volunteer force. I will tell you as the end of the Clinton administration, I was the Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and I will tell you that the quality of the force is better than we ever had it before. We don't necessarily have the top of the top, but those were the people who got deferments in previous years. We truncated the bottom. We'd take effectively no one who's not a high school graduate, no one who does not score roughly a 90 IQ or above, it is a cut above the American population as a whole, but representative racially and regionally of the broad middle class.

Vietnam, we had a retention rate of about 15% of first-termers decided to stay.
Today, we have a retention rate that is between fifty and sixty percent. It is a career oriented force. We've reduced training costs, but we have paying more because they are careerists. And it is the most professional force that exists in the world today, or has ever existed as a volunteer force.

So, the efforts that these gentlemen started have come, now, to fruition in a military that you can be proud of and our soldiers are proud of, and you can see it in their decisions to reenlist and to stay.

So we can look back now over 40 years of great accomplishment that really started with President Nixon's personal commitment to move the country to an all-volunteer force.

So, I think we have time for questions.

Sure, go ahead.

Audience Question: I really appreciate your candor. I was a member of the armed forces in the late seventies, and it was pretty bad. And one thing I noticed that was common, and it was kind of a back door draft in a way, is a lot of guys who would like have problems with criminal records, and the judge will give the choice: "You can go in the military." So I was serving with some people who might have ended up in jail if they hadn't served, and that was no good for the force.

Bernard Rostker: In the late seventies, we had a technical problem, which was we had a screening test that was wrong. I was in the administration at the time. We thought we were bringing in quality and we really weren't. And the cost of the volunteer force had risen so that during the inflation after Vietnam, President Carter was trying to hold the budget and we let wages slip.

By the end of his administration, he finally agreed to increase wages. There were two large wage increases that went into effect, one at the end of the Carter administration, one at the beginning of the Reagan administration, and that carried the Reagan administration through an inability to increase quality at the same time as we were trying to rebuild the force.

And the fruits of that are seen in 1990 during the first Gulf War. But you're exactly right. It was a... We didn't plan on building an inferior force, but it was an inferior force, and we recognize that now in hindsight. And we improved the GI Bill with the Montgomery GI bill. We brought that back as a major factor to improve the quality of our people. You are exactly right.

Annelise Anderson: I think that Ronald Regan also, and his Secretary of Defense Cap Weinberger, had an extremely strong commitment to the all-volunteer force, and not only were willing to go to Congress and get the pay raises, but also the morale of the armed services because Reagan was so supportive of their role and what they were doing and it made a difference. I think it makes a difference.

Nixon made difference in his commitment to what he wanted and to seeing it through and to effectively strategizing it, and so did Ronald Reagan and Cap Weinberger.

Bernard Rostker: A little story that goes with that, one of the people who was most negative during your period of time was Alexander Haig, who was a aide to Henry Kissinger, and Kissinger was not in favor of it.

During the Reagan administration, Haig is now Secretary of Defense and went around the country bad-mouthing the all-volunteer force. And when that got back to Secretary Weinberger, he wrote a handwritten note to Secretary Haig, first of all a handwritten note in Washington is a big trumpet. You're saying something in capitals. And it said, "Here are the facts, and by the way, if you have anything more to say about the all-volunteer force, why don't you talk to me first?"

Which was a way of telling Haig to shut up.

Jonathan Rose: We've got a question over here and we should get to it, but I wanted to add on the... just tell you what Marty was facing in the Nixon administration. I would go down to talk to Al Haig at night a lot about our problems with Hershey and the lottery and the draft, and Kissinger really didn't know me, nor did he really seem to know who Marty was because he kept confusing me with Marty Anderson.

Martin Anderson: That's true.

Jonathan Rose: And every time I would go down to the basement to go the NSC to talk to Haig, Kissinger would walk by and say, "Oh, here comes the volunteer Army again." So that gives you some idea of the attitude he was facing. Go ahead, sir, you.

Audience Question: Sir, ma'am, I served during the Vietnam War as a commissioned officer. I was not drafted, but I had ample experience in serving with drafted men under both Presidents Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon. Today, as a veteran, I function as a service officer for my American Legion post and I come into contact with the needs and issues of many members of the volunteer armed services. I certainly do not disagree that the volunteer force is extremely well trained, perhaps the best military we've ever put in the field. And with the fifty percent retention rate, that is remarkable. But my question to you sir is, I want to follow up on a comment that Secretary of Defense Gates

made last year when he retired. And Secretary Gates said, "The burden of war is upheld by one percent of the United States population." That is, only one percent of the American public participates in our armed services. Considering, considering that statistic, and considering the redeployment of our troops four, five, and I've met some even more times than that, to the war zones of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Annelise Anderson: Okay, what is your question?

Audience Question: The question is, do you not think the United States would be better served if all of our youth had the opportunity, were given the opportunity to serve in the armed services, that is bring back the draft.

Bernard Rostker: Let me answer that because it's kind of contemporary and I had to deal with that as Undersecretary. First of all, all of American youth have the opportunity to serve as volunteers.

Second, I would not have much of an objection if we had universal service as we really had in World War II. But our requirement is so low that any form of conscription becomes a crapshoot, a lottery. It's not equal sacrifice. It's not equal service. It's like going to Las Vegas and taking a gamble. And I don't know how, I was the director of selective service, how to explain to a young man that his life is in danger because of a lottery number, not equal service to his compatriots, his friends who stay at home.

So that's one answer. The second answer is, those who went 4 and 5 and 6 times, were all volunteers. They reenlisted to go. Our reenlistment rates in Army units were 110, 120% of goals. They could have gone home if they wanted to, but they are professional soldiers and going to war is what they did and what they do and they choose to stay, they are not forced to stay.

If we had a volunteer force, it would be a high turnover force, it would be a much more expensive force in terms of training, but it also would be an inferior force in terms of experience, because the soldier who goes twice and three and four times is much more expert in his tasks than the soldier who is going for the first time, and has to learn and often learning is cause, is the result of increased mortality.

So I appreciate the argument, but the math doesn't work, given where we are and the size of our population today and the technical nature of military today.

Annelise Anderson: I'd just like to mention also that one of the things that's very important in supporting our volunteer military are our reserve units and the National Guard, so that they are what are trained and are ready to go when the number of people who are actually on duty at the time, isn't that right Bernie, are not adequate, and we've used a lot of reserves and National Guard in the last several years. A lot of pressure on them.

Bernard Rostker: In the last ten years we have integrated the National Guard and the reserves into the normal rotations.

Martin Anderson: You're right.

Bernard Rostker: The old argument was, they join the National Guard and now you're surprising them that they have to go to war. There isn't a person in the National Guard today that that argument holds for. Might have hold in 1990. It didn't hold in 2000, certainly doesn't hold today. You don't join the National Guard without the expectation that you will go to war.

You've chosen to go to war in a occupational structure that brings you home, and you stay at home for a number of years, and you go back to work. They are all volunteers. We have built a true total force of part-time soldiers and full-time soldiers that are fully integrated.

Jonathan Rose: You also haven't mentioned the women that have been added to the...We are the...

Martin Anderson: That's a good point

Bernard Rostker:...huge employer of women.

Martin Anderson: That's true, absolutely.

Bernard Rostker: Twenty percent of the force today are made up of women. If there's any category that has made the all-volunteer force work, it is women and women support it in two ways. They support it both as members and they support it as spouses to members, and

women and the family-friendly nature of the military today, compared to what it was before, is quite a remarkable transition.

Martin Anderson: Yep. Go ahead.

Audience Question: I like this man's concern. It's based on Bob Gates and his experience. And my experience is like Long Beach Wilson over here, Whittier kid, who also was avoiding the draft. I graduated from high school in '64, avoided the draft with two S college and then National Guard service. And my friends, who most of them went to Vietnam, came home, helped to end the war, veterans, because they saw the imperial presidency of Lyndon Johnson, mostly.

Just putting these kids into a meat grinder. And so there is an aspect that I understand he's saying that takes away the private army of a President if you have a forced draft, but obviously I love the interchange, I've never heard the quote, Gates to Friedman? Was that the quote?

Annelise Anderson: No, it wasn't Gates, it's a different general.

Bernard Rostker: It was a different general.

Annelise Anderson: It's a different general.

Audience Question: I never heard that.

Annelise Anderson: I don't know right now which one it was.

Audience Question: But nonetheless, I don't want your mercenary force fighting my war, I don't want your slaves fighting my war, is a genius interchange. And so how do you balance out then this well-trained, well-focused, well-financed force to not become basically a private army that doesn't have a political responsibility to a broader base?

Annelise Anderson: Well, I think a political responsibility, first of all, is the voters and who they support in primaries and elections. I don't think you look to your military to do your political work. That's not their job.

Bernard Rostker: The world has changed. When the United States went to an all

-volunteer force, we were an anomaly in Western Europe. Only England effectively was a volunteer force. And that represents a great split between the Anglo-American tradition and the Continental tradition that you had an obligation to serve.

The height of that tradition was France. And France today has a volunteer force. They had the same problems we had. When the French could afford a conscription of less than six months, the Generals finally said, no, no, we have to go to a volunteer force. The French could not mount a effective combat force for the first Gulf War because they were mired with draftees that could not be assigned out of metropolitan France.

And so today, effectively every European country has a volunteer force, with the exception of Germany. They are moving towards it, but they have a huge portion of alternative service rather than military service. So, the norm has become the professional volunteer force, also heightened by the great technology.

You can't draft somebody for six months or a year and expect them to become proficient in the systems that we have today. So I'm very sensitive to the claim, but the times are so different than they were of the mass army and the conscripted army to support the country that it becomes really infeasible.

Geoff Shepard: We could go on all afternoon, we could go on all month talking about the tradeoffs and the changes. I want to thank the panelists for their discussion, but before I let you go, I want to talk about a different revolution just for a second. This is Bernie's book. Bernie wrote the definitive book on the draft from the Selective Service in 2006.

And you can get it, if you'd like to wade through it, from Rand at rand.org, but what's so intriguing is about how Bernie did it, because he collected all of the documentation, a massive amount, all the way back to Marty's first thoughts, and back to the election, everything involving Richard Nixon and bringing it up to date. And then he put in the back of the book, a DVD. And this is 2006, and what's so intriguing - it's almost a view to the future.

If you look at the electronic version of his book, and he mentions the Gates report, or somebody in, a member of the Gates report, and you click on it, it gives you the report, or it gives you the biography of the individual that was involved, and we think that's perfectly normal

today because you can do that in Wikipedia anytime you want, but Bernie developed it in 2006 and for back then, it's revolutionary.

And you see these germs, we're talking about germs of other ideas up here. But that's what happened with Rand's technology and the desire to enable people to do a book electronically. A little vignette for how things happen. This is whatever the count is on our Legacy Forums, as Sandy mentioned we have one on February 1st at Stanford, on peaceful desegregation of Southern schools, we have one planned roughly once a month throughout 2012.

Some will be in Washington, DC. Some will be back here. We're doing one on restoration of rights for Native Americans in May in Tulsa, Oklahoma. But you can go on the website and you can see these, we thank you for coming, we appreciate your interest and your support. Have a pleasant afternoon.