

The Draft

"With the end to the draft we will demonstrate to the world the responsiveness of our system of government—and we will also demonstrate our continuing commitment to the principle of ensuring for the individual the greatest possible measure of freedom."

President Richard Nixon

When President Nixon took office, he moved immediately on the most agonizing—and the most incendiary—youth issue of the century: the nation's antiquated and inequitable draft system.

His ultimate goal was total elimination of involuntary military service, but he had no intention of letting the generation involved hang by its teeth while opposing party legislators nit-picked his proposals for an all-volunteer force.

He warned Congress that if it did not move he would act by Executive Order—the only means available to a President under the circumstances. Congress balked. The President kept his promise.

DRAFT REFORM

- By Executive Order of President Nixon, the time that a young man is vulnerable to induction was cut from seven years to one—limited to the year in which he turns 19. (Under the old system, induction was possible any time between the ages of 19 and 26).
- The lottery system was adopted—eliminating an inequity that had existed for 27 years.
- A uniform monthly call by lottery now equalizes the liability of men with the same numbers in all parts of the nation and eliminates local draft board quotas.
- Automatic deferment of new students is to be ended under the draft extension bill with stand-by authority given to the President to grant deferments.

In June 1969, President Nixon established a nationwide system of Youth Advisory Committees

to serve as the voice of America's young people within the Selective Service System itself.

- 56 committees were activated—one for each state, district and territory of the United States.
- There are 650 committee members, each appointed by his own state director.
- Members are appointed to achieve racial, educational and income balance.

Due to the work of these committees:

1. The Selective Service System now issues a Curriculum Guide to the Draft to teachers and students in high school.
2. Many misunderstandings between draft counselors and the draft system have been resolved.
3. The Director of the Selective Service System meets with committee members on a regular basis.
4. Two-thirds of 35 major recommendations have been accepted by the Selective Service System, Defense Department and the President.

In February 1970 the President appointed Curtis W. Tarr as Director of Selective Service. The former President of Wisconsin's Lawrence University had been Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for manpower and had achieved a reputation for his work with young servicemen. In addition, he had been a draftee himself—in 1943—with combat experience (Battle of the Bulge) and had served for three years as an enlisted man.

Two of his first Presidential assignments were carried out immediately—the replacement of 17 aging State Directors of the draft with younger men, and a 100% increase in minority group representation to match the realities of the population base.

VOLUNTEER FORCE

After de-fusing the immediate draft problem by Executive Order, the President turned the full weight of his office on the prospect of eliminating the draft altogether.

He appointed a special Commission under the direction of former Defense Secretary Thomas S. Gates to study the feasibility of an all-volunteer

army. In February 1970, the Commission reported to the President:

"We unanimously believe that the nation's interests will be better served by an all-volunteer force, supported by an effective stand-by draft, than by a mixed force of volunteers and conscripts."

As he winds down the Vietnam War, the President views his own target date for an all-volunteer army—mid-1973—as realistic.

INCENTIVES

To stimulate enlistments, President Nixon has asked Congress for an additional military pay raise. Pay scales were increased by 7.2 percent last year and living conditions were improved. In addition, the President has asked for a 50 percent increase in basic pay at the entry level, amounting to an additional \$1.5 billion. Personnel in the lower enlisted grades would also receive increases.

One-fifth of the \$1.5 billion extra appropriation will go toward the costs of recruiting, medical scholarships, ROTC, and improvements in housing.

You and Your Number

The highest number called in 1970 was 195. As of June 1970 the numbers up to 170 had yielded 99,500. By June 1971 the Department of Defense had requested only 88,000 with #125 as the limit. Defense Secretary Melvin Laird has indicated that 1971's maximum call will not exceed 148,000. That means a call of no more than 10,000 a month for the rest of 1971. Thus the chance of a qualified available man being inducted is 1 in 17. In 1968 it was 1 in 5.

DEEDS, NOT WORDS

While the battle of words and unkept promises rounds out its eleventh year on Capitol Hill, President Nixon has simply done what he said he would do if he were elected—with or without the help of Congress.

1. He cut Vietnam troop strength in half—drastically reducing the number of replacement troops needed to begin with.

2. By continued, systematic reduction of American involvement in Indochina, he scaled down estimated manpower requirements at the planning level.
3. He sealed off draft vulnerability at age 19, freeing all young men above that age to concentrate on planning their lives and building careers without the threat of draft disruption.
4. He established a lottery system that gives every eligible 19-year-old an equal chance of being called—or missed.
5. He replaced the old system with a new formula that changed the odds on being drafted from one in 5 to one in 17.

To top it off, he changed a favorite topic of political rhetoric—the all-volunteer army—into a very realistic prospect.

The draft has been going on now for 27 years. President Nixon has been in office less than three.

THE DRAFT



Bob Dole, Chairman Republican National Committee 310 First Street, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003