

MORE MONEY FOR THE MILITARY

To avoid reinstatement of the draft, increased spending on troops is necessary

It has been more than 10 years since the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. Since then, the U.S. military has lacked a major conventional enemy that could match its full might. This has led to a reevaluation of force levels and strategies for the U.S. military.

The strategy adopted was that the U.S. military would stay sizable enough to be able to fight two major regional conflicts at the same time. The stages that were envisioned at the time for these conflicts were the Middle East and the Korean Peninsula, where countries that could pose a threat with conventional military forces still exist.

As recently as December 2002, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld was quoted in a CNN interview saying, "We're capable of fighting two major regional conflicts as the national strategy and the force-sizing construct clearly indicate. We're capable of winning decisively in one, and swiftly defeating in the case of the other, and let there be no doubt about it."

That has been the stated policy of the United States since the end of the first Bush administration, through Clinton and now George W. Bush. The idea would be to hold off the enemy in one country, while defeating the enemy in the second. Then the full force of the U.S. military could be brought to bear against the second enemy.

But the decisions made by lawmakers in Washington did not ensure that the military could do what was expected of it. Units were decommissioned; equipment, planes and ships were retired but not replaced; and training was curtailed somewhat. Meanwhile, Congress failed to ensure that the pay and benefits stayed competitive with other jobs, which is important with an all-volunteer force. But any problems that were developing went unseen.

Until Iraq. Now, the military, which was stretched with commitments in Afghanistan, became drastically understaffed in Iraq. The planning done before the invasion apparently envisioned a quick, easy war like the first Gulf War. But the plans did not consider the ferocity with which Saddam's supporters and radical Islamists would fight back.

Now the United States needs more troops in Iraq to secure the country and future of the government there. According to Newsday, the Army wants to recall 5,674 soldiers who have left the service. And, according to another article from Newsday, five brigades of the National Guard will be going to Iraq, and the 42nd Infantry Division of New York, a Guard formation, will command regular Army units as well as Reserve and National Guard ones.

The military has not had to lean upon National Guard and

reserve units like this in some time. And this pressure upon members of the Army especially, with long tours in the Middle East and Afghanistan, has hurt recruitment and retention.

Luckily, Congress has not ignored the current problem. According to an article from The Houston Chronicle, several members of the House Armed Services Committee commented on the fact that the Army particularly was being pushed hard.

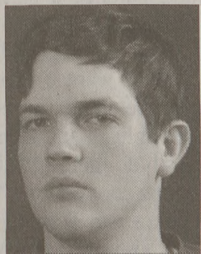
Rep. Ike Skelton, the top Democrat on the committee, was quoted in the article, saying that, "We're taxing our part-time soldiers, our Guard and Reserves nearly to the breaking point."

It should now be clear to policymakers and the public that a critical turning point has been reached with the concept of an all-volunteer military. The money that they are paid and the conditions that they function under, such as the length of tours, are not conducive to retention or recruitment. If this country wants to continue to avoid a draft, it is time for the United States to put its money where its mouth is.

Congress and the American people have to realize that the cost of avoiding a draft includes better pay and benefits for soldiers and the costs of training and equipping them properly. And the public should simply stop comparing current conflicts with the 1991 Gulf War. The United States will never likely fight such an easy war against such a large enemy again. That war was an aberration, an instance where an enemy with little will to fight simply gave up after weeks of bombing. If the United States were ever to fight North Korea, it would most assuredly not fold like Saddam's forces did in 1991.

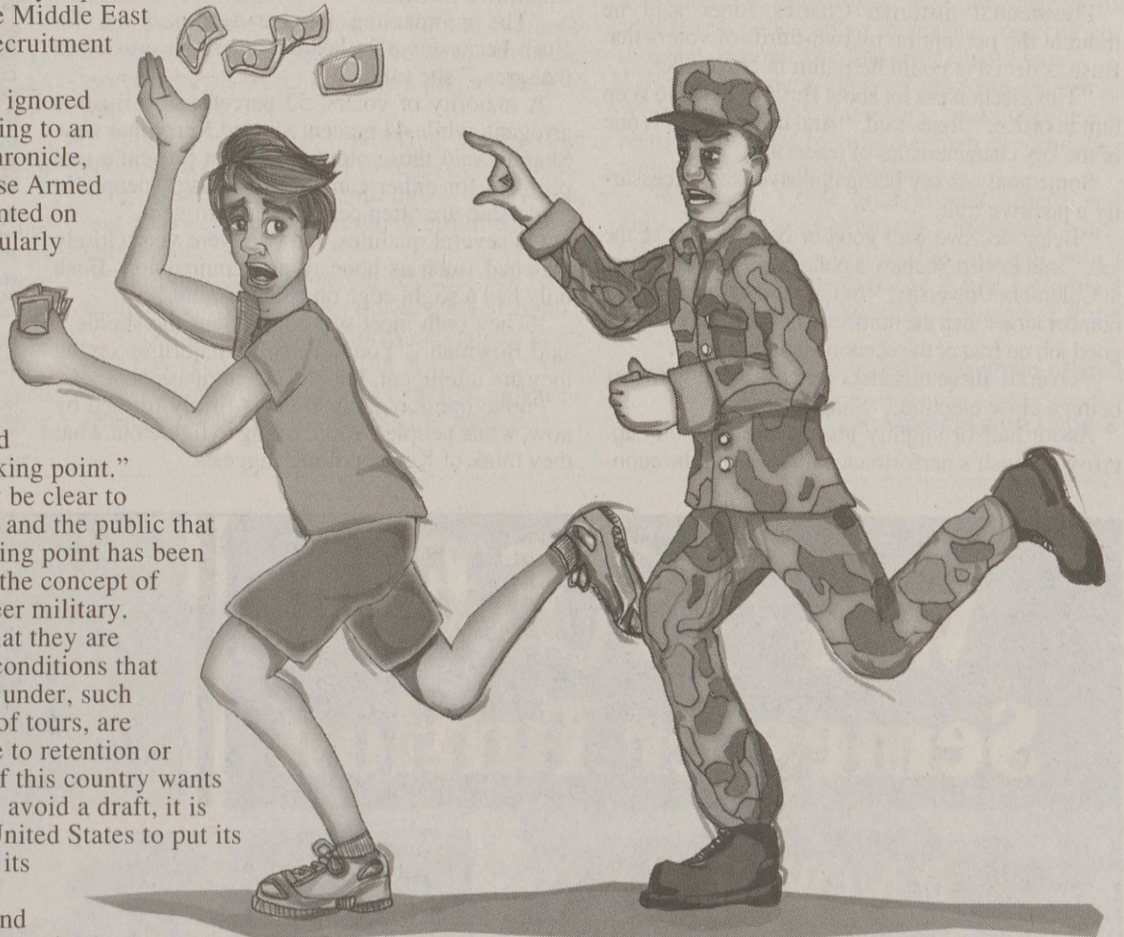
Congress and the public must realize that to secure our national interests, without a draft of any kind, serious money and effort will have to be put up, and very soon. There are still countries like North Korea in the world — ones with powerful weapons and the will to use them. In these potential future

conflicts the only option will be to resort to the armed forces, which must be ready. As things stand now, the U.S. military is incapable of fighting two regional wars as envisioned by the strategy. This must change. The military can ill afford any further inattention.



DAVID SHOEMAKER

"If this country wants to continue to avoid a draft, it is time for the United States to put its money where its mouth is."



David Shoemaker is a senior management major. Graphic by Gracie Arenas

MAIL CALL

Restaurant has right to promote politics

In response to Nick Anthis' July 13 mail call:

Yes, it's true that we have the F— Kerry shirts at New York Sub. And yes, it's true that there's an elephant awkwardly positioning himself behind a donkey on the breast pocket.

Let me get one thing straight for Mr. Anthis and anyone else who wants to take this too far: pulling the "rape" card is a cheap shot and insinuating that we would endorse such a despicable act represents mental weakness. Hate on NYS for its politics or because we messed up your order; don't claim we promote rape, whether it's a donkey or a presidential candidate. It's absurd, and I would imagine embarrassing to your fellow progressives.

You're correct, Mr. Anthis, there IS NOTHING humorous about rape.

Also, my goal is not to "alienate progressives" as you say in your letter. Rather, it was a way to embrace the conservative members of the community. I understand each time you take a side in a hotly contested subject such as politics or religion, you automatically anger or offend those people who aren't of the same opinion.

I understand that you will not be returning to New York Sub, and I understand your position. I would most likely not eat at an establishment if it had F— Bush on its T-shirts.

I understand that I will look like an

immoral guy to some people, and that's OK. It'll happen as long as I'm fortunate enough to portray my opinion in a public forum.

"Rape" card aside, I respect your views Mr. Anthis as well as the views of every other dissenter. For the record, my goal is never to anger or offend people, but rather bring like-minded people together and have a sense of humor in the process. It's just a shame that your dining experience has to suffer as a result.

Austin Harkness
Owner
New York Sub

Restaurant T-shirt is free speech

In response to Nick Anthis' July 13 mail call:

I am upset about the utter disregard for free speech displayed by Mr. Anthis. This T-shirt was made at a local establishment and their employees are offered this chance to wear the shirt. Free speech is free speech and it should not be censored in order that others may not be offended. My advice is for those offended to grow thicker skin.

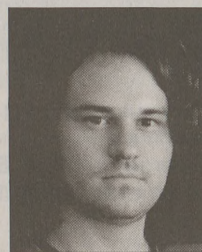
Before he starts slinging accusations or impropriety he should be fully informed on the situation.

By the way I will be dining at New York Sub.

Michael W. Hart
Class of 2004

Wal-Mart should settle lawsuit and stop discrimination policies

Removing sexual discrimination from the workplace has been a difficult but worthwhile crusade for the millions of American women in America's workforce. Recently the country's largest company, Wal-



JONATHAN SMITH

Mart, learned that it too will have a place in the history of this fight. Whether Wal-Mart wants to go down in history as a chauvinistic corporation or a progressive caring company depends on how it handles the court case set before it.

In San Francisco, a federal judge has ruled that a sexual discrimination lawsuit filed in 2001 by six women employed by Wal-Mart can now proceed as a class action suit. This new suit represents all 1.6 million of Wal-Mart's current and former female employees. This case is easily the largest sexual discrimination lawsuit in United States history.

When the numbers are considered, Wal-Mart certainly appears to be a sexist company. According to Time magazine, 65 percent of Wal-Mart's hourly employees are female, but two-thirds of the company's managers are men. Female employees working hourly jobs take home \$1,100 less than men, while female managers earn \$14,500 less than their male counterparts. On average, it takes men 2.86 years to get promoted to assistant manager, yet, despite better performance ratings, it takes women 4.38 years to accomplish the same task.

If these numbers aren't bad enough, the plaintiffs present many stories that describe how Wal-Mart's management blatantly discriminated against its female employees. USA Today recounts the tale of one woman who said that her division's monthly sales meetings were held at a Hooters restaurant. Such a policy definitely does not fit into Wal-Mart's image as

a pro-family company.

Another woman recalls what happened when she confronted her boss about the fact that her male counterparts were paid more. His answer was that men "had families to support." Such outdated thinking on the part of the company's management must be changed if Wal-Mart wants to stay out of court.

Finally, a female Wal-Mart employee tells of the discrimination she faced when she asked to be transferred to the hardware department. She was asked, "You're a girl. Why do you want to be in hardware?" When management makes decisions based upon incorrect stereotypes, it is no surprise that most of Wal-Mart's work force feels like the company doesn't care about their needs. Wal-Mart must deal with these problems.

Wal-Mart's excuse for these inequalities is not convincing. According to BBC, the company believes that it should not be held responsible because "promotions were decided by local managers." The fact that Wal-Mart shifts the blame to its individual stores instead of settling the issue indicates that it does not have a legal leg to stand on.

The obvious and correct choice for Wal-Mart is to settle the case outside of a courtroom. Any jury presented with such evidence would easily find Wal-Mart to be in the wrong. Wal-Mart should willingly pay the largest settlement ever to avoid the largest legal embarrassment ever. Even a multibillion-dollar settlement would be peanuts compared to the money lost when the company's stock drops after a lost lawsuit.

Wal-Mart needs to solve the problems the lawsuit addresses. It should offer free childcare to offset some of

these costs to its underpaid workforce. Business Week also suggested that a settlement could bring in an independent monitor to review Wal-Mart's pay and promotion records.

Wal-Mart spokeswoman Mona Williams said the company would be happy to cooperate with an independent monitor. The company should

use this opportunity to purge itself of institutionalized discrimination and prove to its employees and customers that it cares about women.

Since it is obvious that Wal-Mart would lose this case, its lawyers have been doing everything they can to keep the case out of court, with Wal-Mart executives describing the case as "unmanageable and unconstitutional" for the courtroom according to the

BBC. It is time for the company to take responsibility for its actions.

Sam Walton, the original founder of Wal-Mart, once said that he had "always been driven to buck the system, to innovate, to take things beyond where they've been." At this critical juncture, Wal-Mart finds itself faced with an interesting question: Does it follow the words of its former leader and "buck the system" of discrimination, or does it refuse to pull its company's policies into the twenty-first century?

For Wal-Mart's sake, it should choose to reform itself without the help of the legal system. Yet if the company refuses to go the easy route, it is certain that a jury will have no problem "rolling back" some of the company's sexist policies.

Jonathan Smith is a junior history major.

