

Conservative Mental Dichotomy on the Draft

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Global Research, March 03, 2023

[The Future of Freedom Foundation](#) 1 March
2023

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#)

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The war in Ukraine has displayed a fascinating dichotomy that exists within conservatives. They uniformly condemn the Russian invasion of Ukraine while, at the same time, steadfastly ignoring the measures that the Pentagon took through NATO to provoke the invasion.

Moreover, while they condemn the Russian invasion of Ukraine, they also continue to steadfastly support the U.S. invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq and continue to effusively thank the troops for their service in those two longstanding wars of aggression.

Thus, I wasn't too surprised to see another conservative dichotomy appear in an article by Holman W. Jenkins, Jr., who serves on the editorial board of the conservative *Wall Street Journal*. The title of Jenkins' article is "Putin Is the West's Target in the Ukraine War." The subtitle of the article pretty much sums up what it's about: "A combination of escalation and deterrence must bring Russia to the table."

What caught my attention, however, was this sentence in Jenkins' piece: "Mr. Putin is the one abducting their sons and sending them home three weeks later in body bags."

Abducting? One doesn't often see conservatives using that word to describe conscription. One usually expects to see conservatives using the word "draft" or the word "serve" to describe conscription.

I found another article in the *Journal* that Jenkins wrote a few years ago in which he stated the following, "Even in World War II, more than 60% of American participants were drafted."

Yes, he used the word "drafted." No mention of the word "abducted." But then again, this is the U.S. government, not the Russian government, to which he is referring.

In other words, when conservatives are talking about those evil Russkies, officials "abduct" people to fight in their wars. When the good U.S. government does it, it's just "drafting"

people to “serve” their country.

Actually though, Jenkins gets it right with his word “abduct.” That’s what conscription is all about — in both Russia and the United States. Another word that could be used is “slavery.” The best term is the one used in the Thirteenth Amendment — “involuntary servitude.”

The process works as follows: The government embroils people in a war that is not defensive in nature. Many people don’t like fighting and dying in that type of war. They’d be more than willing to fight and die if a foreign army was invading their homeland. But they don’t have much interest in leaving their homes, families, and businesses to go fight and die in some faraway land against an enemy that has not invaded their country.

But such wars are important to public officials. So, after calling for volunteers, the government finds that it still needs soldiers to fight. When no one else will volunteer, that’s when the government commands citizens to report to military installations to “serve” their country by being forced to travel to some foreign land to kill or be killed. If the person refuses, the government sends armed agents to forcibly seize him and take him away to jail. If he still refuses to “serve,” he is tried, convicted, and sentenced to a long term in a federal penitentiary.

Jenkins’ point about World War II is a fascinating one. He points out that 60 percent of American soldiers were abducted — oh, I’m sorry — I mean *drafted* — to serve in the war. But how can that be? I thought World War II was supposed to be the “good war.” No doubt inadvertently, Jenkins is telling us that what people describe as the “greatest generation” had to be forced to “serve” in World War II.

What’s up with that? If World War II was so good, how come 60 percent of Americans soldiers had to be abducted — I mean *drafted* — to fight in it?

Prior to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the American people were overwhelmingly opposed to entering the war, especially after the horrors of U.S. intervention in World War I. To circumvent opposition to entry into World War II, FDR did everything he could to provoke the Japanese into attacking the U.S., including imposing an oil embargo on Japan as well as leaving American soldiers at Pearl and in the Philippines to serve as bait. (The FDR playbook undoubtedly served as a model that the Pentagon used to provoke Russia into invading Ukraine.)

My hunch is that those 60 percent who had to be abducted — I mean, *drafted* — knew that President Roosevelt had schemed, plotted, and maneuvered to provoke the Japanese into attacking the United States. They knew that the Japanese attack at Pearl was simply a response to FDR’s provocations and that the aim of the attack was simply to open up supply lines for oil in the Dutch East Indies. They knew that Japan had no military capability or even interest in invading, conquering, and occupying the United States. They also knew that Germany, which could not even cross the English Channel to conquer England, lacked the military capability, supply lines, money, armaments, troops, and even the interest to cross the Atlantic and invade, conquer, and occupy the United States.

Thus, those 60 percent were smart. They weren’t willing to fight and die in another foreign war, one that FDR had provoked and that did not involve the survival of the United States. That’s why they had to be abducted — I’m sorry, *drafted* — to “serve their country” and “defend our freedoms.”

Of course, the same thing applied to the wars in Korea and Vietnam. Americans understood the same thing about those wars. That's why they had to be abducted — I mean *drafted*." When people said no, like Mohammad Ali, U.S. officials went after them with a vengeance for their cowardice and lack of patriotism, just like Putin is doing to those who resist his draft in Russia.

Oh well, at least the Russian invasion of Ukraine has caused conservatives to confront the evil nature of conscription, even if they are only referring to Russia.

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