

Text 1

FARLEY: Mr. President, since we continue to police the world, how do you intend to maintain our military presence without reinstituting a draft?

BUSH: Yes, that's a great question. Thanks. I hear there's rumors on the Internets (sic) that we're going to have a draft. We're not going to have a draft, period. The all-volunteer army works. It works particularly when we pay our troops well. It works when we make sure they've got housing, like we have done in the last military budgets. An all-volunteer army is best suited to fight the new wars of the 21st century, which is to be specialized and to find these people as they hide around the world. We don't need mass armies anymore. One of the things we've done is we've taken the – we're beginning to transform our military. And by that I mean we're moving troops out of Korea and replacing them with more effective weapons. We don't need as much manpower on the Korean Peninsula to keep a deterrent. In Europe, we have massed troops as if the Soviet Union existed and was going to invade into Europe, but those days are over with. And so we're moving troops out of Europe and replacing it with more effective equipment. So to answer your question is, we're withdrawing, not from the world, we're withdrawing manpower so they can be stationed here in America, so there's less rotation, so life is easier on their families and therefore more likely to be – we'll be more likely to be able to keep people in the all-volunteer army. One of the more important things we're doing in this administration is transformation. There are some really interesting technologies. For instance, we're flying unmanned vehicles that can send real-time messages back to stations in the United States. That saves manpower, and it saves equipment. It also means that we can target things easier and move more quickly, which means we need to be lighter and quicker and more facile and highly trained. Now, forget all this talk about a draft. We're not going to have a draft so long as I am the president.

GIBSON: Senator Kerry, a minute and a half.

KERRY: Daniel, I don't support a draft. But let me tell you where the president's policies have put us. The president – and this is one of the reasons why I am very proud in this race to have the support of General John Shalikashvili, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Admiral William Crowe, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; General Tony McPeak, who ran the air war for the president's father and did a brilliant job, supporting me; General Wes Clark, who won the war in Kosovo, supporting me; because they all – and General Baca, who was the head of the National Guard, supporting me. Why? Because they understand that our military is overextended under the president. Our Guard and reserves have been turned into almost active duty. You've got people doing two and three rotations. You've got stop-loss policies, so people can't get out when they were supposed to. You've got a back-door draft right now. And a lot of our military are underpaid. These are families that get hurt. It hurts the middle class. It hurts communities, because these are our first responders. And they're called up. And they're over there, not over here. Now, I'm going to add 40,000 active duty forces to the military, and I'm going to make people feel good about being safe in our military, and not overextended, because I'm going to run a foreign policy that actually does what President Reagan did, President Eisenhower did, and others. We're going to build alliances. We're not going to go unilaterally. We're not going to go alone like this president did.

GIBSON: Mr. President, let's extend for a minute...

BUSH: Let me just – I've got to answer this.

GIBSON: Exactly. And with Reservists being held on duty...

BUSH: Let me answer what he just said, about around the world.

GIBSON: Well, I want to get into the issue of the back-door draft...