



The All- Volunteer Force: Thirty Years of Service

Curtis L. Gilroy, Barbara A. Bicksler, John T. Warner

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The All- Volunteer Force: Thirty Years of Service Curtis L. Gilroy, Barbara A. Bicksler, John T. Warner Throughout most of the twentieth century, American military personnel were drafted into service. A conscripted force served the nation in both world wars, Korea, and Vietnam. But in the late 1960s, the draft came under intense scrutiny and was viewed by the American public with growing dissatisfaction and a sense of inequity. The mounting unease over the draft prompted President Richard Nixon to establish a special commission—the President’s Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force, also known as the Gates Commission—to study the alternatives. After much debate within the Administration and Congress over the feasibility and affordability of a volunteer military, the draft was abolished, and on July 1, 1973, the All-Volunteer Force (AVF) was born. It was perhaps the most important transformation of the U.S. military in the past century.

Editors Bicksler, Gilroy, and Warner have presented the proceedings of a high-level conference commemorating the thirtieth anniversary of the AVF. Their book begins with reflections from several of the Gates Commission members on the beginnings of the AVF and its many successes over the years. The balance of the volume is devoted to the challenges the Department of Defense will face in sustaining the AVF in the future in light of recent U.S. troop commitments around the globe. Topics addressed include future recruiting and retention, Reserve component contributions, and transformation in military manpower and personnel policy.

The All-Volunteer Service is a vital resource for defense professionals, journalists, politicians, and all citizens concerned about future U.S. defense policy.

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