

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: CITIZEN-CIVILIANS: MASCULINITY, CITIZENSHIP,
AND AMERICAN MILITARY MANPOWER POLICY,
1945-1975

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“Citizen-Civilians” argues that military manpower policies between the end of World War II in 1945 and the shift to the All-Volunteer Force in 1973 separated military service from ideals of masculine citizenship in the United States. Manpower policies, especially those that governed deferments, widened the definition of service to the state and encouraged men to meet their responsibilities for national defense as civilians. They emphasized men’s breadwinner role and responsible fatherhood over military service and defined economic independence as a contribution to national defense.

These policies, therefore, militarized the civilian sector, as fatherhood and certain civilian occupations were defined as national defense initiatives. But these policies also, ironically, weakened the citizen-soldier ideal by ensuring that fewer men would serve in the military and equating these civilian pursuits with military service. The Defense

establishment unintentionally weakened its own manpower procurement system.

These findings provide context for the anti-war and anti-draft protest of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Vietnam exacerbated points of friction that already existed. The war highlighted assumptions about masculinity and citizenship as well as inequities in the draft system that had existed for a generation. This dissertation, therefore, explains the growth of the mechanisms that allowed men to avoid military service, as such avoidance became relatively simple to accomplish and easy to justify. Thus, when draft calls rose in order to support a war that many Americans did not agree with, men used the channels that the Defense establishment had already created for them to avoid serving in the armed forces.

This work also demonstrates how policies and ideas about masculine citizenship affected one another. Competing visions of manhood as well as debates over the rights and responsibilities of citizenship influenced policy debates. Moreover, policies took on a social engineering function, as the Selective Service and Department of Defense actively encouraged men to enter particular occupational fields, marry, and become fathers. In this way, this project is an example of the “lived Cold War.” It suggests that individual men made career, school, and marriage decisions in response to Cold War policies.

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
2013

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Acknowledgements

A good friend of mine likens producing a dissertation to giving birth. While I'm not sure I would go that far, it is certainly true that it takes a village to write a dissertation. I have many people to thank.

First and foremost, I must thank the community of academics I found myself a part of at the University of Maryland, College Park. I owe a special debt of gratitude to my adviser, Robyn Muncy, who went above and beyond the call of duty. Various cheerleader, critic, sounding board, and mentor, she has played many roles in my life over the last eight years. I do not believe I could have completed this project without her wise counsel. My committee – David Freund, Clare Lyons, Jennifer Mittelstadt, and David Segal – gave the generous gifts of time and feedback. Their input helped me sharpen arguments I was not even aware I had been making. Additionally, Ira Berlin, Sonya Michel, and Jon Sumida all went out of their way to help me develop as a historian. Peter Albert taught me the importance of precision writing and some excellent research tools.

Second, “Citizen-Civilians” exists because of the generous financial support I received from the Department of History and Graduate School of the University of Maryland. Grants from the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation in Dumphries, Virginia; the United States Army Military History Institute in Carlisle, Pennsylvania; and the Harry S. Truman Library Institute in Independence, Missouri, further made travel to archives possible.

Once at these repositories, archivists at the National Archives and Records Administration in College Park, Maryland; the Wisconsin Historical Society in Madison,

Wisconsin; the Truman Library; the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library in Abilene, Kansas; the U.S. Army Military History Institute; the Swarthmore College Peace Collection in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania; the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.; and the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign offered invaluable help. David Clark at the Truman Library, Herb Pankratz at the Eisenhower Library, Richard Sommers and David Keough at USAMHI, and Wendy Chmielewsky at Swarthmore deserve special mention. Further, I must thank J.E. McNeil of the Center on Conscience and War, who I contacted with the generous help of Christopher Richmond, for granting me access to the restricted files of the National Service Board of Religious Objectors collection at Swarthmore. While my project evolved in such a way that I did not end up using documents from all of these archives, my findings at each influenced how I thought about my research questions.

I must thank my colleagues in the graduate program at the University of Maryland, who pulled me through this crazy process. At times, I think I shared a brain with Kimberly Welch and Christina Larocco. Melissa Kravetz, Helena Iles Papaioannou, Andrew Kellett, Mary-Elizabeth Murphy, Stefan Papaioannou, Charles Reed, Reid Gustafson, and Stephanie Hinnershitz-Hutchinson deserve special thanks. Beyond College Park, Julie Mancine, Rachel Louise Moran, and the many scholars I met at conferences provided insight, sources, and support. All of these people prove that academia can be a fun and humane pursuit as well as intellectually challenging.

Finally, I would like to thank my family. Not everyone has a parent who supports their child's desire to give up a solid, lucrative career to embark on the quixotic quest for a Ph.D. I was blessed with two. Joel Rutenberg and Rebecca Becker Rutenberg both

offered me their love and support when I quit my job as a high school teacher at age 27 to return to graduate school. They never complained, even when I did, and for that, I am grateful. My brothers, Adam Rutenberg and David Rutenberg, were equally supportive. In our quest to be the most over-educated family ever, the three of us engaged in friendly competition to see who would graduate with their terminal degree last. I am thankful that I did not earn that particular title, but I think all three of us won because we each have the others. Gini Tate, Linda Best, Herb Best, Chris Best, Anna LaPuz Best, Abigail Best, and Julie MacCartee all became part of my family along this journey, and they are the best circle of in-laws a person could ask for.

This brings me to the heart of my support network. Jeremy Best lives up to his name. He is the best husband, colleague, scholar, and friend I could ever have asked for. Our son, Benjamin is the light of my life. Together, they make me laugh every day. They gave me a reason and the strength to complete this project. I love and thank you both.

My grandmother, Florence Becker, wanted nothing more from her final years than for me to be happy. I hope that wherever she is, she can see that I am.

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Figure 1.
Selective Service Classification Chart (1951-1973)¹

<u>Classification</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
I-A	Available for military service
I-A-O	Conscientious objector available for non-combatant military service
I-C	Member of the armed forces
I-D	Member of a reserve unit or approved officer procurement program
I-O	Conscientious objector opposed to combatant and non-combatant military service; available for alternate civilian service
I-S (H)	Student administratively deferred to complete high school
I-S (C)	College student administratively deferred to complete the current academic year
I-W	Conscientious objector assigned to alternate civilian service
I-Y (after 1962)	Unqualified for military service except in times of war or declared national emergency
II-A	Deferred for non-agricultural occupation
II-C	Deferred for agricultural occupation
II-S	Student
III-A	Deferred for reasons of dependency or hardship
IV-A	Deferred due to previous military service or as the sole surviving son in a family with one or more children who died in military service
IV-B	Government official
IV-C	Foreign national not liable for military service
IV-D	Deferred as minister or divinity student
IV-F	Unfit for Military Service

¹ Adapted from Ann Yoder, "Military Classifications for Draftees," Swarthmore College Peace Collection, <http://www.swarthmore.edu/library/peace/conscientiousobjection/MilitaryClassifications.htm>

Introduction

On September 11, 2001, I was a high school social studies teacher in a suburb of New York City. For a week after the terrorist attacks of that day, I could see the smoke rising off of Ground Zero from my apartment over the Hudson River. The day was both merciful and tragic for the community in which I taught. One of its members lost his life when the Twin Towers fell. Yet others, including the wife of one of my colleagues, escaped. Over the next couple of weeks, those students trained as emergency medical technicians missed school in order to dig through the rubble of the World Trade Center. Everyone else came to class expressing their anger, betrayal, and vulnerability. I, unfortunately, had the impossible job of explaining to 125 ninth graders, many of whose parents worked in Manhattan, what had happened and why. Terrorists had not only attacked my students' country, they had attacked my students' community and sense of well-being.

This project grew out of my experiences in the months and years that followed. Between 2001 and 2005, I watched class after class move through the school and graduate. Yet, to my knowledge, only one of my students joined the military after graduation, and he entered the Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps in order to fulfill his lifelong dream of flying Marine aircraft, not out of a sense of duty to the nation. Many of my students, residents of a socio-economically and politically diverse town, supported the American mission in its wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, but they did not feel it their responsibility to fight for the United States, despite their very personal connection to the

attacks of September 11.¹ I could not help but make comparisons to Americans' response to Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941.

In the week following Japan's surprise raid, the *New York Times* ran a series of articles chronicling the frenzied rush by American men to enlist in the nation's armed services.² New York's Army, Navy, and Marine Corps enlistment centers extended their hours of operation, some to twenty-four hours a day, in order to accommodate the surge of potential soldiers, sailors, and marines. Sixty years later, following the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, the newspaper again reported on citizens' response to a surprise assault on American soil. This time, however, the *Times* explained that, despite a spike in inquiries about military service, there had been no rise in actual enlistments since the attack, and some who tried to convince friends to apply, faced mockery.³ It was not only my students who did not rush to join up.

At its core, then, this project asks what changed. What cultural expectation or perception of responsibility drove men to enlist in droves after an attack in 1941 but vanished in the years after? Or, more pointedly, what motivated men to heed the call of conscription during World War II but weakened the institution of the draft so

¹ I am not the only one to make a similar observation. See, for example, Cheyney Ryan, *The Chickenhawk Syndrome: War, Sacrifice, and Personal Responsibility* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2009), 7.

² See, for example, "Rush of Recruits Crowds Stations," *New York Times*, Dec. 9, 1941; "Enlistments Rise to New Heights Here," *New York Times*, Dec., 10, 1941; "Surge of Recruits Continues in City," *New York Times*, Dec. 11, 1941; "Croft Men Enlist in Droves for War," *New York Times*, Dec. 13, 1941; and "Discharged Men Besiege Fort Dix," *New York Times*, Dec. 13, 1941. This December spike in enlistments was directly related to the attack on Pearl Harbor. Although many men enlisted in the military out of economic need over the course of World War II, the military had been expanding since 1940. It is therefore unlikely that economic necessity was the mitigating factor immediately after Pearl Harbor.

³ "Despite a National Rush of Emotion, Recruiting Centers Aren't Seeing a Rush to Enlist," *New York Times*, Sept. 16, 2001.

significantly that suggestions for its reinstatement after September 11 were met with derision?⁴ The answer, of course, is complicated and many-layered. Scholars have examined how the civil rights, pacifist, New Left, and anti-war movements of the 1950s and 1960s affected Americans' relationship with the state, as well as the disillusionment caused by the Vietnam War. To borrow a phrase, their explanations are not exactly wrong, but they are incomplete.⁵

This project examines the historical relationship between American citizens and their state by focusing specifically on military manpower policy between 1945 and the end of the draft in 1973. It uses the debates over these policies to explore the question of what motivated men either to serve in the military or to avoid military service in the decades after World War II.⁶ It also interrogates the meaning of that service. Different

⁴ See, for example, William F. Buckley, Jr., "Who's Fighting the War," *National Review*, May 5, 2003: 55; "Backdraft," *The Nation*, Dec. 1, 2003: 8; "Draft Dodge," *Wall Street Journal*, Jan. 6, 2003; Carl Hulse, "A New Tactic Against War: Renew Talk About the Draft," *New York Times*, Feb. 9, 2003; Clyde Haberman, "Draft Talk, But Source is Antiwar," *New York Times*, Jan. 3, 2003.

⁵ The original phrase, "That explanation is not exactly wrong, but it is incomplete," comes from Margot Canaday's argument that institutionalized discrimination against homosexuals did not originate in the aftermath of World War II. See Margot Canaday, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2009), 2.

⁶ This work makes a distinction between men who avoided military service and men who resisted the draft. Draft resisters were men who actively protested the war by refusing to serve in the military. These men burned, tore up, or turned in their draft cards; fled to Canada; or sometimes went to prison to demonstrate their beliefs. They constructed their resistance to military service as a moral and/or political act. As this dissertation will show, however, the majority of men who did not serve avoided service through legal means, primarily through deferments. These men generally did not see their actions as political or a form of protest. They simply wished to avoid disrupting their lives. Draft avoidance is an umbrella term that encompasses war resisters but that also includes those men who did not understand their actions as a political statement. See Michael S. Foley, *Confronting the War Machine: War Resistance during the Vietnam War* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 3-16. Former members of President Gerald Ford's clemency program, Lawrence M. Baskir and

constituencies – including defense officials, members of Congress, civic organizations like the American Legion, and activists of all types – created a rich discourse as they debated who should offer service to the nation, what form that service should take, and what those who served – and the country itself – should gain as a result of that service. Ultimately, I argue, policy-makers’ decisions during the 1950s and early 1960s unintentionally strengthened American men’s already existent ambivalence toward military service. Military manpower policies weakened the relationship between military service and masculine citizenship obligations so thoroughly by the time of the Vietnam War that neither the rhetoric of protecting home and hearth through military service nor the threat of government reprisals could save the draft. Too many men did not feel it their responsibility to serve.

* * * * *

Anecdotally speaking, when members of the Vietnam generation talk about why more men did not serve in the military, they mention the character of the war itself. Those who avoided military service tended to see the war as an immoral or futile undertaking. They did not want to die, especially for a cause they cared so little about. As a result, they sought methods to either actively protest it or passively avoid it. Those who did serve frequently attribute other men’s shirking to the inequalities that were inherent in American society and in the Selective Service System. The conflict instilled a deep sense of ambivalence toward military service in middle-class Americans, who felt that the

William A. Strauss also made this distinction in *Chance and Circumstance: The Draft, the War, and The Vietnam Generation* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978).

federal government misused its troops in an unethical and dishonorable – or at least ill-conceived – military action.⁷

Popular representations of the war certainly support this view. Memoirs, novels, and movies depict the Vietnam Era as a period that started full of hope and promise but that ended in disappointment, frustration, anger, and loss.⁸ Veterans' accounts, both fictional and non-fictional, like those of Ron Kovic, Tim O'Brien, Lynda Van Devanter, and Philip Caputo, discuss the emotional turmoil experienced by young American service personnel.⁹ They went to Southeast Asia thinking they were protecting the U.S. and South Vietnam from communism but found themselves mired in the moral ambiguity of a war whose victory would be measured by body counts. Movies about the era, from *The*

⁷ I formulated this impression based on numerous anecdotes shared with me by people who were of draft age during the Vietnam War, both draft avoiders and veterans. It is in no way based on careful sampling or scientific method. As will be shown below, however, it is an impression that oral histories and cultural representations of the era support. As always, there is the danger that popular culture and the passage of time have affected the memories of the men who shared their stories with me and of those who participated in formal oral history projects. But even if men unintentionally altered their stories, how they retold their stories still shaped national memory of the Vietnam War. For an interesting example of how remembering or “misremembering” incidents have influenced national historical memory of the Vietnam War, see Jerry Lembcke, *The Spitting Image: Myth, Memory, and the Legacy of the Vietnam War* (New York: New York University Press, 2000).

⁸ For the purposes of this project, I define the Vietnam Era as the years between 1965, when the United States committed its first regular ground troops, to 1973, when the last of those troops were pulled out of South Vietnam.

⁹ Ron Kovic, *Born on the Fourth of July* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976); Tim O'Brien, *If I Die in a Combat Zone, Box Me Up and Ship Me Home*, reprint (New York: Broadway Books, 1999); Lynda Van Devanter, *Home Before Morning: The Story of an Army Nurse in Vietnam*, with a new introduction (Amherst, Mass.: Sheridan Books, 2001); Philip Caputo, *A Rumor of War* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1977). See also Michael Herr, *Dispatches* (New York: Knopf, 1977); Ronald Glasser, *365 Days* (New York: George Braziller, Inc.: 1971); Frederick Downs, *The Killing Zone: My Life in the Vietnam War* (New York: Norton, 1978); John M. Del Vecchio, *The 13th Valley* (New York: Bantam Books, 1982); Jerome Klinkowitz and John Somer, eds, *Writing Under Fire: Stories of the Vietnam War* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1978); James Webb, *Fields of Fire* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1978).

Deer Hunter to *Platoon*, *Coming Home* to *Full Metal Jacket*, *Rambo: First Blood* to *Forrest Gump*, depict a similar sense of futility and disillusionment.¹⁰ Overwhelmingly, cultural depictions of the war created since its end told American citizens that the government, including the military leadership, lied to soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen; used them shamefully; and then abandoned them when it was through with them.¹¹ Military service scarcely seemed worth the sacrifice.

During the war, the evening news broadcast images of Vietnam veterans throwing their medals on the Capitol steps rather than accept decoration for what they viewed as immoral actions. *Life* magazine reported on “Our Forgotten Wounded,” injured soldiers who were warehoused in rat-infested, dirty Veterans Administration hospitals and who felt like they had been “put in jail or punished for something.”¹² Media reports direct from Vietnam seemed to support the futility of the endeavor. The press corps did not face

¹⁰ *The Deer Hunter*, Dir. Michael Cimino, Columbia Pictures, 1979 (183 min.); *Platoon*, Dir. Oliver Stone, Herndale Film Corporation, 1986 (120 min.); *Coming Home*, Dir. Hal Ashby, United Artists, 1978 (127 min.); *Full Metal Jacket*, Dir. Stanley Kubrick, Warner Brothers, 1987 (117 min.); *First Blood*, Dir. Ted Kotcheff, Orion Films, 1982 (93 min.); *Forrest Gump*, Dir. Robert Zemeckis, Paramount Pictures, 1994 (142 min.).

¹¹ See, for example, Myra MacPherson, *Long Time Passing: Vietnam and the Haunted Generation* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1989); Michael J. Allen, *Until the Last Man Comes Home: POWs, MIAs, and the Unending Vietnam War* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2009); Jon Roper, ed., *The United States and the Legacy of the Vietnam War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Keith Beattie, *The Scar that Binds: American Culture and the Vietnam War* (New York: New York University Press, 1998); Andrew Martin, *Receptions of War: Vietnam in American Culture* (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993); Fred Turner, *Echoes of Combat: The Vietnam War in American Memory* (New York: Anchor Books, 1997); Owen W. Gilman and Lorrie Smith, *America Rediscovered: Critical Essays on the Literature and Film of the Vietnam War* (New York: Garland, 1990); Susan Faludi, *Stiffed: The Betrayal of the American Man* (New York: W. Morrow and Co., 1990); Maureen Ryan, *The Other Side of Grief: The Home Front and the Aftermath in American Narratives of the Vietnam War* (Amherst, Mass: University of Massachusetts Press, 2008).

¹² “Assignment to Neglect: From Vietnam to VA Hospital,” *Life*, May 22, 1970, 24D-33. Quotes, cover, 28.

ensorship, as it had during World War II and the Korean War. Reporters demonstrated a strong allegiance to the soldiers, argued historian Andrew J. Huebner, and frequently depicted servicemen as victims of military incompetence, circumstance, and their own excesses.¹³ In this context, when word spread that doctor's notes or student status or claims of homosexuality could release a man from military service, increasingly large numbers of men took advantage of the system's loopholes to find a way out.¹⁴

Scholarship on the era complicates the picture somewhat, but most works agree that Vietnam was the tipping point in the relationship between American men and the obligation to perform military service. According to political scientist David Cortright, dissatisfaction with military policies, fear, and an ill-defined mission in Southeast Asia caused rates of desertion, absence without leave (AWOL), drug use and fragging – the phenomenon of enlisted men shooting or targeting their officers with explosives – to skyrocket and rates of enlistment and reenlistment to plummet. This “crisis within the ranks” led, in Cortright's view, to the “internal disintegration of the military” and the “collapse of the infantry in Vietnam,” and forced the Pentagon to reevaluate its strategies

¹³ This, argues Huebner, is how Lt. William Calley, who was convicted on 22 counts of murder for his role in the My Lai Massacre of 1968, could become a national cause celebre as thousands of Americans agitated for his freedom. They believed that American soldiers had become “scapegoats for an official policy that encouraged brutality.” Andrew J. Huebner, *The Warrior Image: Soldiers in American Culture from the Second World War to the Vietnam Era* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), ch. 7-8. Quote, p. 210.

¹⁴ See, for example, Saul Braun, “From 1-A to 4-F and All Points In Between,” *New York Times Magazine*, Nov. 29, 1970; Stephen Minot, “On Aiding and Abetting: The Anguish of Draft Counseling,” Sept., 1968, 161-169, reprinted in *The Sixties: Recollections of the Decade from Harper's Magazine*, edited by Katharine Whittemore, Ellen Rosenbush, and Jim Nelson (New York: Franklin Square Press, 1995); Homer Bigart, “Draft Deferments Called Major Motivation at R.O.T.C. Camp,” *New York Times*, July 24, 1970; “Beating the Draft: Counselors Who Advise How to Avoid Service Multiply, Draw Youths,” *Wall Street Journal*, April 16, 1968.

and tactics, including its system of manpower procurement.¹⁵ Military sociologist James Burk claimed that “widespread doubt about the legitimacy of the Vietnam War increased public tolerance of opposition to the draft and refusal to perform military service,” which, in turn, led to a new conception of military service that stressed voluntarism.¹⁶

Sociologist David Segal tempered his evaluation somewhat, but he also acknowledged that “the failure of the Johnson administration and Congress to reform the Selective Service System...and continuing opposition to the draft probably contributed significantly...to the end of the draft and the advent of the all-volunteer force.”¹⁷ Most recently, historian Beth Bailey referred to the Vietnam War as “the perfect political storm,” as anti-war protest “gave legitimacy to vastly different arguments justifying the move to an all-volunteer force.”¹⁸

In addition to the effects of the war on soldiers and the military establishment, historians, sociologists, journalists, and cultural critics have examined how the pacifist, anti-war, and civil rights movements as well as the New Left and the New Right contributed to the crisis of the war years. Although their focus varied widely, these scholars ultimately identified the time during the Vietnam War and immediately thereafter as a moment when the relationship between American citizens and the

¹⁵ David Cortright, *Soldiers in Revolt: G.I. Resistance during the Vietnam War*, revised edition (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2005). Quote p. 4.

¹⁶ James Burk, “The Military Obligation of Citizens since the Vietnam War,” *Parameters* 31 (summer 2001), available at <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/USAWC/Parameters/Articles/01summer/burk.htm>.

¹⁷ David R. Segal, *Recruiting for Uncle Sam: Citizenship and Military Manpower Policy* (Lawrence, Kans.: University Press of Kansas, 1989), 36.

¹⁸ Beth Bailey, *America's Army: Making the All-Volunteer Force* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 2009), 3.

American state fundamentally shifted.¹⁹ In the words of scholar and former New Left activist Todd Gitlin, the crucible of war and protest forged “a slackening in the loyalties

¹⁹ Scholars of the New Deal and World War II have shown that political responses to these events intimately linked the citizen to the state. For example, see Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), esp. ch. 6; Jennifer Klein, *For All These Rights: Business, Labor, and the Shaping of America's Public-Private Welfare State* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006); Alan Brinkley, *Liberalism and its Discontents* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998); Brinkley, “The New Deal and the Idea of the State,” 85-121, in *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order, 1930-1980*, ed. Steven Fraser and Gary Gerstle (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989); William E. Leuchtenburg, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, 1932-1940* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963); William L. O’Neill, *A Democracy at War: America’s Fight at Home and Abroad in World War II* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993); Julian E. Zelizer, *Arsenal of Democracy: The Politics of National Security- From World War II to the War on Terrorism* (New York: Basic Books, 2010), esp. ch. 3; James T. Sparrow, *Warfare State: World War II Americans and the Age of Big Government* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Thomas Bruscino, *A Nation Forged in War: How World War II Taught Americans to Get Along* (Knoxville, Tenn.: University of Tennessee Press, 2010). For works that demonstrate how the Vietnam War and the social and economic changes of the late 1960s and early 1970s helped to loosen this connection, see Mary Sheila McMahon, “The American State and the Vietnam War,” 45-89, in *The Sixties: From Memory to History*, ed. David Farber (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1994); Jonathan Rieder, “The Rise of the ‘Silent Majority,’” 243-268, in *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order*, ed. Fraser and Gerstle; Thomas Byrne Edsall, “The Changing Shape of Power: A Realignment in Public Power,” 269-293, in *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order*, ed. Fraser and Gerstle; Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001), esp. ch. 5; Matthew D. Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006), esp. ch. 9; Arthur Stein, *Seeds of the Seventies: Values, Work, and Commitment in Post-Vietnam America* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1985); Farber, “The Torch had Fallen,” 9-28, and Christopher Capozzola, “‘It Makes You Want to Believe in the Country:’ Celebrating the Bicentennial in an Age of Limits,” 29-49, both in *America in the 70s*, ed. Bailey and Farber (Lawrence, Kans.: University Press of Kansas, 2004). Political scientist Theda Skocpol, moreover, has argued that Vietnam also caused a rupture in Americans’ relationship with civic organizations. She showed that wars in America usually increased citizens’ membership in voluntary organizations, including fraternal and veterans groups. This pattern reversed itself after the Vietnam War. See Theda Skocpol, *Diminished Democracy: From Membership to Management in American Civic Life* (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003), 46-66, 182-191.

which bound people to the social order...Traditional authority...lost its hold.”²⁰ Shock from atrocities like the massacre of Vietnamese civilians at My Lai in 1968, outrage at the shooting of American students at Kent State and Jackson State in 1970, dismay at the secret bombings of Cambodia and Laos, and disgust at the Watergate scandal – the “son of Vietnam” – irreparably harmed Americans’ faith in their government and, what former *Washington Post* editorial editor Philip L. Geyelin called, “all things establishmentarian.”²¹ The siphoning of resources from the War on Poverty and the struggle for racial justice to the war in Southeast Asia, a questionable enterprise undertaken against people of color, was one factor in the growing frustration of African Americans with the liberal establishment.²² The disproportionate number of black men who were conscripted to fight was another.²³ Division over the war and the perceived excesses of some members of the New Left caused a “massive defection of the electorate

²⁰ Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam Books, 1987), 381, 424.

²¹ Philip L. Geyelin, “The Vietnam Syndrome,” 77 in *Vietnam in Remission*, ed. James F. Veninga and Harry A. Wilmer (College Station, Tex.: Texas A&M Press, 1985). See also, James Miller, *Democracy is in the Streets: From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), 237-261; Van Gosse, *Rethinking the New Left: An Interpretive History* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005); Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, “The Failure and Success of the New Radicalism,” 212-242, in *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order*, ed. Fraser and Gerstle.

²² Gerald Gill, “From Maternal Pacifism to Revolutionary Solidarity: African-American Women’s Opposition to the Vietnam War,” 177-195, in *Sights on the Sixties*, ed. Barbara L. Tischler (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1992).

²³ James E. Westheider, *Fighting on Two Fronts: African Americans and the Vietnam War* (New York: New York University Press, 1997), esp. ch. 2; Kimberly L. Phillips, *War! What is it Good For? Black Freedom Struggles and the U.S. Military from World War II to Iraq* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), esp. ch. 5-6; Gill, “Afro-American Opposition to the United States’ Wars of the Twentieth Century: Dissent, Discontent, and Disinterest,” (Ph.D. Diss.:Howard University, 1985).

from the liberalism that had guided the country since 1960.”²⁴ Former Assistant Secretary of State and policy expert Elliott Abrams and historian Andrew J. Bacevich went so far as to argue that the “changing relationship between the individual and the state, spurred...by the cultural revolution” of the 1960s killed the “mythic tradition of the citizen-soldier.”²⁵

According to many scholars, a new conservatism stepped into the breach. It had been developing for over a decade but used the upheaval of the Vietnam years to gain traction in the 1970s.²⁶ Leaders of the libertarian branch of the New Right, like economist Milton Friedman, advocated the end of conscription on the grounds that the draft impinged on the liberty of individuals. They came together in common cause with

²⁴ Allen J. Matusow, *The Unraveling of America: A History of American Liberalism in the 1960s* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), 395.

²⁵ Elliott Abrams and Andrew J. Bacevich, “A Symposium on Citizenship and Military Service,” *Parameters* 31 (summer 2001), available at <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/USAWC/Parameters/Articles/01summer/bacevich.htm>.

²⁶ On the longer development of the New Right, see McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*; Kevin Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2005); Lassiter, *The Silent Majority*; Rebecca E. Klatch, *Women of the New Right* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987); Joseph E. Lowndes, *From the New Deal to the New Right: Race and the Southern Origins of Modern Conservatism* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2008); Joseph Crespino, *In Search of Another Country: Mississippi and the Conservative Counterrevolution* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2009); Michelle M. Nickerson, *Mothers of Conservatism: Women and the Postwar Right* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2012); Kenneth D. Durr, *Behind the Backlash: White Working-Class Politics in Baltimore, 1940-1980* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); John A. Andrew III, *The Other Side of the Sixties: Young Americans for Freedom and the Rise of Conservative Politics* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1997); Rick Perlstein, *Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001); Mary C. Brennan, *Turning Right in the Sixties: The Conservative Capture of the GOP* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1995).

members of the New Left to oppose the draft.²⁷ The combined pressure of widespread draft avoidance from non-activists, anti-military agitation from the Left, and political persuasion from the Right ultimately crushed the system of conscription and intentionally severed the link between citizenship and military service. With the shift to an all-volunteer force, according to Eliot Cohen, “manpower became a commodity” on the open market, “an input into the machinery of national defense,” just as “weapons or installations were.”²⁸ Free-market economists and libertarian thinkers, who found a home in the Nixon administration, replaced, in Bailey’s words, “the logic of citizenship with the logic of the market.”²⁹

* * * * *

My argument questions the scholarly and cultural narratives outlined above by challenging historians to rethink why conscription failed in the United States. I do not discount the importance of the Vietnam War as a catalyst for social change, but I contend that the patterns of draft avoidance behavior that supposedly emerged during the Vietnam War – marrying young, entering particular occupations, going back to school – were not the direct result of the war in Southeast Asia. Rather, they were the product of two decades of specific military manpower policies that defined a wide range of civilian roles as service to the state and imbued those roles with a value equivalent to that of military service. The Vietnam War, with its heightened draft calls, exacerbated points of friction

²⁷ Members of Students for a Democratic Society worked with former members of Young Americans for Freedom, after the latter were expelled from YAF over their opposition to the draft. See Klatch, *A Generation Divided: The New Left, the New Right, and the 1960s* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1999).

²⁸ Eliot A. Cohen, *Citizens and Soldiers: The Dilemmas of Military Service* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1985), 168.

²⁹ Bailey, *America’s Army*, 4.

caused by these policies, but it did not cause them. This focus on policy helps explain why so many men *could* avoid military service during the Vietnam War. It explains the origins of deferments, the most common method for draft avoidance.

To be clear, there has always been resistance to military service in the United States, even during times of war. As early as the nation's founding, Thomas Paine praised the men who remained at the continental army's 1776 encampment at Valley Forge because so many "summer soldier[s]" and "sunshine patriot[s]" had "shr[u]nk from the service of their country."³⁰ The draft was a major source of contention during the Civil War in both the North and the South, as the 1863 New York draft riots famously reflected, and during World War I.³¹ Perhaps most tellingly, conscription during wartime has been necessary because men have rarely been eager to put themselves into mortal danger, regardless of the cause.

Nevertheless, during the twentieth century, most eligible men who received draft notices served without public comment.³² Inductees may have grumbled, they may have

³⁰ Thomas Paine, "The Crisis," 91, in *Thomas Paine: Collected Writings*, ed. Eric Foner (New York: Library of America, 1995).

³¹ For an overview on the history of the draft, see Peter Karsten, "The U.S. Citizen-Soldier's Past, Present, and Likely Future," *Parameters* 31 (summer 2001), available at <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/USAWC/Parameters/Articles/01summer/karsten.htm> and David R. Segal, *Recruiting for Uncle Sam: Citizenship and Military Manpower Policy* (Lawrence, Kans.: University Press of Kansas, 1989), 17-38. On the New York City draft riots, see Iver Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots: Their Significance for American Society and Politics in the Age of the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990). For a description of opposition to the draft and the problems it presented the U.S. government during World War I, see Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You: World War I and the Making of the Modern American Citizen* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), ch. 1-2.

³² As historian James Sparrow has recently argued, widespread participation in the military during World War II created a particularly strong relationship between male citizenship, the state, and military service. See Sparrow, *Warfare State*.

complained, but they served. They had complex reasons for doing so, but these reasons tended to boil down to a combination of public pressure, legal coercion, and personal responsibility.³³ Those men who wilfully failed to answer the Selective Service faced the possibility of jail time, but those who held legal deferments often encountered ridicule. Most men, therefore, felt some obligation as citizens and as men to defend their homes, their communities, their comrades-in-arms, and their nation. They may not have volunteered for military service, but if their country called them, most men served.³⁴ Those who sought methods to avoid induction tended to do so quietly and as individuals.

The Vietnam War was different. Once again, most men who were drafted served, but a much higher proportion of eligible men did not, frequently because they actively sought legal means to avoid military service.³⁵ One survey of 1,586 men found that 60 percent of draft-eligible men took some sort of action to escape conscription during the

³³ Other reasons also included economic necessity, adventure, and eventually, survival. For example, see John Ellis, *The Sharp End of War: The Fighting Man in World War II* (London: Corgi, 1982); Christian G. Appy, *Working-Class War: American Combat Soldiers and Vietnam* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1993); Wallace Terry, *Bloods: An Oral History of the Vietnam War* (New York: Random House, 1984); Samuel Hynes, *The Soldiers' Tale: Bearing Witness to Modern War* (New York: Penguin Books, 1997); Christopher H. Hamner, *Enduring Battle: American Soldiers in Three Wars, 1776-1945* (Lawrence, Kans.: University of Kansas Press, 2011); Robert B. Westbrook, *Why We Fought: Forging American Obligations in World War II* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 2004), especially ch. 2..

³⁴ Exact numbers are difficult to obtain, but for example, historian George Q. Flynn estimates that 75 percent of the draft-age cohort of men served during the Korean War, an unpopular war in American history, and of the 25 percent who did not, 2/3 were classified as IV-F, and only 1/3 sought deferments. See George Q. Flynn, *The Draft, 1940-1973* (Lawrence, Kans.: University Press of Kansas, 1993), 143.

³⁵ Baskir and Strauss estimated that approximately 570,000 men broke the law to avoid the draft, of whom only 209,517 were accused and 8,750 were convicted. In contrast, 15,410,000 were deferred, exempted, or disqualified from military service. Baskir and Strauss, *Chance and Circumstance*, 5. See also James Fallows, "What Did You Do in the Class War, Daddy?" *Washington Monthly* 7, no. 8 (October 1975): 5-20.

conflict.³⁶ According to another study, 26 percent of draft-age men altered their educational plans in order to gain a student deferment, 21 percent spoke to a doctor to learn how to qualify for a medical deferment, 11 percent allowed their desire to avoid the draft to influence their career choice, and four percent chose to alter their bodies in some way to avoid military service.³⁷ Men also shared information with one another about how to escape military service. They sought help from organizations. They consulted manuals published to help them. New Left and pacifist organizations with nation-wide followings such as Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors (CCCO) along with hundreds of smaller, local anti-war groups and organizations, helped foment what historian John Whiteclay Chambers, II, termed “a massive campaign of public disobedience.”³⁸ My work explains the mechanisms men used to avoid the armed forces – especially the Selective Service System’s policies related to deferments – and why those mechanisms existed. It also explores their unintended consequences. Ultimately, decisions made by the Selective

³⁶ Baskir and Strauss, *Chance and Circumstance*, xviii, 7.

³⁷ It should be noted that the survey cited asked men to list *all* of the methods they used to evade the draft, and, on average, those respondents who took action to avoid military service tried 2.3 different methods. Thus, the percentages of men who tried the various methods add up to greater than 100 percent of respondents. See G. David Curry, *Sunshine Patriots: Punishment and the Vietnam Offender* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1985), 65-66; John Whiteclay Chambers, II, estimates that between 1964 and 1973, 27 million young men reached draft age, of whom 16 million, or sixty per cent, of those eligible did not serve. Of these, 15 million received legal exemptions or deferments and approximately 570,000 evaded the draft illegally. See Chambers, “Conscientious Objectors and the American State,” 41, in *The New Conscientious Objection: From Sacred to Secular Resistance*, ed. Charles C. Moskos and Chambers (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

³⁸ Chambers “Conscientious Objectors and the American State,” 40; Charles DeBenedetti and Charles Chatfield, *An American Ordeal: The Antiwar Movement of the Vietnam Era* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 199), 163-167, 183-185; Amy Swerdlow, “‘Not My Son, Not Your Son, Not Their Sons’: Mothers Against the Draft for Vietnam,” 163-176, in *Sights on the Sixties*, ed. Tischler;

Service, the Pentagon, Congress, and the presidents in the years prior to the Vietnam War allowed men to stop understanding military service as an obligation of American citizenship, even during wartime.

* * * * *

“Citizen-Civilians,” therefore, examines the relationship between the concept of citizenship and the ideal of the citizen-soldier, a flexible and culturally resonant symbol in American history, in post-war America. The concept of the citizen-soldier, as political scientist Ronald R. Krebs has argued, exists in two realms.³⁹ The first is historical, firmly rooted to American institutions and historical events. This “institutional manifestation” originated in the fact that all free, white, able-bodied men were liable for service in local militias from the founding of each of the thirteen original colonies.⁴⁰ While the composition of each colony’s militia was different, all were charged with protecting local English settlements. Because militias were limited to fighting inside the borders of their respective colonies and could only be used for defensive purposes, George Washington and Federalists championed a national, federally-controlled, fighting force.⁴¹ Anti-

³⁹ Ronald R. Krebs, “The Citizen-Soldier Tradition in the United States: Has Its Demise Been Greatly Exaggerated?” *Armed Forces and Society* 36, no. 153 (2009):153-174.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 154.

⁴¹ In a Sept. 25, 1776 letter to John Hancock, Washington famously complained, “To place any dependance [sic] upon Militia, is, assuredly, resting upon a broken staff.” He lamented the lack of discipline inherent in a fighting force “dragged from the tender Scenes of Domestick life” and “unaccustomed to the din of Arms.” He argued that “to bring men to a proper degree of Subordination is not the work of a day – a Month – or even a year – and unhappily for us, and the cause we are Ingaged in, the little I have been labouring to establish in the Army under my immediate Command, is in a manner done away by having such a mixture of Troops as have been called together within these few Months.” He further complained that militia men, who served under limited contracts, vanished when most needed, taking arms and equipment with them, making them a financial as well as an emotional drain on limited resources. George Washington to John

Federalists, however, believed a strong, centralized army was representative of the tyranny and despotism of the British crown and rejected Federalist thinking when it came time to formulate the new country's government. Militiamen had captured the imagination of the would-be nation by defeating the British at the battles of Lexington and Concord in 1775. Many early legislators, therefore, remained rhetorically committed to the notions that military service should be spread equally among citizens and should be locally controlled.

The Articles of Confederation preserved the ascendancy of local militias. It invested the central government with the sole right to declare war, but did not provide for a national army. Instead, it enjoined each state to “keep up a well-regulated and disciplined militia, sufficiently armed and accoutered,” and to “provide and constantly have ready for use, in public stores, a due number of field pieces and tents, and a proper quantity of arms, ammunition and camp equipage” in case of a national emergency.⁴² Yet it provided no mechanism for the federal government to access either men or equipment without the approval of each state's governor. To rectify this problem, the Constitution granted Congress the rights to “raise and support Armies” and to “provide and maintain a Navy,” but, again, militias remained an integral part of the United States' defense plan. Congress could call “forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union, suppress Insurrections and repel Invasions” and it was authorized to organize, arm, and discipline

Hancock, Sept. 25, 1776, *The Papers of George Washington*, edited by Dorothy Twohig, et al. Revolutionary War Series, vol. 6, August-October 1776, edited by Philander D. Chase and Frank E. Grizzard, Jr. (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1994), 396-397.

⁴² Articles of Confederation, Article VI, available at http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/artconf.asp#art6

militias when specifically under federal command. But states retained the responsibility for training the militias and appointing officers.⁴³

The Militia Act of 1792 allowed states to enact the relevant portions of the Constitution into law. It mandated that every free, able-bodied, white man between the ages of 18 and 45 should serve in the militia at his own expense. In theory, this law provided for national defense by training a significant proportion of the country's population and keeping trained citizens at the ready while avoiding a large standing army and protecting republican liberties. Military power would be reserved to the states, except in times of national emergency, and all free men would earn their right to citizenship through service in the militia. In reality, however, this system proved unworkable from the beginning.

The Act left control of the militias in the hands of the states. It did not include any federal enforcement mechanism. It provided no federal funding for state militias or means to coordinate state systems. States were left to enforce the law, which they frequently did not do, and they were given the right to decide service requirements, including who could or should be deferred or exempted from training. Governors often appointed political allies as officers rather than men with any military qualifications, creating a sense of partisanship throughout the militia system.⁴⁴ Overall, militia units remained staunchly local in orientation and constrained by the constitutional limits placed

⁴³ United States Constitution, Article I, section 8, available at http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution_transcript.html

⁴⁴ As one example, Republican militia units refused to escort newly-elected Federalist President John Adams through Philadelphia in 1796. See Jeffrey A. Jacobs, *The Future of the Citizen-Soldier Force: Issues and Answers* (Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky, 1994), 29.

on their use.⁴⁵ Elsewhere, individual men simply did not respond when called. Nevertheless, states maintained the political structures needed to administer state-wide militia systems throughout the antebellum era and continued to pay lip-service to the republican virtues of the citizen-soldier.⁴⁶ But in reality, militia service diminished considerably.⁴⁷ Brooms filled in for muskets at drill and private volunteer units started to replace mandatory units. Men simply stopped training without fear of local, state, or national reprisal. The Militia Act of 1792 was finally repealed as part of the Militia Act of 1903.⁴⁸

In short, militias as a form of universal military training and service were never truly universal and became still less so over time. American citizenship as it applied to white, freeborn men, never truly rested on an obligation to serve.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, the

⁴⁵ For example, during the War of 1812, Governor John Cotton Smith of Connecticut declared the federal mobilization of militia units unconstitutional, claiming that the presence of British ships off the American coast did not constitute an invasion, while members of the Ohio and New York militias refused to cross the border into Canada, citing the provision that militia units were to be used as a defensive force only. See John K. Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Company: 1983), 67-69.

⁴⁶ Jerry Cooper, *The Militia and the National Guard in America Since Colonial Times: A Research Guide* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1993), 69.

⁴⁷ According to Mahon, by the late 1820s, Ohio had the largest proportion of militiamen to general population at one in five, while South Carolina had the lowest at one in nineteen. In 1830, the War Department issued enough weapons to states to equip only 12,500 men out of the estimated one to two million eligible for military service. Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard*, 83.

⁴⁸ Popularly known as the Dick Act, after Representative Charles Dick of Ohio, the Chairman of the House Committee on Military Affairs, the Militia Act of 1903 created a voluntary “organized militia,” otherwise known as the National Guard, which would be equipped and at least marginally funded by the federal government, would have to conform to certain government standards, and which could be federalized in the case of a national emergency, but which would otherwise remain under the control of the individual states.

⁴⁹ For a larger discussion of exclusionary definitions of the citizen-soldier, see Eliot A. Cohen, *Citizens and Soldiers*, ch. 5.

ideal of the citizen-soldier as an arbiter of citizenship and virtue, the “civic-minded willingness to set aside private interests for the sake of the common good” against the corrupting influences of concentrated power, resonated with the American populace during the nineteenth century, when concepts of citizenship increasingly depended on broad civic participation.⁵⁰ As men – middle- and working-class, native-born and immigrant – voted, ran for office, marched in parades, debated one another, and joined civic organizations, they created ritual practices that united them as citizens of a nation rather than simply inhabitants of a locality or state. In the words of historian Thomas Watson, “Republicanism...was not an abstraction for the typical American freeholder.”⁵¹ Militia service was part of this broad political participation. The symbolic value of the citizen-soldier as a strong, virtuous, patriotic, masculine ideal that was on display during military drill far outweighed the reality that relatively few men actually served in militias and those who did frequently did so in exclusionary units as a means to gain social status.

The ideal of the citizen-soldier took on additional symbolic power in the twentieth century with the advent of mass armies, especially in the wake of World War II, the high

⁵⁰ Scholars of the antebellum era have argued that the democratization of civic participation in everything from voting rights to fire brigades helped individual white men constitute their own understandings of citizenship. See, Bruce Dorsey, *Reforming Men and Women: Gender in the Antebellum City* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2002); Harry L. Watson, *Liberty and Power: The Politics of Jacksonian America*, updated edition (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006); Bruce Laurie, *Working People of Philadelphia, 1800-1850* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press 1980); David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (New York: Verso, 1991); Susan G. Davis, *Parades and Power: Street Theatre in Nineteenth-Century Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986); Amy S. Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Mark Tebeau, *Eating Smoke: Fire in Urban America, 1800-1950* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003); Michael E. McGerr, *The Decline of Popular Politics: The American North, 1865-1928* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986). Quote, Watson, *Liberty and Power*, 45.

⁵¹ Watson, *Liberty and Power*, 49.

point of mass citizen participation in the American military. Approximately 12 million men – including 80 percent of men born in the 1920s – served in the armed forces during the war.⁵² The majority was drafted. But whether each individual enlisted or was conscripted, military service was, for that generation, a common experience. World War II veterans, just like veterans of every other American war from the Revolution to the present, earned special benefits – variously, pensions, preferential hiring status, health care, low-interest loans, and access to education – that remained unavailable to Americans who did not enter the armed forces. The passage of the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944, more popularly known as the G.I. Bill, allowed almost an entire generation of American men access to these benefits, a phenomenon historian Patrick J. Kelly has termed “martial citizenship.”⁵³ Volunteers and draftees alike – both citizen-soldiers – gained special status through their military service.

But the depth of the myth after World War II went beyond mass participation, for the second realm inhabited by the citizen-soldier is symbolic. In Krebs’ words, the citizen-soldier is “a set of rhetorical conventions.”⁵⁴ As this dissertation will show, politicians, the media, and individuals used the symbol of the citizen-soldier to embody America’s best values, although how they defined these values varied by time and place. Most commonly, the citizen-soldier has been portrayed as a man who sacrificed – his time, his property, his family life, his health, his life – in order to protect his loved ones and his nation. For example, as chapter one will show, President Harry Truman, in

⁵² Elizabeth Mettler, *Soldiers to Citizens: The G.I. Bill and the Making of the Greatest Generation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 7.

⁵³ Patrick J. Kelly, *Creating a National Home: Building the Veteran’s Welfare State, 1860-1900* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997).

⁵⁴ Krebs, “The Citizen-Soldier Tradition in the United States,” 154.

advocating for a system of universal military training for all American men, used the symbol of the minuteman who grabbed his musket from the mantel to defend his infant country's liberty as shorthand. Truman expected Americans to recognize this citizen-soldier as a virtuous, honorable, courageous, strong, and resourceful man, willing to sacrifice his time and his life for the good of the nation. The symbolic language used by Truman and others through the period under study, also encompassed that which the soldier was supposed to gain from his service to the nation, including a sense of belonging, self-discipline, and respect for the diversity of the American populace. In short, many of the individuals discussed in this work assumed that military service was a great leveler. Through their service to the country, men were to gain an appreciation for their nation and their fellow citizens *and* improve as individuals and citizens.⁵⁵ The symbol of the citizen-soldier incorporated all of these values.

The ideal of the citizen-soldier has also been gendered.⁵⁶ According to the myth, military service, which, historically, has been available only to (free, white) men,

⁵⁵ Political scientist Eliot A. Cohen argues that three characteristics differentiate the citizen-soldier from a professional or semi-professional soldier. First, he must be motivated by an obligation to the state or out of defensive necessity. Second, citizen-soldiers must reflect the demographic make up of the citizenry at large in order to represent the state. Third, his identity must be "fundamentally civilian." See Cohen, "Twilight of the Citizen Soldier," *Parameters* 31 (summer 2001), available at <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/USAWC/Parameters/Articles/01summer/cohen.htm>.

⁵⁶ See, for example, Marcia Kovitz, "The Roots of Military Masculinity," 1-14, in *Military Masculinities: Identity and the State*, ed. Paul R. Higate (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2003); R. Claire Snyder, *Citizen-Soldiers and Manly Warriors: Military Service and Gender in the Civic Republican Tradition* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1999). War, itself has also been a gendering experience. See, for example, Margaret Randolph Higonnet, et al. (eds), *Behind the Lines: Gender and the Two World Wars* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press: 1987), especially Higonnet, "Introduction," 1-17, and Margaret R. Higonnet and Patrice L.-R. Higonnet, "The Double Helix," 31-47; Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Women and War* (New York: Basic Books, 1987); Elshtain and Sheila Tobias, (eds.), *Women, Militarism, and War: Essays in History, Politics and*

transformed boys into manly citizens. Political scientist R. Claire Snyder, for example, argued that the voluntary militia units formed by private citizens to replace dying public units in the antebellum era helped unify American manhood. Although individual men joined outfits based on their social class, race, and ethnicity, volunteers in all of these units participated in drill, wore similar uniforms, and professed a commitment to the public good. “The myth of the Citizen-Soldier,” she wrote, “demanded that a diversity of male individuals participate in the martial rituals that would constitute them as a fraternity of masculine republican citizens.”⁵⁷ Thus, all of the qualities associated with

Social Theory (Savage, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1990); Miriam Cooke and Angela Woollacott, (eds.), *Gendering War Talk* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993); Alan Berube, *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two* (New York: The Free Press, 1990); Bailey and Farber, *The First Strange Place: The Alchemy of Race and Sex in World War II Hawaii* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992); John D’Emilio and Estelle Freedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* (New York: Perennial Books, 1992); Canaday, *The Straight State*; Leisa Meyer, *Creating G.I. Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women’s Army Corps during World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998); Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1998); Higate, *Military Masculinities*; Stefan Dudink, Karen Hagemann, and John Tosh, eds., *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History* (New York: Manchester University Press, 2004); Christina S. Jarvis, *The Male Body at War: American Masculinity during World War II* (DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 2004); Amy Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood*; Eleanor Hannah, *Manhood Citizenship and the National Guard, Illinois, 1870-1914* (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 2007); Susan Zeiger, “Finding a Cure for War: Women’s Politics and the Peace Movement in the 1920s,” *Journal of Social History* 24 (Fall 1990): 69-86; Amy Swerdlow, *Women Strike for Peace: Traditional Motherhood and Radical Politics in the 1960s* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); Dee Garrison, “‘Our Skirts Gave Them Courage’: The Civil Defense Protest Movement in New York City, 1955-61,” 201-228, in *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960*, ed. Joanne Meyerowitz (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994); Timothy Stewart-Winter, “Not a Soldier, Not a Slacker: Conscientious Objectors and Male Citizenship during the Second World War,” *Gender and Society* 19, no. 3 (2007): 519-42; Robert A. Nye, “Western Masculinities in War and Peace,” Review Essay, *American Historical Review* 112, no. 2 (April 2007): 417-438.

⁵⁷ Snyder, *Citizen-Soldiers and Manly Warriors*, 86-87.

the ideal – duty, independence, patriotism, honor, self-discipline, and so on – were associated with masculinity. These manly characteristics infused cultural representations of military service.⁵⁸ Moreover, since, through most of American history, women (and non-white and homosexual men) have been excluded from the military, martial citizenship has accrued only to (white, heterosexual) men.⁵⁹ The feminized social position of conscientious objectors, who were branded as sissies, weaklings, cowards, and traitors during both World Wars, underscores this point.⁶⁰ Men, therefore, have also served in order to protect their masculinity.⁶¹

The citizen-soldier has been a malleable symbol because it has resonated widely across the political spectrum. On one hand, it has been intimately linked to the ideal

⁵⁸ Leo Braudy, *From Chivalry to Terrorism: War and the Changing Nature of Masculinity* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003); Jarvis, *The Male Body at War*, 35-55; Anna Clark, “The Rhetoric of Masculine Citizenship: Concepts and Representations in Modern Western Political Culture,” 3-22, in *Representing Masculinity: Male Citizenship in Modern Western Culture*, ed. Hagemann, Dudink, and Clark (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007).

⁵⁹ Kelly, *Creating a National Home*; Canaday, *The Straight State*; Lizabeth Cohen, *Consumers’ Republic*; Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1992); Linda K. Kerber, *No Constitutional Right to be Ladies: Women and the Obligations of Citizenship* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998); Elizabeth Regosin, *Freedom’s Promise: Ex-Slave Families and Citizenship in the Age of Emancipation* (Charlottesville, Va.: University Press of Virginia, 2002); Mettler, *Soldiers to Citizens*; Stephen R. Ortiz, *Beyond the Bonus March and the G.I. Bill: How Veteran Politics Shaped the New Deal Era* (New York: New York University Press, 2010); Kathleen J. Frydl, *The GI Bill* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Gregory T. Knouff, “White Men in Arms: Concepts of Citizenship in Revolutionary America,” 25-44, in *Representing Masculinity*, ed. Dudink, Hagemann, and Clark.

⁶⁰ For more on conscientious objectors, see Moskos and Chambers, *The New Conscientious Objection*; Stewart-Winter, “Not a Soldier, Not a Slacker”; Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You*, esp. ch. 2.

⁶¹ Braudy, *From Chivalry to Terrorism*; Chris Hedges, *War is a Force that Gives Us Meaning*, (New York: Anchor Books, 2002); Barbara Ehrenreich, *Blood Rites: Origins and History of the Passions of War* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1997), 125-131.

civic-republican definition of citizenship, which historically stressed the pursuit of the public good over private interests. According to this tradition, the citizen-soldier performed military service in order to earn the right to political participation. The act of soldiering constituted citizenship. Service in the military built the qualities – honor, duty, self-sacrifice, independence, patriotism, courage – that composed the civic virtue required of all citizens in a republic.⁶² “Equal rights,” in the words of scholar Francine D’Amico, “demand[ed] equal responsibilities.”⁶³ Moreover, following the Anti-Federalists of the Revolutionary era, universal (male) participation in the military was supposed to prevent the establishment of a warrior elite and eliminate the potential for tyranny that could accompany a standing army.⁶⁴

But liberals in the classical tradition have also utilized the myth of the citizen-soldier, if somewhat differently. The classically liberal conception of citizenship has historically privileged individual liberties over obligation to the polity and rejected the idea of military service as a prerequisite for citizenship. Rather than citizens owing an obligation to the state, therefore, classical liberalism has stressed the state’s responsibility to protect the rights of citizens. Ideally, citizens have only a limited liability to the state that can be discharged through the payment of taxes. According to political scientist Eliot

⁶² Dudink, “In the Shadow of the Citizen-Soldier: Politics and Gender in Dutch Officers’ Careers, 1780-1815,” 111, in *Gender, War, and Politics: Transatlantic Perspectives, 1775-1830*, edited by Hagemann, Gisela Mettele, and Jane Rendell (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010); Mark E. Kann, *On the Man Question: Gender and Civic Virtue in America*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 18; Derek Heater, *What is Citizenship?* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, Inc., 1999), 49.

⁶³ Francine D’Amico, “Citizen-Soldier? Class, Race, Gender, Sexuality, and the U.S. Military,” 107, in *States of Conflict: Gender, Violence, and Resistance*, ed. Susie Jacobs, Ruth Jacobson, and Jennifer Marchbank (New York: Zed Books, 2000).

⁶⁴ Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*, enlarged edition (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1967, 1990), ch. 3.

A. Cohen, model liberals believe “life is a natural right.” Thus, a man cannot “rightfully be required to die for his country” unless “peril [is] immediate and mortal,” in which case the state must be defended so that it can survive to protect individual rights in the future.⁶⁵ In the words of political scientist Derek Heater, the “liberal citizen is expected to feel only a limited obligation to the state,” and “the state is expected to impinge on the citizen’s life in only a feeble way.”⁶⁶ Liberalism historically rejected the compulsion inherent in civic-republicanism, but treated voluntary participation in the armed forces as a moral obligation, nonetheless.⁶⁷ Liberals worked to create a military controlled by civilian officials and staffed by non-professional soldiers who freely offered their time and service.⁶⁸ This is why, through most of their history, American military forces have been constituted solely by volunteers. Both models, however, have used the figure of a moral, virtuous, soldier who served to protect his home, family, and nation to show how civilian values should infuse the military and rein in its power.

⁶⁵ Eliot A. Cohen, *Citizens and Soldiers*, 134-36. Quote p. 136.

⁶⁶ Heater, *What is Citizenship?*, 7.

⁶⁷ Cohen, *Citizens and Soldiers*, 137.

⁶⁸ For more on the ideological differences between civic republican and liberal conceptions of citizenship, see Ruth H. Bloch, “The Gendered Meanings of Virtue in Revolutionary America,” *Signs* 13 (Fall 1987): 37-58; Isaac Kramnick, “The ‘Great National Discussion’: The Discourse of Politics in 1787,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 45, no. 1 (Jan. 1988): 3-32; Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*. For more on how these ideologies affected the ideal of the citizen-soldier in the United States, see Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1957); Eliot A. Cohen, *Citizens and Soldiers*, ch. 5-6; Snyder, *Citizen-Soldiers and Manly Warriors*; Michael S. Neiberg, *Making Citizen Soldiers: ROTC and the Ideology of American Military Service* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000); Ronald R. Krebs, *Fighting for Rights: Military Service and the Politics of Citizenship* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2006); Lawrence Cress, *Citizens in Arms: The Army and Militia in American Society to the War of 1812* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982).

My work indicates some of the ways these varied visions of military service functioned in the American political realm between 1945 and 1973. Politicians' and officials' positions in debates over military manpower policy rarely broke along party lines. Instead, planners, interest groups, and ordinary citizens tended to support or reject proposals based on how they defined citizenship. This is how, for example, Director of Selective Service Lewis B. Hershey, a Republican who believed strongly in civic republican definitions of citizenship, could support Democrat Lyndon Johnson's Great Society proposals. As I argue, Hershey hoped programs designed to identify and rehabilitate poor men who could not pass their induction exams would give those men the tools they needed to serve their nation in some capacity. It also explains how, in 1966, James Farmer, a founder and former director of the civil rights organization Congress of Racial Equality; Norman Thomas, a co-founder of the American Civil Liberties Union and perennial presidential candidate for the Socialist Party of America; Karl Hess, an advisor and speech writer for Republican Senator and presidential candidate Barry Goldwater; and Milton Friedman, among others, could come together to sponsor an organization dedicated to ending the draft.⁶⁹ Although these men inhabited vastly

⁶⁹ These men, along with Yale Brozen, an economics professor at the University of Chicago; Bruce K. Chapman, the author of *The Wrong Man in Uniform*, a work that publicized the problems of the draft; Richard C. Cornelle, the author of *Reclaiming the American Dream*, a book that promoted the libertarian vision of voluntarism to solve the nation's problems; David Franke, the editor of the *New Guard*, the organ of the Young Americans for Freedom; Sanford Gottlieb, the Political Action Advisor for the National Committee for a SANE Nuclear Policy; and Eugene Groves, the President of the National Student Association, a student activist organization, all sponsored the University of Chicago-based Council for a Volunteer Military. See Thomas B. Curtis, "Conscription and Commitment," n.d., reprint, May 15 [1969] Meeting, box 1, Records of Temporary Committees, Commissions, and Boards, Records of the President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force, 1969-1970, Papers of Richard Nixon, National Archives and

different positions on the political spectrum, from socialist to libertarian, they all favored a liberal interpretation of citizenship with regard to military service. They all believed that Selective Service, as it functioned during the Vietnam War, infringed on men's rights and therefore harmed American liberty.

* * * * *

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, politicians and defense officials blended pragmatic policy decisions with a desire to use the military establishment to affect social change. This combination widened the definition of what constituted service to the state, and, I argue, emphasized the importance of men's breadwinner role and responsible fatherhood rather than military obligation. As a result, however individual men chose to define their own masculinity and citizenship, these policies conveyed the message that men did not need to serve in the armed forces to prove themselves responsible men or good citizens.

This argument adds a new dimension to the scholarly use of the term "economic citizenship." Recent historians have used it to signify the system of benefits workers earned from the state through their employment, including the right to Social Security's old age pensions, unemployment compensation, and disability insurance. Such entitlements offered workers a measure of economic stability and marked them as full participants in the political economy.⁷⁰ It also afforded them the ability to consume, for,

Records Administration, College Park, Md. The reprint of the original article, which appears to have run in *Playboy*, was sponsored by the Council for a Volunteer Military.

⁷⁰ This definition of economic citizenship originated primarily with historians of women responding in large part to feminist critiques of British sociologist T.H. Marshall's tri-partite model of citizenship and other frameworks that assumed a male subject. T.H. Marshall, "Citizenship and Social Class," 1949, reprinted in *Class, Citizenship, and Social Development: Essays by T.H. Marshall* (Garden City, N.Y.:

as historian Meg Jacobs has argued, consumption replaced “production as the foundation of American civic identity,” in the twentieth century. Economic citizenship became “essential to the definition of modern liberalism.”⁷¹ This was evident even on U.S. military bases in Vietnam, where soldiers demanded the right to consumer goods, including American steak and Coca-Cola.⁷²

In my work, I use “economic citizenship” to refer to a set of citizens’ responsibilities to the state in addition to the benefits workers expected from the state. Economic markers, including a high gross national product, full employment, and a

Doubleday and Company, 1964). Historian Jennifer Klein, for example, in her discussion of the development of the public-private system of welfare benefits that developed in the U.S. between 1910 and 1960, used Marshall’s idea of “social citizenship,” which included economic welfare and security, to describe activists’ demands. See Klein, *For All These Rights*, esp. pp. 8-9, 143-145. Linda Gordon also used the language of “social citizenship,” provided by Marshall, but she discussed the basic concept of economic citizenship without the terminology in the conclusion of *Pitied but not Entitled: Single Mothers and the History of Welfare, 1890-1935* (New York: Free Press, 1994), 287-306. Felicia Kornbluh similarly did not use the term, but discussed poor women’s fight for “economic rights,” in the 1960s and 1970s. She defined these rights as “access to decently waged jobs,” “better service at government offices,” and “full access...to...consumer marketplaces,” among others. To the women profiled by Kornbluh, “first-class citizenship” included these economic rights. See Kornbluh, *The Battle for Welfare Rights: Politics and Poverty in Modern America*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007). Quote, p. 17. Thomas F. Jackson used a similar construction in his discussion of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s struggle for economic rights for African Americans. See Jackson, *From Civil Rights to Human Rights: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Struggle for Economic Justice* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007). For examples of scholarship that directly uses the language of economic citizenship, see Alice Kessler-Harris, *In Pursuit of Equity: Women, Men, and the Quest for Economic Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); Lizabeth Cohen, *Consumers’ Republic*; Meg Jacobs, *Pocketbook Politics: Economic Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2005); Michael B. Katz, *The Price of Citizenship: Redefining the American Welfare State*, Updated Edition (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 341-359.

⁷¹ Meg Jacobs, *Pocketbook Politics*, 2-3.

⁷² See Meredith H. Lair, *Armed with Abundance: Consumerism and Soldiering in the Vietnam War* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

consumerist lifestyle, became, in the minds of some, weapons of the Cold War in the 1950s and 1960s.⁷³ Men's ability to earn a living for their families not only earned them the right to federal entitlements, but, as I will show, also became a matter of national security in the minds of significant policymakers. A democratic, capitalist system could not prove its superiority if a significant segment of the population lived in poverty and was therefore dependent on handouts.⁷⁴ Breadwinning fathers kept families off of the dole and earned the federal benefits they gained. But their labor – and therefore their economic independence – was also defined by the Selective Service as a contribution to the nation's defense. Self-sufficient workers strengthened the United States. Deferments in the 1950s and Department of Defense initiatives in the 1960s designed to locate and “rehabilitate” poor and minority men worked to encourage and train men to enter the civilian workforce. These programs sent the message that military service was only one way for men to defend and serve the nation. Supporting their families was another. For certain defense planners, including Hershey and Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara

⁷³ Vice-President Nixon's 1959 “Kitchen Debate” with Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev is the most famous example.

⁷⁴ Civil rights activists made a parallel argument in their fight for equal rights for African Americans. See Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000); Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001); Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935-1960* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Carol Anderson, *Eyes off the Prize: The United Nations and the African American Struggle for Human Rights, 1944-1955* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Penny M. Von Eschen, *Race against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1997); Jonathan Rosenberg, *How Far the Promised Land? World Affairs and the American Civil Rights Movement from the First World War to Vietnam* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006).

and Great Society Liberals like Secretary of Labor W. Willard Wirtz, helping men earn full economic citizenship eclipsed the masculine obligation to perform military service.⁷⁵

This finding has an important implication for the historiography of militarization in the United States.⁷⁶ Military manpower policies that defined non-military pursuits as essential to national defense clearly served to militarize the civilian sector, as certain occupations and domestic arrangements were portrayed as aiding the country's national defense against communism. As scholars have shown, civilian scientists conducted the research necessary to build a better bomb. Fathers financially supported their families, which helped Americans achieve the consumerist lifestyle that was supposed to characterize a capitalist democracy, and led their families' civil defense efforts.⁷⁷ By

⁷⁵ Robert O. Self discusses the importance of breadwinner masculinity to Great Society liberals in chapter 1 and the "fracturing of coherent wartime manhood" during the Vietnam War in chapter 2 of his recent study of the American family, although he does not explicitly connect the two ideas. Robert O. Self, *All in the Family: The Realignment of American Democracy since the 1960s* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2012).

⁷⁶ My work utilizes Michael Sherry's definition of militarization as "the process by which war and national security became consuming anxieties and provided the memories, models, and metaphors that shaped broad areas of national life" after World War II. See Sherry, *In the Shadow of War: The United States since the 1930s* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1995), xi.

⁷⁷ For more on militarization during the Cold War, see Lori Lyn Bogle, *The Pentagon's Battle for the American Mind* (College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University Press, 2004); Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights*; Aaron L. Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State: America's Anti-Statism and Its Cold War Grand Strategy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000); Andrew D. Grossman, *Neither Dead nor Red: Civilian Defense and American Political Development during the Early Cold War* (New York: Routledge, 2001); Jonathan P. Herzog, *The Spiritual-Industrial Complex: America's Religious Battle against Communism in the Early Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Stuart W. Leslie, *The Cold War and American Science: The Military-Industrial-Academic Complex at MIT and Stanford* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994); Jennifer S. Light, *From Warfare to Welfare: Defense Intellectuals and Urban Problems in Cold War America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005); Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988); Laura McEnaney, *Civil Defense Begins at Home: Militarization Meets Everyday Life in the Fifties* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton

associating national security with civilian pursuits, these policies helped militarize huge swaths of civilian life. Surprisingly, however, by identifying non-military pursuits as essential to national defense, these same military manpower policies weakened the citizen-soldier ideal by ensuring that a shrinking proportion of men would serve in the military and by defining civilian pursuits as the equivalent of military service. The defense establishment, therefore, unintentionally undermined its own manpower procurement system, leading to the eventual disestablishment of the draft.

* * * * *

In addition to explaining the mechanisms men used to avoid military service during the Vietnam War, this work joins a new and growing body of literature that highlights how assumptions about gender, race, sexuality, and class shaped public policy and how, in turn, public policy shaped identities and social relations. Policy both reinforced existing beliefs about America's social structure and caused those beliefs to evolve and change.⁷⁸

University Press, 2000); Guy Oakes, *The Imaginary War: Civil Defense and American Cold War Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); Joy Rohde, "The Social Scientists' War: Expertise in a Cold War Nation" (Ph.D. Diss.: University of Pennsylvania, 2007); John L. Rudolph, *Scientists in the Classroom: The Cold War Reconstruction of American Science* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); Sherry, *In the Shadow of War*; Sparrow, *The Warfare State*; James Tracy, *Direct Action: Radical Pacifism from the Union Eight to the Chicago Seven* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); Zouyue Wang, *In Sputnik's Shadow: The President's Science Advisory Committee and Cold War America* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2009).

⁷⁸ For example, see David M.P. Freund, *Colored Property: State Policy and White Racial Politics in Suburban America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), Jennifer Mittelstadt, *From Welfare to Workfare: The Unintended Consequences of Liberal Reform, 1945-1965* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press 2005); Canaday, *The Straight State*; McEnaney, *Civil Defense Begins at Home*; Regosin, *Freedom's Promise*; Gerald E. Shenk, *Work or Fight: Race Gender and the Draft in World War One* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005).

This project argues that debates over men's proper role in society influenced military manpower policy. As they discussed and argued over which men should serve in the armed forces and which should not, politicians, military officials, and ordinary Americans betrayed a strong attachment to the masculine citizen-soldier. Those who subscribed to civic republican ideology tended to believe that military service could transform boys into men by teaching them the rudiments of citizenship, hardening their bodies, and inculcating self-discipline. They believed that martial masculinity was the key to national improvement, and military service should be a rite of passage for all young men. Others, however, argued that universal service would corrupt male youth, regiment it, and ultimately undermine American freedom. These critics highlighted the importance of domestic forms of masculinity. They understood the family as the center of a man's life. They argued that parents nurtured boys into men, and then the families that mature men headed constituted their most important contribution to the state. Still other critics of military service, especially those who believed in the importance of classically liberal forms of citizenship, focused on the male role of breadwinner. Compulsory military service, they believed, robbed men of their ability to choose how to support their families and contribute to national strength in the manner that they saw fit. As the modern liberal state grew through the twentieth-century, the influence of civic republicanism waned. Military manpower policy, as a reflection of national values, increasingly privileged individuals' rights to pursue masculine citizenship in a variety of ways, both within and outside of the military establishment.⁷⁹

⁷⁹ On the subject of the military as a reflection of civilian society, see Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*; Huntington, *The Common Defense: Strategic Programs in National Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961); Eliot A. Cohen, *Citizens*

This project also explores what one scholar has called “the lived Cold War.”⁸⁰ Military manpower policy affected the life choices of some men and their families. As I will argue, deferments from military service became normalized through the 1950s and 1960s. They became significantly easier to obtain and excuse, which in turn, influenced the career choices of some men, when they married, and the circumstances under which they decided to have children. For a few, the availability of deferments affected how they treated their bodies, including whether they sought treatment for medical conditions. The laws and regulations that governed deferments evolved in response to America’s foreign policy and defense needs. Policy shaped in reaction to Cold War strategy, therefore, directly impacted individual lives.

and Soldiers; William O. Walker, *National Security and Core Values in American History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Edward Bernard Glick, *Soldiers, Scholars, and Society* (Pacific Palisades, Calif.: Goodyear Publishing Co., 1971); Suzanne C. Nielsen and Don M. Snider (eds.), *American Civil-Military Relations: The Soldier and the State in a New Era* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009). On the subject of multiple masculinities, see Steve Estes, *I am a Man: Race, Manhood, and the Civil Rights Movement* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); James Gilbert, *Men in the Middle: Searching for Masculinity in the 1950s* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005); Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood*; Jarvis, *The Male Body at War*; Dudink, et al., *Masculinities in Politics and War*; Higate, *Military Masculinities*; R.W. Connell, *Masculinities*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2005); George Chauncey, “Christian Brotherhood or Sexual Perversion? Homosexual Identities and the Construction of Sexual Boundaries in the World War I Era,” 294-317, in *Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*, ed. Martin Dauml Duberman, Martha Vicinus, and Chauncey (New York: New American Library, 1989); Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Makings of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940* (New York: Basic Books, 1994); Martin Summers, *Manliness and its Discontents: The Black Middle Class and the Transformation of Masculinity, 1900-1930* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* (New York: Free Press, 1996); E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformation in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1993).

⁸⁰ I am grateful to Anne Deighton for this phrase. She used it during her plenary panel, “Did the Cold War Matter,” at the Tenth Annual LSE-GWU-UCSB Graduate Conference on the Cold War, London School of Economics, London, United Kingdom, April 2012.

The long view of manpower policy helps contextualize the anti-draft and anti-military protest of the late 1960s and early 1970s. As previously explained, scholars who have examined the failure of conscription and the shift to the All-Volunteer Force have identified the unique circumstances of the Vietnam War as the main cause of anti-military sentiment. I argue that it has a longer history. Historians of the pacifist movement *have* identified a longer history of anti-military activism, but tend to view draft resistance as a tool of activists, when, quite often, it was men who would not consider themselves politically active who sought legal ways to avoid the draft.⁸¹ Works that look at Cold War culture have identified a weakening of “the warrior image” in the decades before the Vietnam War but have not adequately identified either the causes or implications of this change.⁸² Scholars of gender have used anti-military sentiment during the Vietnam War to explain the nation’s so-called “crisis of masculinity” in the

⁸¹ DeBenedetti, *The Peace Reform in American History* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1980); DeBenedetti and Chatfield, *An American Ordeal*; Tracy, *Direct Action*; Lawrence S. Wittner, *Rebels Against War: The American Peace Movement, 1941-1960* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969); Moskos and Chambers, *The New Conscientious Objection*; Patricia Applebaum, *Kingdom to Commune: Protestant Pacifist Culture between World War I and the Vietnam Era* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009); Mitchel K. Hall, *Because of their Faith: CALCAV and Religious Opposition to the Vietnam War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990); Anne Klejment and Nancy L. Roberts (eds.), *American Catholic Pacifism: The Influence of Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker Movement* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1996); Stephen M. Kohn, *Jailed for Peace: The History of American Draft Law Violators, 1658-1985* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger Press, 1986).

⁸² Tom Englehardt, *The End of Victory Culture: Cold War America and the Disillusioning of a Generation* (New York: Basic Books, 1995); Huebner, *The Warrior Image*; Jon Robert Adams, *Male Armor: The Soldier-Hero in Contemporary American Culture* (Charlottesville, Va.: University of Virginia Press, 2008); Christian G. Appy, “‘We’ll Follow the Old Man’: The Strains of Sentimental Militarism in Popular Films of the Fifties,” 74-105, in *Rethinking Cold War Culture*, ed. Peter J. Kuznick and James Gilbert (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001).

1970s and 1980s but have not explained the origin of this sentiment.⁸³ My work pulls all of these threads together, and, by asking new questions about the meanings of national service and citizenship, helps explain a phenomenon that no one else has been able to. Most importantly, I demonstrate the surprising ways that military policy itself promoted men's ambivalence toward military service and how it influenced the way individuals thought about the relationship among citizenship, masculinity, and military service.

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Finally, a note explaining the process by which men entered the military is in order. Between 1948 and 1973, men became soldiers in one of two ways. The first was by volunteering.⁸⁴ If a man chose to enlist, he signed up for the service branch and program of his choice through local recruiting stations. He would then undergo a physical exam, aptitude testing, and an interview at an Armed Forces Examining Station (AFES) in his home state.⁸⁵ If he met the entrance requirements for his desired service branch, he was sent to basic training, upon the satisfactory completion of which, he would be a soldier, sailor, airman, or marine. The different service branches had different methods of handling men who could not pass their basic training, including "recycling," whereby

⁸³ Susan Jeffords, *The Remasculinization of America: Gender and the Vietnam War* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1989); Faludi, *Stiffed*; Natasha Zaretsky, *No Direction Home: The American Family and the Fear of National Decline, 1968-1980* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Cynthia Enloe, *The Morning After: Sexual Politics at the End of the Cold War* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1993), ch. 3; Ehrenreich, *The Hearts of Men: American Dreams and the Flight from Commitment* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press, 1983).

⁸⁴ The "choice" to volunteer can be misleading throughout the period when the draft operated. As will be demonstrated throughout "Citizen-Civilians," especially in chapters two and three, one of the main purposes of conscription was to pressure men to choose to enlist before they could be drafted.

⁸⁵ Armed Forces Examination Stations are sometimes referred to as Armed Forces Examining and Induction Stations (AFEIS) or Armed Forces Examining and Entrance Station (AFEES). For the sake of consistency, this work will use the acronym AFES.

recruits would redo certain portions of the program. It was rare but possible to wash out of training for physical or mental reasons. It was more common, however, for a trainee to be discharged for disciplinary infractions, a status that carried with it lasting repercussions since men were required to share their military discharge status with prospective employers. College men could also volunteer for the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), which, if successfully completed, would lead to a commission in the reserves or active duty forces.⁸⁶

The second option for entering the military was to wait to be drafted through the Selective Service System.⁸⁷ Most men registered at their local Selective Service boards in person upon their eighteenth birthdays. Those with obvious disabilities, like a missing limb, or who required institutionalization, would not have to travel to their local boards but would be immediately classified as ineligible for military service. Through the 1950s and early 1960s, as deferment standards became more lenient, those who could demonstrate physical disabilities such as asthma or cardiac defects with a note from a physician could also be classified as IV-F upon their initial contact with the Selective Service. Everyone else received a questionnaire designed to provide the local board members with information about the registrant's dependents, educational status, occupation, and religion. Based on the man's answers, members of the man's local board

⁸⁶ Between its creation in 1916 and the early 1960s, two years of ROTC training were compulsory on many college campuses, including almost all of the nation's land-grant universities. In the years just prior to America's entry into the Vietnam War, as part of a larger program of revamping the country's reserve programs, universities began to drop the compulsory aspect of military training. Between 1961 and 1965, sixty Army ROTC and 59 Air Force ROTC units switched to an all-volunteer status. For more information, see Neiberg, *Making Citizen Soldiers*, 58.

⁸⁷ Through most of the period under study, this meant induction into the Army, which during times of peace was the only service branch directly utilizing conscription to meet its manpower quotas.

– unpaid volunteers who were overwhelmingly veterans and who were all men – would provisionally classify the man as I-A (available for service), begin proceedings to determine if he could be considered a conscientious objector, or provide a deferment according to the current Selective Service regulations. Those who received deferments would have their files reviewed once per year to determine if the mitigating factor remained. If a man graduated from college, lost his job, or experienced some change in his dependency status – if an elderly parent whom he supported died, for example – he would be provisionally reclassified as I-A.

Those whom local boards provisionally classified as I-A eventually would be called to their nearest AFES for their preinduction exam, a procedure identical to the induction exam taken by volunteers.⁸⁸ Men were asked to strip down to their underwear and move from station to station to have various parts of their bodies physically examined. They would also receive a chest X-ray, urinalysis, and blood work. After the physical exam was completed, men would dress and move on for what the Army described as a mental test – an aptitude test designed to measure a potential recruit’s ability to absorb military training.⁸⁹ A man’s score on the exam would determine into which mental category he would be placed. In theory, the Army drafted men from each

⁸⁸ Until 1967, the Selective Service inducted the oldest eligible men first. When draft calls, as set by the Selective Service, were low, this process could be very slow. In 1963, for example, most men were not called for preinduction exams until the age of 21 and did not face induction until at least their 22nd birthdays, if not later. For a colorful description of the preinduction exam process, see George Walton, *The Wasted Generation* (Philadelphia: Chilton Books, 1965), 9-15.

⁸⁹ Between 1950 and 1972, men took the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT), which included sections that measured verbal ability, mathematical ability, and spatial reasoning.

mental category in proportion to the population at large.⁹⁰ After a full day, men returned home to wait. If and when the military needed them, they would receive an induction notice and be returned to the AFES for an induction exam. If a man was inducted within 180 days of his preinduction exam, this second exam would be a cursory inspection for any diseases or injuries he may have sustained since the initial inspection. If he received his induction notice more than 180 days after the first physical, he would receive a second full examination. After that, if he passed muster, he would be sworn into a particular service branch – the Army for most of the period under study – and be sent to basic training. Between 1948 and 1973, the preinduction exam was a common and nerve-wracking process for almost all American men.

* * * * *

“Citizen-Civilians” uses sources from a variety of archival, government, military, and civilian sources to build its arguments. It draws heavily from the records of presidential advisory commissions held at the Harry S. Truman Library in Independence, Missouri, and the National Archives and Records Administration in College Park, Maryland, as well as from the Records of the Selective Service, also at the National Archives. Documents from these collections provide a window into internal discussions on the development of military manpower policies. Transcripts from congressional hearings, published reports from government and military fact-finding committees, and

⁹⁰ Scores between 93 and 100 were considered Mental Group I, between 65 and 92 were Mental Group II, between 31 and 64 were Mental Group III, between 10 and 30 were Mental Group IV, and scores below 10 were Mental Group V. In theory, seven percent of draftees were to be from Category I, 28 percent from Category II, 34 percent from Category III, 21 percent from Category IV, and 10 percent from Category V. However, as chapter four will show, this was not always the case. See Walton, *The Wasted Generation*, 14.

publicity materials produced by the Army and Department of Defense illustrate the ways in which policy debates and decisions were disseminated to the public. Sociological studies, pilot-programs, and published position papers from private organizations, think tanks, and scholars show how these groups influenced policy decisions and public opinion. And finally, letters to the president and Selective Service found in archival collections, articles in the popular press, and public opinion polls indicate how Americans reacted to military manpower policy. I have supplemented archival and other primary sources with a rich body of secondary works on military policy, the Cold War, and gender in the United States.

Chapter one examines debates surrounding the push for universal military training (UMT) in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Proposals called for the military training of all eighteen year-old men, but as civilians rather than as soldiers. The measure was designed to return men to their civilian lives after their year of training but as members of a large, unorganized, civilian reserve. Planners believed that the knowledge men gained in that year would allow the military to mobilize quickly and efficiently in the event of nuclear attack or another war. Despite the support of the War Department, three presidents, and the majority of American citizens, UMT failed to gain legislative traction, in part because Americans did not share a common definition of masculine citizenship. This chapter argues that competing visions of manhood clashed in UMT proposals. Supporters hoped universal training would become a rite of passage that would teach patriotism and duty to American men at the same time that it remediated healthcare deficiencies and offered vocational training. A year with the military would put all American men, regardless of background, on a common path toward full citizenship in the civic-republican model.

Opponents, on the other hand, believed UMT would undermine the very foundations of American citizenship. Using a classically liberal interpretation, they believed compulsory training would violate trainees' rights, corrupt their moral virtue, and militarize the nation. Domestic and economic citizenship, they argued, was best achieved outside of the military establishment. Ultimately, I contend, UMT's failure confirmed the nation's commitment to selective rather than universal military service. Not all young men would serve in the military, even if all were ostensibly liable for such service under the draft. The failure of UMT also outlined the limits of militarization in Cold War America.

Chapter two, which examines the public debate over draft deferments immediately before and during the Korean War, argues that American commitment to selective military liability deepened in the early 1950s. The Selective Service faced a particularly difficult task during the conflict, as low birth rates during the Great Depression resulted in a smaller than usual pool of draft age men in the early 1950s. Nevertheless, it was during an active hot war that Congress instituted a deferment for college students. Members also postponed the induction of married men with children up until the very last days of the war. I contend that they – and other elements of American society – were reluctant to draft students and fathers because they believed that the Korean War was just the opening salvo of a much longer Cold War. America was entering an indeterminate period of militarized peace, during which conscription would remain necessary.⁹¹ Therefore, regulations instituted during the Korean War could not disrupt American society overmuch because, planners believed, such regulations were creating a new normalcy. The nation's economic and domestic future depended on

⁹¹ See chapter two for a discussion of what I mean by “militarized peace.”

careful and reasoned deliberation over who to draft and who to defer. The draft law that emerged during the Korean War, the Universal Military Training and Service Act of 1951, confirmed the importance of student, occupational, and dependency deferments. In the process of deferring tens of thousands of men under its provisions, however, the law militarized fatherhood and civilian occupations defined as in the national health, safety, or interest. Yet, by keeping certain groups of men out of the armed forces in the name of national security, the law broadened the definition of service to the state and limited the reach of the military itself.

Chapter three extends the argument developed in chapter two by focusing on the development of the Selective Service System's decision to "channel" men into certain occupations and domestic arrangements. Under the policy of "manpower channeling," the Selective Service offered deferments to those men who enlisted in the Reserves and National Guard, who pursued jobs deemed to be in the national interest, and who married and had children. In granting these deferments, the Selective Service altered its mission – defining itself as a civil defense agency as well as a procurer of military manpower – and the definition of service to the state. Not only did it accept civilian pursuits as national service as it had during the Korean War, but by the late 1950s, it explicitly encouraged certain men to fulfill their citizenship obligations by remaining civilians. Hershey and his staff believed that scientists, engineers, teachers, students, fathers, and others could contribute more to the nation as civilians than as soldiers. Through the policy of channeling, the Selective Service made social engineering one of its main priorities. Men themselves, whether aware of the policy's rationale or not, used their deferments to avoid

the military. As fewer and fewer men faced the threat of conscription, commitment to military service diminished. It became something that “other men” did.

Finally, chapter four returns to some of the same themes as chapter one. It examines other ways the military establishment became an agent of social engineering. Where manpower channeling primarily affected middle-class (often white) men who could afford the college educations necessary to enter the professions that would earn them deferments, other programs specifically targeted poor and minority men. The Selective Service and Department of Defense became soldiers in the War on Poverty. Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, in an effort to eradicate poverty and bolster America’s ideological struggle with the Soviet Union, turned to the Selective Service to identify men in need of vocational and educational help. Working with the Departments of Defense; Labor; and Health, Education, and Welfare, Hershey’s agency hoped to “salvage” those men believed to be incapable of service to the state. It first tried voluntary referral and rehabilitation programs, and then in 1966, the Defense Department initiated a compulsory program known as Project 100,000, designed to offer rehabilitation services to conscripts. These measures focused on creating productive economic citizens. They either kept men in the civilian world or highlighted military service as a means of achieving economic independence. The civic-republican notion of military service as a universal path to citizenship formerly stressed in the debates over UMT fell away. The message was that military service would not benefit all men. It would improve poor or otherwise marginalized men, but middle-class men were left to their own devices.

In all, I conclude, America's system of conscription was already in trouble by 1964, the year of the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. Many men simply did not feel it their responsibility to serve. As draft calls rose between 1964 and 1968, many resented the intrusion of Selective Service into their lives. Where the same might have been true during earlier conflicts, men were able to avoid service in large numbers during the Vietnam War because the mechanisms that allowed them – and even encouraged them – to do so were well-entrenched. The policies of the previous twenty-five years had provided both a rationale and a method for American men to avoid military service without risking their claims to masculinity or responsible citizenship.

Chapter One
“To Rub Smooth the Sharp Edges”:
Universal Military Training and the Meaning of Masculine Citizenship,
1945-1951

On January 13, 1947, the Army opened an Experimental Training Unit at Fort Knox, Kentucky. It was designed to test the War Department’s proposal for universal military training (UMT), a plan that would have required military training in a civilian capacity for all able-bodied American men. The plan proposed that eighteen-year-olds would train under regular military officers, but remain civilians themselves. The Army intended this new unit to demonstrate the feasibility and value of such training. Its commander, Brigadier General John M. Devine, who had spent the last year of World War II leading the Army’s 8th Armored Division across France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Germany, now found himself in the middle of a public relations war. Despite widespread political support for UMT, the measure faced stiff opposition from religious, pacifist, educational, farming, and labor organizations and some members of Congress. They worried that widespread military training would infringe on the rights of individual men, militarize the nation, and destroy its moral foundations. The Army, detractors believed, was not the place to develop democratic citizens or virtuous men. Devine’s mission, therefore, was to oversee the military education of trainees in the experimental unit while also reassuring UMT’s critics. This meant keeping a close eye on the physical, moral, and religious welfare of the men as well as devising disciplinary and training procedures suitable for civilians within a military establishment. It was no easy task.

Despite Devine's assurances that he had "no intentions of handling...trainees with gloves," he found it necessary to remind his commanders that they were "dealing with boys."¹ The general understood his "primary object" as the production of "disciplined, well trained, and self-reliant basic soldiers" despite the civilian nature of the program. He proposed "to train them like men (always remembering that they are boys)."² His statements indicate two of the central dilemmas of universal military training in the United States. In order to gain support for UMT legislation, promoters needed to appeal to constituents who wanted the "boys" protected and the "men" hardened, to those who hoped it would train soldiers physically to defend the nation and those who wanted to develop civilians willing to sustain the nation's democratic values.

Universal military training, as indicated by Devine's comments, was never envisioned as a straight-forward defense measure. Proponents argued that universal military training could eradicate illiteracy, remediate healthcare deficiencies, provide vocational training, and teach moral values. In short, the Army, through a program of UMT, could turn boys into productive American men. It would promote both martial citizenship and economic citizenship among trainees. Opponents vehemently disagreed. They could not accept military training as an essential component of male citizenship or the military as the best place to teach economic or domestic responsibility.

¹ John M. Devine to Lt. General Raymond S. McLain, 27 Jan. 1947, Commission Kit – 7th meeting, 1-31-47, Box 3, Records of the President's Advisory Commission on Universal Training [hereafter PACUT], Records of Temporary Committees, Commissions, and Boards (RG 220), Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, Missouri [hereafter HST]; Devine, John M., *Interim Report: U.M.T. Experimental Unit*, Fort Knox, Ky., 1947, 4, United States Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania [hereafter USAMHI].

² Devine to McLain.

Congressional refusal to enact a program of universal military training, therefore, was significant for two main reasons. First it indicated the limits of militarization in the immediate post-war United States. As the Cold War took shape and the nation sought to deploy the ideology of democracy as a weapon against communism, it became increasingly important that defense policy, including key manpower decisions like universal military training, reflect democratic American principles. For too many people, compulsory military training reeked of totalitarianism.³ Militarization in the United States was an ambivalent process, and it would require a defter hand. Secondly, the failure of UMT confirmed the nation's commitment to a system of selective rather than universal service. From 1948 until the end of the draft in 1973, the Department of Defense would struggle with a system of conscription that paid lip service to the concept of universal military obligation but did not compel military service of every man. As later chapters of this dissertation will show, deciding which men to select for military service and which men to defer or exempt became an increasingly time-consuming and problematic task for the agencies responsible for classifying the nation's manpower.

Universal military training was important for more than just its failure, however. As this chapter argues, the terms of the debate illustrated the contested nature of American citizenship and masculinity and their difficult relationship with military service in the second half of the twentieth century. Politicians, military officials, and members of the public sparred over the best ways to build masculinity, develop citizenship, and grow the military. UMT's supporters and detractors grounded their positions in different

³ It should be noted that opponents of UMT in the early years of the Cold War used the terms "fascism," "totalitarianism," "communism," and "Prussianism" interchangeably to connote a system of government that stressed regimentation, militarism, and lack of freedom for its citizens.

theoretical bases for citizenship. For those who preferred a civic republican definition of citizenship, universal experience in the armed services seemed the most democratic way to forge male citizens. They believed that a year of common training would create common opportunities for all American men, provide a measure of equality to men from diverse backgrounds, and teach individuals how to function as informed citizens in a democratic republic. Those who defined citizenship more liberally viewed UMT as the first step along the path to fascism and totalitarianism. They thought that the regimentation of military life would destroy America's independent manhood, undermine the liberty on which American citizenship was based, and arrest the moral development of boys as they grew into men.

UMT failed, in part, because the political and military events of the early Cold War introduced new geopolitical realities that made the program seem outmoded. But it also failed because many Americans opposed universal compulsion in peace time. They worried about the possible consequences of using the military a major socializing agent for all young men. Classically liberal ideals of the citizen-soldier clashed with civic-republican ones in debates over instituting the program. By late 1946 and early 1947, planners from the War Department and the Army had settled on a publicity strategy that addressed opponents' concerns about the morality and democratic nature of compulsory military training. Such a strategy, however, created some peculiar problems for a military establishment whose first priority was maintaining national security by training men for war within a regimented and hierarchical organization. Moreover, the image of inclusive citizenship UMT proponents tried to project did not include all Americans. Such contradictions eventually proved too much for the military to handle. The campaign

failed to convince Congress, detractors, or the American public that the Army was the proper place to instill the virtues of citizenship or masculinity into American men.

Ultimately, the defeat of UMT limited the reach of militarization in the immediate post-war era and confirmed the nation's commitment to military service as a selective rather than a universal obligation.

* * * * *

The modern idea of universal male military training did not originate with the Cold War. Rather, it grew out of the preparedness movement of the pre-World War I years. Advocates believed American involvement in World War I was inevitable and that the only response to the threat of war was a program of readiness, including the development of a large, well-trained army. A few newly-formed preparedness organizations, including the Association for National Service, the Universal Military Training League, the Business Men's National Service League, and the Army League, went one step further and became champions of universal military training. Of these groups, the Military Training Camps Association (MTCA) became the most visible and vocal. By 1916 it counted among its ranks more than 17,000 veterans of civilian military training camps that it established with support from the U.S. Army.⁴ Members, most of whom were wealthy and powerful eastern and mid-western businessmen, argued that the burden of military service should be spread equally throughout the populace and that prepared citizens could constitute a large fighting force if necessary. The MTCA gained enough publicity that the entire UMT lobby became known as the "Plattsburg

⁴ John Gary Clifford, *The Citizen Soldiers: The Plattsburg Training Camp Movement, 1913-1920* (Lexington, Ky.: The University Press of Kentucky, 1972), 152.

Movement,” after the civilian training camp it established at Plattsburg Barracks, New York.⁵

Just before American entry into the war, the War Plans Division of the Army General Staff established a four-man committee, chaired by Colonel (later Brigadier General) John MacAuley Palmer, to examine the feasibility of UMT. The committee’s report recommended adopting the program as part of a larger plan of Army reorganization, but involvement in the European conflagration placed all such plans on hold.⁶ The issue of reorganization resurfaced in early 1919, after the war had been won

⁵ The Plattsburg training camp began as public/private hybrid, but eventually became wholly financed by the U.S. military. Major General Leonard Wood, as Army Chief of Staff, had pioneered the idea of summer training camps for college students in 1913 and 1914. In 1915, when he became the commanding general of the Eastern Department of the Army, he partnered with New York lawyer and preparedness activist Grenville Clark on a plan to expand the camps to professionals and businessmen. Plattsburg was the first of these training facilities. It was underwritten by a private donation from financier Bernard Baruch and supplied by the U.S. Army. Its approximately 1,200 recruits each paid thirty dollars to attend. The political clout of camp veterans such as Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., Elihu Root, Jr., Henry Stimson’s law partner Bronson Winthrop, Delaware congressman Thomas W. Miller, and New York City mayor John Purroy Mitchel helped preparedness advocates successfully influence Congress to include Section 54 in the National Defense Act of 1916. It authorized the establishment of civilian training camps under the direct supervision of the Army and provided uniforms, food, and transportation for recruits at government expense. For more information, see Clifford, *The Citizen Soldiers*, 60-66.

⁶ Memorandum “Outline of a National Military Policy Based on Universal Military Training” attached to letter from John McAuley Palmer to James W. Wadsworth, 6 July 1942, UMT Folder, James W. Wadsworth Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Quoted in Frank Dale Cunningham, “The Army and Universal Military Training, 1942-1948” (Ph.D. Diss., The University of Texas at Austin, 1976), 44. Before American entry into World War I placed plans on hold, several bills were introduced in Congress to adopt UMT, including 64 S. 1695, introduced by Democrat George E. Chamberlain of Oregon on December 15, 1918, which called for the training of all “able-bodied male inhabitants” of the United States between the ages of twelve and twenty-three; and 65 S. 5485, introduced by Republican Harry New of Indiana on January 31, 1919, which required one year of continuous training for all American men at the age of eighteen. Bill quoted in “Detailed Summary of Bills

but before the shape of the international community had yet been decided. At least three congressional proposals contained provisions for UMT.⁷

By early 1920, however, public and political opinion had turned against the idea of compulsory training for all male citizens.⁸ House Democrats decided to throw their weight behind President Woodrow Wilson's League of Nations as the best way to settle international disputes. Seeing a system of UMT and a large army as antithetical to the principles of global peace and cooperation, they voted to oppose UMT in any plan for reorganization.⁹ Once this occurred, House Republicans opted to wait until after the 1920 elections to push the issue. In the Senate, Joseph Freylinghuysen, a Republican from New Jersey, introduced an amendment that called for voluntary training at civilian camps for all citizens who requested it, which ultimately became part of the National Defense Act of 1920.¹⁰ UMT proponents had lost.

Despite their defeat, the MCTA and other UMT lobbying organizations proved an important precursor to the post-World War II UMT movement. Advocates like Palmer, who went on to advise the Senate Military Affairs Committee, played a crucial role in

Introduced in Congress on Universal Military Training, 1915-1947," Staff Studies, Summary of Bills Introduced in Congress on UMT, Box 7, PACUT, HST.

⁷ On Aug. 5, 1919, Republican James Wadsworth of New York introduced 66 S. 2715 and Republican Julius Kahn of California introduced 66 H.R. 8287, both of which reflected the War Department's plan for a three-month training period; 66 S. 2691, introduced by Chamberlain and 66 H.R. 8068, introduced by Kahn, reflected the MCTA's plan and contained provision for a longer training period and a reserve obligation; 66 S. 3792 was introduced by Wadsworth as a result of hearings of the Senate Military Affairs Committee he chaired between August 1919 and January 1920. It would have required four months of training.

⁸ Cunningham, "The Army and Universal Military Training," 48.

⁹ 66 S. 3792.

¹⁰ P.L. 66-242; Chase C. Mooney and Martha E. Layman, "Some Phases of the Compulsory Military Training Movement, 1914-1920," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 38, no. 4 (March 1952): 655.

later debates, as did the more than 500,000 men who received voluntary training at the Citizens' Military Training Camps in the two decades after World War I.¹¹ George Marshall, Henry Stimson, and Palmer were all veterans of the Plattsburg Movement.

Moreover, these activists pioneered many of the arguments that would be used in favor of UMT in the 1940s and 1950s. Although the primary focus of the campaign for UMT had been preparedness for World War I, advocates had highlighted secondary benefits of training as well. Members of the MCTA called for a male citizenship based on universal male military training and service, emphasizing what they saw as the democratic nature of such a program. UMT would not “militarize the nation,” a 1915 *New Republic* article on the camp at Plattsburg stated. “Rather...[it would] civilize the American military system.” Military training camps would not “turn civilians into mere automatons. They [would] attach soldiering to citizenship; and ... do it in such a way as to make a soldier really a civilian.”¹² MCTA members understood a civilian reserve as a deterrent to militarism rather than as a potential threat to American liberty. They believed training would enhance Americans' commitment to liberty by underscoring the principles of duty, responsibility, and patriotism. They also used the perceived non-military benefits of UMT as selling points. Former Assistant Secretary of War Henry Breckinridge, for example, told an audience at the Academy of Political Science in 1916 that the extra training illiterate and non-English-speaking trainees would receive within the MCTA's UMT program would “yank the hyphen out of America.”¹³ The organization's plan included provisions for naturalizing immigrant aliens who completed training, teaching

¹¹ Clifford, *The Citizen Soldiers*, 296.

¹² “The Plattsburg Idea,” *New Republic*, Oct. 9, 1915: 247-249, cited in Clifford, *The Citizen Soldiers*, 195.

¹³ “Sees End of Hyphen in Universal Drill,” *New York Times*, May 19, 1916.

illiterate trainees how to read, and providing vocational training to those men who needed it.¹⁴ According to enthusiasts, universal training could unify a divided nation, create an educated populace, and protect American liberty.

Members of the MCTA were content to bide their time with voluntary camps during the interwar years, managing to keep them safe from budget cuts, even during the austere years of the Great Depression. They understood their plans for UMT as a victim of poor timing. Rather than revise their arguments, they and other UMT supporters resurrected them in 1940.¹⁵ In June of that year, the organization drafted a bill that found sponsorship in Congress amidst a new flurry of preparedness measures.¹⁶ But the idea once again took a back seat to war planning, as Congress, under pressure from President Franklin Roosevelt, passed a controversial measure to instate a draft before a formal declaration of war for the first time in U.S. history.¹⁷

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The second push for UMT began during World War II, and as in the first, proponents focused primarily on national security with only a secondary emphasis on

¹⁴ See McIlvaine's testimony, Senate Committee on Armed Services, *Reorganization of the Army: Hearings Before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Military Affairs*, 66th Cong., 1st sess., 1919, 827-828.

¹⁵ President's Commission on Universal Training, *A Program for National Security*, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1947), 391.

¹⁶ 76 S. 4164, introduced by Democrat Edward Burke of Nebraska on June 20, 1940, and 76 H.R. 10132, introduced by now Representative Wadsworth of NY on June 21, were sponsored by the MCTA and called for compulsory military training.

¹⁷ P.L. 76-783, The Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 provided for the induction of 900,000 men for a term of service of twelve months, though this was later extended. The Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 is frequently referred to as America's first peace-time draft. As will be shown in chapter 2, however, this is something of a misnomer. The United States was clearly hurtling toward war by September 1940.

other benefits.¹⁸ Long-time advocates like Marshall, Stimson, and Palmer believed that a lack of centralized post-war planning had severely weakened the American military and the United States' position in global politics, leading to what Marshall, now Army Chief of Staff, termed the Army's "Dark Ages."¹⁹ They treated congressional failure to include UMT in the National Defense Act of 1920 as a deficiency of political will and blamed the measure's defeat on the wild swings in public opinion that followed the 1919 armistice. They argued that if Congress had acted with greater expediency in 1918, prior to the Fourteen Points and the introduction of the League of Nations, Americans would have enthusiastically supported a plan of universal military training. In turn, they reasoned, the large, trained reserve that would have resulted from the law would have deterred German and Japanese aggression in the late 1930s. According to Marshall, if the country had only "followed through" with the 1920 Defense Act by training a large civilian reserve,

¹⁸ On April 30, 1943, Roosevelt told assembled members of the press that he supported some type of common training for the "young persons" of America but that it should be only "partly military" and possibly should include women as well as men. On August 19, 1944, he stated that he wanted training to resemble the experience of the Civilian Conservation Corps rather than consist of wholly military training, explaining that such a program would be a good way to use otherwise obsolete training centers left from the war. He made similar statements on November 17, 1944, and on Jan. 6, 1945. During his state of the union address, he stated that universal military training was "an essential factor in the maintenance of peace in the future." See, *A Program for National Security*, 392, 396, 400, 401. Original quotations from *New York Times*, April 30, 1943; *Commercial and Financial Chronicle*, Aug. 31, 1944; *New York Times*, Aug. 19, 1944; *New York Times*, Nov. 18, 1944; *Congressional Record*, 79th Cong., 1st sess., 1945, vol. 91, pt. 1, 95.

¹⁹ Transcript, "Comments on Universal Military Training at the Meeting of Religious Leaders – 3 May 1945 by General George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff," Plans and Policy Office, UMT Decimal File (1944-48), 020 Chief of Staff, Records of the Legislative and Liaison Division, RG 165, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland, [hereafter NARA] quoted in Michael S. Sherry, *Preparing for the Next War: American Plans for Postwar Defense, 1941-1945* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1977), 3.

“Germany would not have dared to involve herself in a war that would draw the United States into the conflict.”²⁰

Supporters claimed that a civilian population with military training would reduce the amount of time needed for mobilization should another war occur and eliminate the need for a substantial, expensive, force-in-being. Articles written by high-ranking military and government officials in 1944 and 1945 stressed the strategic benefits of a large reserve. While they acknowledged UMT’s secondary advantages, like common education and universal healthcare for trainees, and highlighted American men’s citizenship obligations, they underscored the point that “the ultimate purpose of all Military Training is the assurance of victory in the event of war.”²¹ They claimed adopting UMT would act as a bargaining chip at peace negotiations, deter enemies from attacking American interests by providing the means for a quick U.S. counterstrike, and strengthen the United Nations through a show of American commitment. According to former New Dealer and presidential adviser Harry Hopkins, “such a force would be a powerful influence in discouraging aggression.” Secretary of War Stimson explained, “If the American people should adopt the principle of universal military training, it would be the strongest possible assurance to the rest of the world that, in the future, America will

²⁰ Marshall’s Remarks to the Academy of Political Science in New York City, 10 November 1942, excerpts attached to memorandum, Marshall to General Ray Porter, 21 October 1945, file 353 (219), RG 165, NARA, in Sherry, *Preparing for the Next War*, 4.

²¹ Major General Walter L. Weible, “The War Department and the Program for Universal Military Training,” American Association of University Professors *Bulletin*, Winter 1944, Opinion Survey: Universal Military Training, Weekly Surveys of Newspaper Opinion Concerning Universal Military Training and the Postwar Military Establishment, 1944-1945, entry 52, volumes 1 and 2, RG 107, Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, NARA.

be not only willing but *able* and *ready* to take its part with the peace-loving nations in resisting lawless aggression and in assuring peaceful world order.”²²

These viewpoints were all aired during hearings before the House Select Committee on Postwar Military Policy held in June 1945. The Committee, chaired by Clifton A. Woodrum, a Democrat from Virginia, consisted of seven members of the Military Affairs Committee, seven members of the Naval Affairs Committee, and seven members at large. It was charged with recommending “a broad general policy” for postwar national defense, including evaluating the efficacy of a universal military training program.²³ Over 150 witnesses, including government and military officials, representatives of concerned organizations, and private citizens presented testimony or prepared statements outlining their positions on a program of compulsory military training.

Witnesses representing the military and civilian arms of the federal government overwhelmingly focused on universal military training as a key element to the United States’ national security policy, emphasizing their belief that America would not enjoy “a reasonable degree of national security” without it.²⁴ Several themes ran through their testimony. First, although the shape of the postwar world had not yet been determined, they assumed that another war would occur if the United States appeared weak.²⁵

²² Henry L. Hopkins, “Tomorrow’s Army and Your Boy,” *The American*, March 1945; Henry L. Stimson, “Should Universal Military Training be Made Obligatory: Henry L. Stimson’s Response,” *The Nation’s Schools* 34, no. 5, (Nov. 1944): 27.

²³ House Select Committee on Postwar Military Policy. *Universal Military Training: Hearings Before the Select Committee on Postwar Military Policy*. 79th Cong., 1st sess., June 4, 1945, 1 [hereafter Woodrum Committee Hearings].

²⁴ Testimony of Vice Admiral Randall Jacobs, *ibid.*, 533-34.

²⁵ See the testimony of Joseph C. Grew, 1-6, Henry Stimson, 481, and James Forrestal, 526, *ibid.*

Second, any future war would begin with a surprise aerial or missile attack on the United States. In that case, America would not have the luxury of time to marshal its resources and train its men. Instead, the military response would have to be immediate. Although they admitted that some retraining would be necessary, the military men felt that the knowledge citizens would gain during the year of civilian training would invaluablely speed up mobilization in the event of a war.²⁶ Finally, although government witnesses vocalized their support for the United Nations, then in its infancy, they strongly recommended a show of military strength from the U.S. as the best way for America to back up its commitment to the new international body. The U.S. would only be able to act as the U.N.'s moral anchor if it had the military strength to support its claim to world leadership. Further, should the U.N. require its member nations to commit a peacekeeping force in the future, the United States needed to have enough troops to spare.²⁷

With the exception of Stimson, a former participant in the Plattsburg movement and member of the MCTA, government witnesses limited their discussion of UMT's social benefits. Although they acknowledged the education and training men would receive as applicable to civilian life, they purposely kept the defensive goals of UMT as a security program at the fore of their statements. Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz wrote a letter to the committee in which he called these educational and vocational "byproducts,"

²⁶ See the testimony of Major General William F. Tompkins, 498, and General Dwight Eisenhower, 487, *ibid.*

²⁷ See the testimony of James Forrestal, Secretary of the Navy, 527; Charles G. Bolte, Chairman, American Veterans' Committee, 23; George Fielding Eliot, Commentator, Columbia Broadcasting Company, 29-30; Dorothy K. Funn, Labor Secretary, National Negro Congress, 348; Henry Stimson, 480; and John MacAuley Palmer, 492; *ibid.*

“entirely beside the point.” Vice Admiral Aubrey Fitch, the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Air), complained that focus on the civilian benefits of military training tended to “confuse the issue.”²⁸

Witnesses with no connection to the government were more likely to extoll the non-military virtues of UMT, but nevertheless they argued primarily from a national security vantage point, albeit with heightened rhetorical flourish. According to John Thomas Taylor, of the American Legion’s national legislative committee, UMT’s opponents were the “one group to bear the blame” for American involvement in World War II. Anyone who failed to support UMT would be responsible for the next war.²⁹ Jay Cooke, the president of the Citizens Committee for Military Training of Young Men, an ad-hoc lobbying organization that claimed chapters in 42 states, colorfully highlighted the protective benefits of UMT. “Few people rush up to [boxers] Joe Louis or Jack Dempsey and slap them in the face,” he asserted.³⁰ No one would attack the United States if it appeared suitably strong. UMT, in these witnesses’ eyes, was required primarily to guard the nation.

Though not a legislative committee with the power to propose bills, the Woodrum Committee’s July 1945 report endorsed these arguments and recommended a plan of universal military training as part of a larger program of national security. It contended that along with a federally-funded program of scientific research and development, a flexible industrial system that was able to convert quickly to wartime production, and a well-trained nucleus of regular soldiers, postwar preparedness required a trained citizenry

²⁸ Ibid., 529, 533.

²⁹ Ibid., 39.

³⁰ Ibid., 6.

as “the most vital element of all.”³¹ The report alluded to the educational benefits such training would bring to trainees, but focused primarily on UMT as a security measure.

Truman encapsulated the national security arguments in an address to Congress on October 23, 1945. He called the joint session to introduce his preferred plan for UMT – one full year of training after high school with a six-year reserve commitment – and to urge passage of legislation based on the Woodrum Committee’s report. In so doing, he invoked the historical citizen-soldier. “The days of the minuteman who sprang to the flintlock hanging on his wall are over,” worried the president. Modern warriors required training and drill with the latest equipment and technology, skills that a military force conscripted at the outset of hostilities would not have time to learn before heading into battle. He assured the assembled congressmen that the ability to forgo basic training in the event of war “may be the margin between the survival and the destruction of this great Nation.”³² Although he acknowledged that military training could “provide ample opportunity for self-improvement” and teach “skills useful in the civilian world,” he was adamant that the main purpose of the program would be national defense. “The other benefits are all byproducts,” he explained, “useful indeed, but still byproducts.”³³

* * * * *

Despite the fame and power of its supporters, opposition to universal military training was strong and well organized. UMT’s detractors worked to reframe the debate over the measure. They, too, focused on national security, but they defined the issue

³¹ House Select Committee on Postwar Military Policy. *Universal Military Training*, H. Rpt. 857, 79th Cong., 1st sess., 1945, 2.

³² Harry Truman, “Universal Military Training,” Oct. 23, 1945, *Congressional Record*, 91, pt. 8, 9934, 9935.

³³ *Ibid.*, 9936.

differently. Rather than emphasize UMT as a possible deterrent *against* external threats, activists from educational, civil rights, pacifist, and religious organizations tended to view it as a threat *to* American values. As early as November 1944, staff representatives from a number of organizations, including the National Education Association, the National Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Friends Committee, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), the National Council for Prevention of War, and the newly formed National Council Against Conscription, met to coordinate a defense against UMT proposals. As a result of their efforts, including organized outreach sessions, the chorus of voices attacking the policy based on its destructive characteristics steadily expanded.³⁴

In November 1945, the House renewed hearings on UMT, this time weighing a specific plan outlined by Representative Andrew May, a Democrat from Kentucky and the chair of the Committee on Military Affairs.³⁵ The May hearings offered opponents a national forum for their objections. So many private citizens and organizations demanded time to testify that May reopened the hearings in February 1946.³⁶

Many of the hostile witnesses at both the Woodrum and May committee hearings grounded their objections to UMT in the unstable international political climate of the immediate postwar period. They argued that it would be impossible to know the United States' military needs until the war with Japan ended, American soldiers stationed in both Asia and Europe could rotate home, provisional governments could be established in the

³⁴ John M. Swomley, Jr., "A Study of the Universal Military Training Campaign, 1944-1952" (Ph.D. Diss., University of Colorado, 1959), 324.

³⁵ 79 H.R. 515 called for one year of continuous training for all able-bodied American men at age 18 with a six year reserve commitment thereafter.

³⁶ Swomley, "A Study of the Universal Military Training Campaign," 112.

countries under occupation, and the organization and mission of the United Nations could be established.³⁷ The detonation of atomic bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 further bolstered opponents' hostility to UMT. If any nation possessed the ability to obliterate another with one weapon, they reasoned, then international cooperation through the United Nations was the only way to prevent global destruction.

Arguments of this ilk spoke as much to the defense of the United States as those that called for universal military training. Pacifists, like Dorothy Detzer of WILPF; educators, like George F. Zook, the president of the American Council on Education; and civil rights activists like federal judge and former Dean of Howard University Law School William Hastie; all advocated international cooperation, primarily through the United Nations, as a safer, more effective means of national defense. Zook told the May Committee that the United States could not “hold, or even merit, the confidence of other nations” if it paid “lip service” to the ideals of international peace and cooperation” but “at the same time repudiate[d] them with [its] actions.”³⁸ Hastie warned, “There is no tolerable future in an international jungle in which each lion calls himself the king of the beasts and keeps sharpening his claws to prove it.”³⁹ These detractors clearly believed

³⁷ See, for example, the testimony of Franklin Clarke Fry, President, United Lutheran Church of America, 17-18; A.J. Brumbaugh, Vice President, American Council on Education, 91-107; William J. Miller, President, University of Detroit, 107-111; Gould Wickey, Executive Secretary, National Commission on Higher Education, Association of American Colleges, 117-121; Thomasina W. Johnson, Legislative Representative, National Non-Partisan Council on Public Affairs, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, 197-209; Ernest Angell, Member of the Board, American Civil Liberties Union and Chairman of the National Committee on Conscientious Objectors, 209-212; Woodrum Committee Hearings.

³⁸ Testimony of George F. Zook, House Military Affairs Committee, *Universal Military Training: Hearings on H.R. 515*, Part I, 79th Cong., 1st sess., November 20, 1945, 180 [Hereafter May Committee Hearings, 1945].

³⁹ Woodrum Committee Hearings, 112.

that training the nation, even through a so-called civilian program, was akin to arming it. Such a program would not disarm the world but could endanger the United States rather than protect it.

Although witnesses at both sets of hearings focused primarily on UMT as a national security measure, it is clear that they believed it was more than a simple defensive expedient. Rather, opponents and proponents equally used it as a symbol for the America they wished to create in the aftermath of World War II. Civilian and military leaders, educators, labor and civil rights activists, Congresspeople, American Legionnaires, representatives from religious organizations, and concerned citizens of all stripes grounded their arguments in differing definitions of American democracy and citizenship. Those who favored universal military training tended to base their opinions on a civic republican understanding of citizenship, framing their support with the obligation of the male citizen to defend his nation. Detractors, on the other hand, rooted their arguments in a more classically liberal interpretation of citizenship. They concentrated on the right of the individual in a free society to make choices for himself. These differing visions of citizenship led witnesses to define universal military training as either a democratic measure or a totalitarian one.

Supporters justified the compulsory nature of the training based on their belief that citizens owed service of some type to the nation that nurtured them. They stressed duty, obligation, and responsibility. “All American citizens and resident aliens enjoy the protection and freedom of our way of life,” wrote Admiral Nimitz in his letter to the Woodrum Committee. “They must share the obligation to defend that freedom.”⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Ibid., 529.

Republican representative Frances Bolton of Ohio declared, “Citizenship in a free society holds within it the responsibility, and the duty on the part of the individual to protect it, and the principles for which it stands.”⁴¹ This framework emphasized a government of, for, and by the people. It could not survive, especially in an unstable global geopolitical climate, without the active participation – in this case through military training – of its citizens.

Training would be worth the temporary sacrifice of time, individual choice, and life, if mobilization ever proved necessary. It would deter outside aggression and provide security to the nation, allowing the United States – and thus its citizens – to thrive and prosper. But more importantly, it would “provide the trainee with a larger return than [he] would give to his Nation.”⁴² Proponents cited remedial healthcare, educational and vocational training, self-reliance, a sense of responsibility, leadership skills, the opportunity “to rub smooth the sharp edges of prejudice, sectionalism, and lack of understanding between groups,” and the physical strength brought on by basic training as some of the benefits to be reaped from a system of universal military training.⁴³ Taken together, these advantages would help equalize many of the inequalities that existed within American society. Graduates of the training system would begin their adult lives on more equal footing than they would have without training. Such equality epitomized the promise of American democracy.

⁴¹ Ibid., 588.

⁴² Testimony of John Thomas Taylor, Ibid., 47.

⁴³ Testimony of Henry Stimson, Ibid., 483. See also the testimony of John Thomas Taylor, Ibid., 35-49; and the testimony of Robert Patterson, Secretary of War, 16; Mrs. LaFell Dickinson, President, General Federation of Women’s Clubs, 124; Lula E. Bachman, President, National Association of Women Lawyers, 136-37; S. Stanwood Menken, 301; and Dunlap C. Clark, Chairman, National Defense Committee, Chamber of Commerce of the United States, 334-35, May Committee Hearings, 1945.

Moreover, a program that took all young men, regardless of background, social or economic status, educational attainment, IQ, or religious belief would ensure that all men exited the program with a common, unifying experience. No one would be able to claim special privilege. As a result, claimed proponents, UMT could not be considered a totalitarian program, despite its compulsory nature. It would apply to all young men equally and supply them with common advantages. It would call for the same “sacrifices from a people that are not accustomed to such sacrifices.”⁴⁴ It was, therefore, a democratic measure.

Detractors, on the other hand, relied on a more liberal interpretation of citizenship. Rather than emphasizing the responsibilities of the citizen to the state, they highlighted the obligation of the state to guarantee the rights of the citizen. They focused on the ideals of individual liberty, free choice, and independence as the essence of American democracy. Therefore, they argued, UMT, because of its compulsory nature, was not democratic. It infringed on the free choice of the men who would be “dragooned” into service, and it encouraged a militarized society in which citizens would be discouraged from thinking for themselves.⁴⁵ This would be particularly onerous for those with religious objections. Samuel L. Harrison, representing the Michigan Council to Oppose Peacetime Military Conscription, pointed out, “American tradition has always held to the rights of religious liberty and that recognition that...men must obey God and conscience rather than men.” He worried that for many, “universal conscription would be a complete violation of their own best conscience,” and therefore the antithesis of

⁴⁴ Testimony of John Thomas Taylor, Woodrum Committee Hearings, 47.

⁴⁵ Testimony of Thomasina W. Johnson, *Ibid.*, 203.

everything America stood for.⁴⁶ “We consider it the last vestige of slavery,” opined Detzer of WILPF in no uncertain terms.⁴⁷

Compulsory military training, which was “largely authoritarian in its methods,” would make the United States no better than Nazi Germany or Soviet Russia.⁴⁸ “To adopt the essence of the system we are fighting to destroy is to be victimized by victory,” stated President of the University of Detroit William J. Miller, representing the Michigan Council to Oppose Peacetime Military Conscription. “Nothing is more dangerous to democracy than the conditioning, regimentation, and uncritical obedience to arbitrary authority that most compulsory military training induces,” he warned. Moreover, he observed, the regimentation and authoritarian nature of UMT would destroy the values of discipline and self-control that supporters proclaimed would be gained through military training. These principles, he noted, “are inwardly induced by voluntary acceptance....They cannot be externally superimposed or cultivated under compulsion.”⁴⁹ Rather, it was freedom of thought and action that led to the innovations that fueled America’s greatness. UMT would infringe on these freedoms and lead to the “death and destruction” that befell all militarized nations, contended Guy E. Snavelly, the Executive Director of the Association of American Colleges. “The best brains of country,” he

⁴⁶ Testimony of Samuel L. Harrison, House Military Affairs Committee, *Universal Military Training: Hearings on H.R. 515, Part II, 79th Cong., 1st sess., February 21, 1946, 994* [Hereafter May Committee Hearings, 1946]. See also the testimony of Edward C.M. Richards of the War Resister’s League, Woodrum Committee Hearings, 387.

⁴⁷ May Committee Hearings, 1945, 307.

⁴⁸ Testimony of Huber F. Klemme, Woodrum Committee Hearings, 160.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 107.

declared, would be “occupied continuously with devising weapons of destruction instead of developing plans for the happier, fuller life.”⁵⁰

The meaning of a happy, full, American life was of great concern to the opponents of UMT. Daniel Marsh, the President of Boston University, outright rejected the notion that military training would improve the nation’s male citizenry. “We go to war when we have to,” he admitted, “but there is no reason why we should lie about it and pretend that it makes for finer manhood.”⁵¹ Exposure to the alcohol and sex on which military encampments supposedly thrived would corrupt the nation’s youth, assured some witnesses at the Woodrum and May hearings, but more importantly, claimed others, compulsory training would interrupt their proper, rightful civilian pursuits.⁵² Educational activists worried that if men did not complete their vocational and higher education immediately after graduating high school, they would not resume training for civilian careers after life in the military.⁵³ Fewer men would either have the training to produce weapons and material in wartime or secure the best jobs in peacetime if all men were subjected to compulsory military training.

African Americans had further reason to reject UMT as a democratic measure. For them, the issue of equal opportunity was not theoretical. So long as America’s military remained racially segregated, activists contended, universal military training could not and would not “rub smooth the sharp edges of prejudice.” Rather, it would

⁵⁰ Ibid., 329.

⁵¹ Ibid., 325.

⁵² See, for example, the testimony of Sam Morris of the Kentucky Sunday School Association, May Committee Hearings, 1946, 958-960, and the testimony of Charles R. Bell, Jr., of the Wisconsin Committee Against Peacetime Conscription and the Madison [Wisc.] Council of Churches, Ibid., 700.

⁵³ Testimony of Ralph McDonald, May Committee Hearings, 1945, 420. See also the testimony of Daniel L. Marsh, Ibid., 325.

further entrench institutional discrimination based on racial difference and spread the idea that black men were not entitled to full, equal citizenship on the same terms as white men. While not necessarily opposed to UMT in principle, the witnesses from civil rights and African American organizations who testified at both the Woodrum and May committee hearings unanimously rejected any program that did not explicitly outlaw segregation.

Judge Hastie, who had worked as a civilian aide with the War Department during the Second World War, described the logistical nightmare of administering a segregated program. At the moment of his testimony in 1945, the Navy barely tolerated African Americans, limiting them to positions as messmen, and only five states and the District of Columbia accepted black soldiers into their National Guard Units. Similarly, most African Americans who graduated from ROTC programs were not granted commissions since the military had limited need of black officers. As UMT was supposed to serve as a feeder for these programs, African American trainees would have fewer choices than their white counterparts.⁵⁴

Administrative details aside, most African American witnesses used both civic republican and liberal definitions of citizenship to demonstrate the contradictions inherent in a universal program that discriminated against ten percent of its participants. To Thomasina W. Johnson, the legislative representative of the National Non-Partisan Council on Public Affairs of the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, democracy included “the priceless rights, worth, and equality of every man regardless of race, color, creed, or

⁵⁴ Ibid., 111-117. NAACP Executive Director Walter White reiterated these points in a prepared statement at the May Committee Hearings. See May Committee Hearings, 1946, 940-946.

national origin.” Therefore, black men had the liberal right as individuals and as members of the “brotherhood of man” to demand equal treatment and opportunity. She forewarned, “If he [the African American] is going to die for democracy in Burma, he will have it in Birmingham. If he is going to fight for it in Europe, he will have it in Washington.”⁵⁵ Dorothy K. Funn, the Labor Secretary for the National Negro Congress, stressed the civic republican obligation to “defend and protect” the country that UMT would foster in African American youths, but only if “democracy [were] present in every institution,” including the military.⁵⁶ Field Organizer for the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters B.F. McLaurin brought these ideas together, calling for both “opportunity and responsibility.”⁵⁷ Regardless of theoretical interpretation, implied these witnesses, UMT would fail as a democratic measure so long as it discriminated against black men.

Finally, opponents of UMT recognized that military training under all of the proposed plans was not to be truly universal. In addition to discriminating against African Americans and not reaching conscientious objectors or those with severe physical or psychological disorders, UMT would not include women. These detractors, however, did not base their objections to UMT on its sexism. In fact, very few activists – either for or against UMT – specifically considered the citizenship rights or obligations of women.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Woodrum Committee Hearings, 208, 207.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 348-349.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 316.

⁵⁸ For examples of women and organizations who objected based on the exclusion of women, See Leila M. Murray, Commander, The American Association of WACS, to Mr. President, October 26, 1945, OF 109 “A” 1945-49 [misc. pro] 1 of 2, box 612, White House Official File, HST; Frieda S. Miller, Director, Women’s Bureau, to Wilbur Cohen, Research Director, PCUT, April 16, 1947, Folder: Commission Kit – 13th Meeting, 4-18/19-47, box 4, PACUT, HST; The Place of Women in a Universal Training Program, n.d., folder 2, box 2, PACUT, HST; Report of the Committee on Manpower to the Association of American Universities, n.d., Universal Military Service and Training, box

When they did complain about the exclusivity of UMT's benefits, they based their arguments in carefully gender-neutral terms. For example, the Executive Committee of the Department of Supervision and Curriculum Development of the NEA resolved that "health, discipline, citizenship, and other outcomes claimed for military training are needs of our entire population and should be made possible to all of all ages. These matters are the rights of citizens and the obligations of their Government. As such, they are of civilian concern and should be provided for through civilian means."⁵⁹ In other words, the NEA believed these principles were civilian values that should accrue to all citizens, whether in the military or not. As such, they should be administered and encouraged through civilian authorities rather than through the military. In theory, this interpretation of "citizen" included women, but in reality, it is difficult to know for certain.

In truth, the one thing that brought both opponents and proponents of universal military training together was their common emphasis on citizenship as a masculine prerogative. They indicated this through their language – their discussion of "boys," "men," and "youths," who were always gendered male.⁶⁰ But more importantly, none of the plans proposed to or considered in Congress required any type of contribution from

164, Principal File, Eisenhower Pre-Presidential Papers, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, Abilene, Kansas. Even those who otherwise supported the equal rights of women did not critique UMT for excluding women. For example, congresswoman Frances Bolton, a republican from Ohio, chided the Woodrum Committee for failing to include any women members, but did not mention women and universal military training or women and citizenship in her testimony other than to state that during World War II women showed themselves equal to all tasks placed in front of them. See testimony of Frances Bolton, Woodrum Committee Hearings, 583-588.

⁵⁹ Woodrum Committee Hearings, 129.

⁶⁰ Daniel L. Marsh, for example, stated "The interruption of a youth's educational career at 18, 19, 20, or 21 would simply be disastrous to an overwhelming number of the young fellows." Testimony of Daniel L. Marsh, *Ibid.*, 325.

the nation's women. Therefore, the differing versions of citizenship emphasized by supporters and detractors were, by virtue of their exclusivity, masculine. Women would not be obliged to sacrifice their time or their bodies to earn the rights of citizenship, nor was it the state's responsibility to defend their rights against the infringement of universal training.

Even more telling, not one witness in either of the two sets of hearings – or in subsequent hearings – complained that the educational, health, vocational, and moral benefits of military training would accrue only to men. Those in favor of the measure argued that UMT would strengthen the nation by strengthening its men – bodily, economically, and morally. In this, they had the precedent set by the recent Servicemen's Readjustment Act or G.I. Bill of Rights, which granted unemployment insurance, low-interest home and business loans, and educational benefits to veterans after World War II.⁶¹ As historians Lizabeth Cohen and Margot Canaday have shown, the G.I. Bill disproportionately benefited white, heterosexual men, as they were the constituency most likely to have served in the military, been honorably discharged, and have their applications for college admission or home and business loans accepted.⁶² The G.I. Bill and UMT legislation both assumed that men, as breadwinners, needed these benefits more than women, who would be supported by their husbands. Proponents used this expectation to argue that the vocational and leadership training men would receive in military camps would help them advance after their terms of service ended. Opponents

⁶¹ P.L. 78-346 was passed in 1944.

⁶² See Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: Vintage, 2003), and Margot Canaday, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), especially chap. 5.

used the same assumption to claim that ripping men away from college and apprenticeship programs would harm their future vocational status and deprive the nation of qualified scientists and engineers. No one suggested that women could fill the extra admissions slots at colleges or universities as they had during World War II.⁶³ Public discourse on UMT centered on the rights and responsibilities of men and the role they were expected to play in American society as both soldiers and civilians.

* * * * *

By early 1946, public opinion on military manpower policy was split. Dissatisfaction with the Selective Service system ran high. Many men who had been serving overseas at the end of World War II remained stationed as occupying forces throughout Asia and Europe. With support from their families, they demanded immediate discharges, but the Army needed 1.5 million men to fulfill its commitments abroad. It would only be able to maintain this number and simultaneously rotate veterans home through continued conscription.⁶⁴

As Soviet intransigence delayed the reunification of Germany, communist forces continued to gain traction in China, and the “iron curtain” dropped over Eastern Europe, Truman and others determined that the United States would not be able to demobilize quickly. The Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, which governed the draft during the war, was originally set to expire on May 15, 1945, but a series of extensions

⁶³ See, for example, appendix 7, “Women and National Security” in *A Program for National Security*, 209-224.

⁶⁴ George Q. Flynn, *The Draft, 1940-1973* (Lawrence, Kans.: University Press of Kansas, 1993), 91.

allowed its operation to continue until March 31, 1947.⁶⁵ These extensions were compromise measures, and though they passed Congress fairly easily, their provisions caused controversy. The new laws exempted eighteen-year-olds and fathers from the available pool, creating a dearth of manpower just as the Cold War was beginning to take shape. Demobilization rates slowed in early 1946 as the Selective Service struggled to meet its commitments. Americans with family members serving overseas and those whose loved ones faced induction lambasted the Selective Service in equal measure. Many Americans questioned the existence of a draft during peacetime, criticizing it as un-American.⁶⁶

At the same time, the public appeared to support universal military training. While the strategic details of how millions of American men with limited training would or could be deployed, the majority of Americans seemed willing to accept UMT as a military necessity. In a series of nine Gallup Polls conducted between December 1945 and January 1956, support for UMT dropped below 65 percent only once.⁶⁷ Approval in other, smaller surveys ranged as high as 83 percent.⁶⁸ But such support was “soft.”⁶⁹ Most Americans may have approved of UMT in theory, but they prioritized other

⁶⁵ Truman signed P.L. 79-54 on May 9, 1945 to extend the draft for one year. P.L. 79-379, signed on May 14, 1946, extended the draft for six weeks, and on June 29, 1946, Truman signed P.L. 79-473 to extend it to March 31, 1947.

⁶⁶ The Selective Service was expected to induct approximately 300,000 men before the draft expired in March 1947, but given the available manpower pool, it would only be able to do so if it ended all occupational deferments and conscripted World War II veterans who had not served overseas. See Flynn, *The Draft*, 96, 92.

⁶⁷ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Common Defense: Strategic Programs in National Defense* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 240.

⁶⁸ According to “Poll of Women Favors Military Duty for Boys,” *New York Herald Tribune*, Dec. 4, 1944, a poll in *The Woman’s Home Companion* found that 83% of readers favored UMT.

⁶⁹ Sherry, *Preparing for the Next War*, 75.

economic, political, and social concerns and were not likely to agitate for its passage into law.⁷⁰ They wanted to wait for American soldiers to return home, for the geopolitical shape of the post-war world to become clear, and to give the new United Nations the opportunity to foster international peace before they made any decisions about domestic military training or service. This left only a core group of lobbyists, led by the American Legion with support from civic organizations like the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Kiwanis International, and the Lions Club, to try to shape public opinion in favor of UMT. These enthusiasts faced a broader range of pacifist, educational, religious, labor, and civil rights organizations, all of which took their dissent to Capitol Hill and to the media.

Opponents of UMT quickly capitalized on public antipathy toward the Selective Service by eliding the differences between military training and military service. They referred to UMT as “universal military conscription,” “peacetime conscription,” and “universal military service” in speeches, radio addresses, newspaper articles, and their organization names.⁷¹ Even though the Truman administration and Selective Service

⁷⁰ See “Summary of Public Opinion Polls Relating to Universal Military Training and National Security,” May 6, 1947, Folder: Poll Results, President’s Advisory Commission on Universal Training (PACUT), Box 2, PACUT, HST.

⁷¹ See, for example, “Statement on Compulsory Military Training, Adopted by the Council of Bishops of the Methodist Church at Buck Hill Falls Inn, Pennsylvania, Dec. 5, 1945,” reprinted in the *Congressional Record*, 79th Cong., 2d sess., 1946, vol. 92, pt. 1, 555 and “Why the Haste? Can’t We Wait on Peacetime Conscription until Peace Conference?” radio address by William T. Evjue,” Jan. 7, 1945, reprinted in the *Congressional Record*, 79th Cong., 1st sess., 1945, vol. 91, pt. 10, A155. Organizations, frequently local and regional in scope, included the Michigan Council to Oppose Peacetime Conscription; the Citizens Committee of Buffalo, Erie County, and Western New York on Peacetime Conscription; the National Council Against Peacetime Conscription Now; the Chicago Committee to Oppose Conscription; the Women’s Committee to Oppose Conscription; the Wisconsin Committee Against Peacetime Conscription; the Oregon and Washington State Committee Opposing Peacetime

repeatedly explained that the main point of the whole program was that men would train *with* the military as civilians rather than training *in* the military as soldiers subject to the same hierarchy, rules, and obligations as enlisted men, public confusion remained.⁷²

People's comprehension was further muddled by contradictory media accounts and congressional debate. Several congressional bills did propose universal service *in* the military instead of just *with* it, although these did not receive backing from the president, War Department, or most civilian advocates of military training.⁷³

As a result of this confusion, supporters struggled to control the terms of the debate. They tried to educate the public on the difference between plans for universal military training and the role of conscription under the supervision of the Selective Service System. Truman, for example, in his October 23, 1945, speech to Congress was very clear that he did not consider UMT to be "conscription," as it had been characterized by its enemies. "Conscription is compulsory service in the Army or Navy in time of peace or war," he argued. "Trainees under this proposed legislation... would be civilians

Conscription; and the Greater Philadelphia Committee Against Wartime Enactment of Peacetime Conscription.

⁷² By the second half of 1946, proposals for UMT had coalesced around the idea of one year of civilian training under military auspices for all eighteen-year-old, able-bodied, male citizens, but the Trainees would remain civilians and be able to return to their peacetime pursuits at the conclusion of their year of training. The Selective Service, on the other hand, inducted men directly into the Army and Navy based on manpower needs as determined by the military branches themselves. The size of draft calls varied depending on a number of factors, including the nature of American military commitments, the number of men who volunteered for service, and attrition rates. Conscription, therefore, directly implied a multi-year service commitment under military direction.

⁷³ See, for example, 78 H.R. 1806, 78 H.R. 3947, 79 S. 1473, and 79 S. 1749.

in training.”⁷⁴ But, as evidence of the muddled nature of the debate, even the president faced ridicule in trying to delineate the difference.⁷⁵

In response to criticism of the draft and in the face of continued public uncertainty over UMT, Truman and the War Department began exploring a return to voluntarism as the best way to meet America’s military manpower needs.⁷⁶ Conscription and universal training could not exist side-by-side they reasoned; the democratic and egalitarian rationales for UMT would evaporate if the armed forces inducted some men for a period of several years while others merely trained as civilians for one. War Department officials, therefore, wanted to suspend the draft, both to prove that enough men would enlist voluntarily to maintain the vital nucleus of America’s military and to allow the political space for a UMT program to pass. In January 1947, the army officially abandoned its policy of advocating another draft extension. The expiration of Congressional authorization for the Selective Service System in March would further open the political doors to universal military training, or so military planners hoped.

* * * * *

Meanwhile, in late November 1946, Truman began assembling what was to become the President’s Advisory Commission on Universal Training (PACUT). Both supporters and detractors of universal military training had long advocated an impartial study of UMT. Backers wanted proof that such a program was both feasible and necessary, while critics hoped to use the time such a study would take to delay passage of

⁷⁴ Truman, “Universal Military Training,” 9935.

⁷⁵ Representative Frederick Smith, a Republican from Ohio, for example, derided Truman, claiming that calling universal military service anything other than conscription was “just plain deception.” Frederick Smith, Oct. 24, 1945, *Congressional Record*, 91, pt. 8, 10008.

⁷⁶ Flynn, *The Draft*, 91, 96-97.

a bill.⁷⁷ Over the next seven months, members of PACUT, led by chair Karl T. Compton, the president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, met with over 200 witnesses and traveled throughout the country to discuss the issue with concerned citizens. Ultimately, their report, *A Program for National Security*, confirmed universal military training as indispensable to the nation's defense. Members grounded their recommendations in national security concerns, but they also used *A Program for National Security* categorically to refute opponents' charges that UMT would destroy America's democratic ideals and superior morality. In short, the commission's findings brought the contested nature of citizenship and democracy to the fore in a way that no other document or forum had yet done.

In highlighting the importance of UMT's secondary benefits, PACUT members took their lead from President Truman, who appeared to have altered his rationale for the program since 1945. Where he had recommended UMT to Congress in October 1945 as a key element of the nation's security program, calling all other benefits provided by the program "by products," he had changed his emphasis by December 1946. In his opening statement to PACUT's members, he explained that he had explicitly left the word "military" out of the commission's title, calling the term "incidental" to what he had in mind. His words contradicted his statement from the year before, as he now claimed a universal military training program that taught men to be good citizens would make America stronger. As he saw it, the "great republics of the past" had crumbled "when their peoples became prosperous and fat and lazy, and were not willing to assume their responsibilities." A program of mandatory training, however, would ameliorate some of

⁷⁷ James M. Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy: Issues in Military Manpower Procurement, 1945-1970* (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1971), 60.

the ills caused by modern living. It would inform the nation's "young people...on what this government is," teach them how to "get...along with one another, inform...them of their physical makeup," and help them care for their bodies – the "Temple[s] which God gave [them]." The end result, he concluded, would be to "have sold our Republic to the coming generations as Madison and Hamilton and Jefferson sold it in the first place."⁷⁸

By late 1946, Truman clearly favored the civic republican justification for UMT, stressing young men's responsibility to serve their nation and the rewards they would reap from their sacrifice. This charge set the tone for all future work the committee undertook.

Members spent their first meeting debating the president's stance and their own opinions on universal military training. Compton and Reverend Daniel A. Poling, the editor of the *Christian Herald* and a former Army Chaplain, had already testified in favor of the idea before the Woodrum and May Committee Hearings.⁷⁹ In fact, PACUT's composition was criticized fiercely in pacifist circles.⁸⁰ Most of its members had close ties to the White House and the military establishment. Anna Rosenberg was an industrial relations consultant who had formerly served as the Regional Director of the War Manpower Commission and as Roosevelt's personal observer in the European Theater of World War II. She would be appointed an Assistant Secretary of Defense in 1950. Joseph E. Davies was the former chairman of the War Relief Control Board and had served as an

⁷⁸ Informal Remarks of the President to his Advisory Commission on Universal Training, Dec. 20, 1946, Folder: Commission Kit – 2nd Meeting, 12-28-46 President's Advisory Commission on Universal Training (PACUT), Box 3, PACUT, HST.

⁷⁹ See the testimony of Karl T. Compton, 191-97, and Daniel A. Poling, 508-18, Woodrum Committee Hearings; and the testimony of Compton, May Committee Hearings, 1945, 207-23.

⁸⁰ See Swomley, "A Study of the Universal Military Training Campaign," 209-211.

ambassador to the Soviet Union, Luxembourg, and Belgium. Former New York State Supreme Court Judge Samuel I. Rosenman had been the Special Counsel to the White House until mid-1946. Attorney Truman K. Gibson, Jr., had served as a civilian aide to the Secretary of War during World War II. Vice President of Georgetown University, Reverend Edmund A. Walsh, had served as a consultant to the American Chief of Counsel at the Nuremberg Trials. Harold W. Dodds, the President of Princeton University, and Charles E. Wilson, the President of General Electric, rounded out the Commission. Gibson, an African American; Poling, a Protestant clergyman; Walsh, a Roman Catholic priest; and Compton and Dodds, both university presidents; had supposedly been appointed to the committee to lend it diversity and authority, but none represented the majority opinion on UMT of their broader constituencies. Although they paid lip service to remaining open-minded, most members, in fact, admitted their predisposition toward passage of a training program at their first meeting.⁸¹

The basis for their support, however, was not grounded solely in the military needs of the country. Members took Truman's charge to heart, acknowledging the importance of looking beyond the country's immediate external defense requirements in order to investigate the possible moral, educational, and health benefits of UMT to national security. As Rosenman put it, "Insofar as this program promotes public health, literacy, intelligence, general citizenship and high standards, I think the program promotes national defense."⁸² Specifically, Rosenberg expressed the hope that physical training would improve the well-being of American men in light of the high rejection

⁸¹ See "Report of the First Meeting of the President's Advisory Commission on Universal Training," December 20, 1946, box 10, PACUT, HST.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 22.

rates by Selective Service during World War II.⁸³ Gibson saw UMT as the “only form of universal education” that the United States had “any chance of putting into effect.”

While he acknowledged that military education might not be ideal, he felt “it [would be] better than none,” especially for young African American men, whose literacy rates were abysmal.⁸⁴ Poling admitted that his “primary interest was in moral and religious values.”⁸⁵

These biases influenced the committee’s final report, *A Program for National Security*, which they submitted to Truman on May 29, 1947, after hearing testimony from witnesses with a wide variety of civilian and military backgrounds.⁸⁶ In it, they unanimously and whole-heartedly recommended universal military training as a necessary and (relatively) economical element of the country’s national security program, but only “under circumstances that w[ould] strengthen the spirit of democracy and prove of lasting value from a physical, mental, and moral standpoint to the youths in training.” These “byproducts,” they concluded, would be appropriate goals within a military setting only if universal training offered a tangible benefit to national security, but no program of UMT could function without paying special attention to the citizenship training the men would receive.⁸⁷ The United States needed to cultivate its strengths – both moral and

⁸³ Ibid., 6.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 7.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 8.

⁸⁶ Witnesses included educators, academics, pacifists, civil rights workers, labor leaders, physicians, psychiatrists, students, civilian religious leaders, military chaplains, government officials, intelligence officers, and military men. For a complete list, see *A Program for National Security*, 104-110.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 2.

military – in order to maintain its global “position of leadership” and prevent “the mantle of totalitarianism” from spreading “its darkness over still larger sections of the earth.”⁸⁸

According to the report, unpreparedness on the part of the United States led to World War II. Therefore, it behooved the United States to remain prepared for all future contingencies, including war. However, this would be a particularly difficult problem for the United States as a “peace-loving nation” left with “no choice except to prepare for every type of attack that might be launched against it...from any possible source.”⁸⁹ The advent of air power and atomic weapons made this responsibility especially daunting. The commission foresaw sneak attacks against the United States, possibly with atomic weapons, and defensive wars in allied and non-aligned nations, especially in Latin America, as equally viable methods for drawing America into military action. In either case, the U.S. would have to mobilize quickly – perhaps within as little as sixty days – in order to meet the threat of mechanized warfare. Moreover, the report warned that the possibility of atomic warfare was both “lurid” and very real.⁹⁰

The only viable way to protect the nation was through the combined effort of “an airborne striking force, composed of highly trained professional troops, equipped with the most advanced weapons and maintained in a constant state of alertness” and “trained men in every part of our country ready and able to meet disorder, sabotage, and even invasion.”⁹¹ This type of balanced approach would require either a force-in-being large

⁸⁸ Ibid., 3.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 7.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 13.

⁹¹ The committee acknowledged that current projections made “push-button warfare” an impossibility for at least another twenty-five years. Nevertheless, the report warned that America could lose its monopoly on atomic weapons as soon as 1951. Ibid., 14.

enough to meet threats overseas and maintain active-duty personnel in every major American city or a trained civilian populace. Both for economic reasons and to maintain the character of American democracy, PACUT concluded that a program of universal military training, as part of a larger, integrated national security program, was the best way for the U.S. to meet its defense obligations to the world and to its own populace. Most importantly, a “strong, healthy, educated population” that could “stand as a beacon of inspiration to those who believe that freedom and respect for the dignity of the individual are superior to security based on domination by the state” had to anchor any such program. A healthy and happy populace, assured the report, would provide the “bedrock” of American defense and prevent discontent from allowing American democracy to “degenerate into spineless ineffectuality.”⁹²

Operating on the assumption that “want, ill health, ignorance, race prejudice, and slothful citizenship” were as dangerous to American existence as Hitler, Mussolini, and Tojo, the members of PACUT made several recommendations for domestic reform.⁹³ They advocated a “healthy economy,” characterized by “full production, full employment, industrial peace, and the avoidance of recurring economic crises or inflation,” in order to alleviate fear at home and discourage aggression from abroad.⁹⁴ Improved healthcare would strengthen America’s manpower resources. Quality education, including the availability of advanced degrees for all who qualified for them, would create “a universal understating among our citizens of their duties as citizens,” including “their responsibility for the general welfare, of their country’s obligations in the

⁹² Ibid., 20.

⁹³ Ibid., 21.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 20.

world community, and of the benefits of democracy.”⁹⁵ Members especially prescribed educational opportunity based on merit, not race, pointing out that true democracy necessitated “the elimination of all forms of intolerance.”⁹⁶ When these pieces came together, citizens would gain an “understanding of democracy and an increased sense of personal responsibility on the part of every individual for making democracy work.”⁹⁷ Universal Military Training was essential to meet this goal.

The members of PACUT carefully constructed a plan for universal military training that they believed would meet America’s national security needs and deflect opponents’ arguments. They called for one year of continuous training for all men upon reaching the age of eighteen or graduation from high school, whichever came second. While their plan acknowledged that basic skills could be taught under other circumstances, “the continuous 6 months’ night and day experience in...camps with other men, and under strict discipline” followed by another six months of specialist training was essential to teaching the intangibles – patriotism, responsibility, tolerance – to America’s men.⁹⁸ Only those with severe physical or mental disabilities would receive exemptions, and anyone whose conscientious objection was deemed “sincere” would train in a non-military capacity. In order to combat accusations of militarism, the entire program would remain under civilian control within the executive branch.⁹⁹

PACUT’s report outlined the advantages of universal military training in positive terms. Military benefits would allow men to familiarize themselves with weapons before

⁹⁵ Ibid., 20.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 21.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 20.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 57.

⁹⁹ See Ibid., 40-50, for a discussion of the organization for the proposed plan.

their use might be necessary, teach trainees to “think like soldiers in military organizations,” and help the military identify men who possessed leadership potential. In addition, the program would shape America’s men both mentally and physically. Citizenship training would be central. A specially developed information and education program “would impart to each trainee the great psychological understanding that he... is performing, a duty to his country – a duty that [is] ...part of his obligation as a citizen.”¹⁰⁰ The screening would catch medical “defects” in the general population that might otherwise go undiagnosed and offer treatment for simple problems like hernias and bad teeth.¹⁰¹ Psychiatrists would help ensure that men adjusted to camp life and learned self-reliance, while tutors would be on hand to provide vocational guidance and literacy training, all of which would be “of inestimable value” to individuals and “of long-range benefit to the country.”¹⁰²

In other words, the plan understood UMT as a positive good for the nation. The entire country would gain protection in the event of an emergency, especially an atomic attack, because there would be civilian men in every town and city with tactical, organizational, first aid, and weapons training within a few years of the program’s start. But America would also gain a healthy, well-educated, male populace with a clear understanding of what it would be fighting for – and the knowledge that it should fight. It would “bring home” the idea that men “share[d] a common responsibility for their country’s destiny.”¹⁰³ For men, citizenship would rest on the responsibility to fight.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 31.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 69.

¹⁰² Ibid., 71-72.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 62.

The report, however, also made its case for training by directly refuting the arguments against UMT. It stated what universal military training was not. It was not conscription any more than compulsory taxes or education. It was neither “un-American” nor undemocratic so long as a democratically-elected government approved of it and so long as all men had equal obligation to participate. The report rejected the notions that military preparedness would lead to war or turn the US into a militaristic society.¹⁰⁴ Camp life would not necessarily be the moral cesspool certain detractors claimed. With carefully selected cadres, strict regulation of sexual behavior and alcohol consumption, good moral and religious training, and community involvement, universal military training could be a wholesome experience that developed the qualities of good citizens in American men even as it provided needed security to the nation.

* * * * *

PACUT received a fair amount of public attention, but it was the Experimental Training Unit at Fort Knox that became the centerpiece of a War Department public relations campaign for UMT.¹⁰⁵ The Army designed the unit, which operated at the same time PACUT was meeting with witnesses, to test the basic training component of the War Department’s plan for universal military training.¹⁰⁶ In order to publicize the virtues of

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 39-40.

¹⁰⁵ Apparently, the suggestion for an Experimental Unit came from Arthur L. Williston of Dedham, Mass., the Secretary of the National Council of the Citizens Committee for a National War Service Act . See “The AGF UMT Experimental Unit, Fort Knox, Kentucky,” n.d., file: Staff Studies – Fort Knox, Ky, box 8, PACUT, HST.

¹⁰⁶ The plan was virtually identically to PACUT’s. It called for six months of common basic training at age eighteen. Parents could authorize their seventeen-year-old sons to complete their obligation early if they graduated from high school before their eighteenth birthdays. A second six months would be devoted to specialist training, unless the trainee opted for one of several alternatives, including enlistment in the regular

universal military training, the War Department brought reporters to Fort Knox to observe – and presumably write favorable articles about – the Experimental Unit. It also provided speakers to interested civic organizations and panel members to radio programs to highlight the various benefits a national UMT program could provide.

Like *A Program for National Security*, the publicity materials produced for the Fort Knox unit focused on how UMT could mold responsible, upright, democratic male citizens. The War Department noted the varied arguments against compulsory training, especially concerns about the religious and moral well-being of trainees, the disruption a year of training would cause to the educational and vocational lives of the men, and the fears over the destruction of democracy that training could signal, and it opted to take them on one by one. Although this strategy was generally not stated overtly, one War Department document, “Outline for Veterans Radio Panels,” clearly asserted, “opposition to universal military training is generally not based on fact but rather on such generalities as democracy, morals, aggression education, and pacifism.” It identified “the chief opponents” to the plan as “parents, church groups, educators, subversive groups, and a large section of the public which does not think.” Finally, it noted that “any attempt to sell a program of universal military training must be based on a thorough job of analysis and specialized thinking along the lines of objections of each of the opposing groups and it must establish refutation and motivation for each of the groups opposed.”¹⁰⁷ But where

forces, National Guard, or ROTC or entrance into one of the service academies. After training, men would enter the Reserves.

¹⁰⁷ Originally cited in House Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, *Investigation of Participation of Federal Officials of the War Department in Publicity and Propaganda, as it Relates to Universal Military Training*, Fourth Intermediate Report of the Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, 80th Cong., 1st sess., July 1947, 6.

PACUT looked to bridge the gap between national security and civic virtue in its plan for UMT, the Army and War Department did not situate its experimental program within a larger defense program. Publicity concentrated on how UMT could save American values instead of how it would protect the security of the United States.

The Experimental Training Unit officially opened on January 13, 1947, when the first of three training companies arrived on post. In all, 664 trainees took part in the first round of the experiment.¹⁰⁸ The Army acknowledged that conditions could not fully mimic a national UMT program, since participants were regular enlisted men rather than conscripts, but it actively worked to approximate the conditions a national UMT law would create.¹⁰⁹ All members of the initial cohort were under age twenty, and the men represented 46 states plus the District of Columbia.¹¹⁰ Only fourteen were married and none had children, a situation the Army expected of future “UMTees,” given their youth.¹¹¹ The average trainee had attained 10.26 years of schooling, and only 31 had any education beyond high school.¹¹² In an attempt to match the population at large, 31 men with Army General Classification Test (AGCT) scores of less than 70 who would otherwise have been rejected for military service were accepted into a special training

¹⁰⁸ The AGF UMT Experimental Unit, 5.

¹⁰⁹ At the time the Experimental Training Unit operated, there was no draft in the United States. All new recruits were volunteers. Therefore, all participants in an Army program, by definition, had to volunteer for it, as was the case for the Fort Knox unit. While the Army and War Department acknowledged that its “UMTees” were regular enlisted men, none of the materials I found attributed the unit’s successes to the fact that the men wanted to be in the Army or that their basic training experience may have been more pleasant than that of other enlisted men.

¹¹⁰ Members were chosen using quotas that had been assigned to reception and replacement training centers to ensure geographic diversity.

¹¹¹ Public Relations Office, Fort Knox, Ky., “The Fort Knox Experiment,” n.d., File: Staff Studies-Fort Knox, Ky, box 8, PACUT, HST, 1.

¹¹² “The AGF UMT Experimental Unit,” 6.

unit, known as the Pioneer Platoon. This unit was designed as a laboratory to test how these men would fare in a regimented environment.¹¹³ Nevertheless, all of the men in the Experimental Training Unit were literate, and none had any major physical ailments. As the Army remained segregated in 1947, all of the UMTees were white.¹¹⁴

Although the men were regular Army recruits, the UMT experiment demanded that they be treated differently than the average G.I., and the Army was quick to highlight the unit's different training focus, judicial system, and regulations. The War Department and the Army Ground Forces both worked to publicize the importance of UMT, publishing pamphlets, producing informational films, and providing speakers to interested civic, religious, and educational organizations.¹¹⁵ Naturally, the progress of the Fort Knox unit became part of this publicity campaign. The unit itself possessed a dedicated public relations office, which produced its own materials and hosted members of the public and the press who toured the installation. According to Unit Commander Brigadier General Devine, almost two thousand visitors toured the facility between January and July 1947 while the post's Public Information Office assisted an additional

¹¹³ The average AGCT test score in 1946, the year when the UMTees volunteered, was 100. Scoring under 70 automatically disqualified a man from service, though by May 1947, the month in which this report was originally written, the Army had raised its requirements to a score of 80. The Army realized, however, that if UMT was to be adopted, it would have to contend with a large number of men with lower scores. See "The AGF UMT Experimental Unit," 4.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹¹⁵ House Subcommittee on Publicity and Propaganda, Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, *Investigation of War Department Publicity and Propaganda in Relation to Universal Military Training: Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Publicity and Propaganda*, 80th Cong., 2nd sess., 1948, 13; House Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, *Investigation of Participation of Federal Officials of the Department of the Army in Publicity and Propaganda, as it Relates to Universal Military Training*, Supplemental Report to the Fourth Intermediate Report of the Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, 80th Cong., 2nd sess., March 4, 1948, 3.

97 members of the media. Officers conducted press tours and helped reporters “compil[e]...information” for their stories.¹¹⁶ The printed materials produced by these offices clearly revealed a common desire to assuage the public’s fears of UMT by portraying the Experimental Unit at Fort Knox in the most positive, non-threatening light possible.

One of the simplest tactics used by public information officers was to address informational statements directly to concerned parents. Devine personally wrote letters to the families of each of the trainees. The Public Relations Office at Fort Knox sent copies of the unit’s newspaper, the *UMT Pioneer*, home to parents of current volunteers each week.¹¹⁷ Publications invited parents to visit their sons in order to put their minds at ease. The 1947 pamphlet, *Universal Military Training*, offered the post’s guesthouses for parents to spend an evening. Letters describing “hot biscuits,” “curtains in the dayroom,” and “new-found friends” could only go so far. “Seeing is believing,” and, as a photograph of a mother dancing with her uniformed son assured parents, a visit was the best way for “mom” to gain satisfaction about “her boy[‘s]...welfare.”¹¹⁸ Such personalization was designed to make parents feel as though the Army understood their fears and would nurture and protect their sons. The homey atmosphere portrayed in these publications obscured the true purpose of universal military training. In fact, *Universal Military*

¹¹⁶ United States, Army Field Forces, Universal Military Training Experimental Unit, *Interim Report: U.M.T. Experimental Unit*, Fort Knox, Kentucky, 1 August 1947, 45.

¹¹⁷ “The AGF UMT Experimental Unit,” 45.

¹¹⁸ “Universal Military Training,” n.d., box 3672, Universal Military Training, Publications “P” Files, 1946-51, Document Library Branch, Assistant Chief of Staff (G-2), Intelligence, Administrative Div., RG 319, Records of the Army Staff, NARA, 24.

Training did not mention, picture, or even allude to any form of martial endeavor until page 27.

When publicity did highlight the military elements of the program, it extolled the secondary benefits of training. According to the publicists at Fort Knox, “the primary mission” of the unit was to turn out “hardy soldiers” who were “strong both in mind and body.”¹¹⁹ But, publications pointed out that drill, calisthenics, and aerobic exercise would all lead to stronger, more muscular bodies, while classes in personal hygiene would help remediate some of the problems faced by the country’s more disadvantaged youth. Planners hoped that all trainees would “acquire [the] personal health habits of bathing frequently [and] caring for the feet, skin, and teeth,” all of which would continue “to prevent disease even after their year at camp.”¹²⁰ Moreover, UMTees would come in contact with people of differing backgrounds, a situation that would help individuals overcome their prejudices and solve some of the country’s class and ethnic tensions. The hope was that “All [would] live and work together in the great democratic fraternity typical of America; bunking in the same barracks, eating the same food, wearing the same distinctive uniform, and sharing the same worth-while experiences.”¹²¹ The abundance of nutritious food, health care, and increased understanding of others was supposed to lull parents into a sense of well-being for their sons.

Lobbying groups, however, posed a much greater obstacle to the passage of a UMT bill than individual parents, most of whom theoretically supported the measure, at least if public opinion polls were to be believed. Of these, religious organizations and

¹¹⁹ “The Fort Knox Experiment,” PACUT, 3.

¹²⁰ “Universal Military Training,” RG 319, NARA, 12.

¹²¹ “Universal Military Training,” RG 319, NARA, 1.

other associations concerned with UMTees' religious and moral welfare were certainly among the most vocal and were therefore perceived as the greatest threat. The program at Fort Knox dealt with these concerns in a number of ways. The enhanced role of the base chaplains was perhaps the most novel. Within one week of arrival at Fort Knox, each trainee met with a Catholic or Protestant chaplain for an initial interview to ascertain his "denominational affiliations, status in the church...and willingness to support the unit's religions program."¹²² Chaplains provided a series of seventeen "Citizenship and Morality" lectures on topics such as "The Citizen and his Religion" and "The Citizen and his Worship," which emphasized the importance of morality in civic life. Finally, attendance at worship services was compulsory during the first four weeks of training.¹²³ Devine and the Public Relations Office described the results of the chaplains' program as "phenomenal."¹²⁴ They were happy to report that most men continued to attend worship services after they were no longer required to do so. Moreover, 102 Protestant trainees took steps to be baptized or confirmed, as did 35 of the 135 Catholics in the first group of volunteers.¹²⁵

Given the importance of morality, sex – or the promise thereof – was depicted carefully. The Army's version of masculinity included an expectation of chaste,

¹²² A Jewish chaplain from the larger installation at Fort Knox was available for the few Jewish volunteers and Jewish worship services were also available. "The AGF UMT Experimental Unit," 33.

¹²³ For more information on religion in the postwar military, see James Gilbert, *Redeeming Culture: American Religion in an Age of Science* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), ch. 6, and Lori Lyn Bogle, *The Pentagon's Battle for the American Mind* (College Station, Tex.: Texas A&M University Press, 2004). A secular lecture on ethics was made available, but only one volunteer took advantage of this option during the first training group. See "The Fort Knox Experiment," PCRW, HST, 10.

¹²⁴ "The Fort Knox Experiment," PCRW, HST, 6.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 10.

heterosexual love with an eye toward future marriage and families. Thus, the trainees needed access to women, but only within controlled circumstances. Unit dances and visits to homes in the local community provided wholesome, chaperoned contact with the opposite sex. *Universal Military Training*, for example, showed one image of trainees gathered around a piano with young women from the local community for a singalong. Another photograph, of a young couple sitting under a tree was captioned, “Old buildings are not the least of the local attractions.” These images left the reader to infer that a training post did not have to be an all-male environment and that marriage, therefore, could be one of the benefits trainees would accrue through UMT.¹²⁶ Twenty-eight compulsory chaplains’ lectures, including two on “Sex Morality,” stressed abstinence rather than prophylaxis. In fact, according to General Devine, “all references to mechanical preventives, or statements that penicillin is [a] cure-all were avoided.... The basis for these lectures was the place of sex in the plan of God and the necessity for keeping one’s body and mind pure.”¹²⁷

In case moral and religious instruction were not enough to keep trainees out of trouble, unit regulations prohibited pin-ups, gambling, profanity, and alcohol consumption. The Post Exchange contained a soda fountain rather than the usual bar because, according to the Public Relations Office, “the average 18 year old prefer[ed] a soda.”¹²⁸ To prevent carousing on weekend passes, post regulations required trainees to register at the U.S.O. and to inform the unit headquarters of their intended whereabouts.

¹²⁶ “Universal Military Training,” NARA, 22-23.

¹²⁷ Report on the Activities and Program of the Protestant Chaplain, UMT Exper Unit, 18 March 1947, box 8, File: Staff Studies – Fort Knox, Ky, RG 220, PACUT, HST; *Interim Report: U.M.T. Experimental Unit*, 25.

¹²⁸ The Fort Knox Experiment, PACUT, HST, 6.

Devine measured the success of this endeavor by the low venereal disease rate exhibited by UMTees (10.2 per thousand) compared with that of the regular Army soldiers also stationed at Fort Knox (41.2 per thousand).¹²⁹ Local statutes forbade bartenders throughout Louisville, the nearest city, from selling alcohol to trainees. In order to keep the UMTees visible, unit regulations required them to wear distinctive badges on their uniforms at all times while off post.

Planners also instituted a plethora of after-hours activities to occupy (or possibly exhaust) the UMTees in a wholesome manner. As one *UMT Pioneer* columnist rhetorically asked, “How is a guy going to particularly good movie, attend glee club practice, see a company basketball game, and go to dance in one night [sic]?”¹³⁰

Volunteers could also take advantage of G.E.D., correspondence, or vocational classes; a hobbyshop; a music room; a sports center; a swimming pool; a radio station; and a theater in their off-duty hours. Publicity surrounding Fort Knox made sure to highlight all of these options in order to deemphasize the military nature of UMT, reassure Americans concerned about the moral lives of the young trainees, and underscore the ways military training would benefit men’s futures as civilians.

Military publicity also aimed to quell fears of “Prussianism.” Public relations officers stressed the democratic features of UMT rather than weapons training or drill. Pamphlets told their readers that trainees were not “taught to kill” because death was not “breathing down their backs.” UMT, such publications claimed, could never foster the violence and terror that characterized militaristic societies because military training

¹²⁹ *Interim Report: U.M.T. Experimental Unit*, 11.

¹³⁰ Dave Bennett, “Blue and Gold Revue: Trainee Diary,” *UMT Pioneer*, Feb. 8, 1947, in File: Commission Kit, 9th mtg, 2-14-47, box 3, PACUT, HST.

avoided “regimentation” even as it taught “discipline and respect.” The men at Fort Knox were never to be considered as mere numbers or cogs in a machine. Each man was encouraged to “respond...as an individual, develop...as an individual, [and] think...as an individual.”¹³¹ Instructors were to present lectures and standardized curricula “in the democratic American way,” complete with “open discussions rather than formal lectures,” based on the assumption that “learning is motivated when each man is made to feel that his ideas are important and original.”¹³²

Even the Army’s system of discipline was modified to avoid the threat of military hierarchy. Unit regulations prohibited drill-sergeants and junior officers from haranguing and using profanity with the trainees, who were to be disciplined through a demerit system rather than with verbal threats, hazing, or other forms of abuse. Infractions too severe for the demerit system, such as going Absent Without Leave for less than 24 hours, disorderly conduct, or drunkenness, were turned over to a Trainee Court. This disciplinary body consisted of a jury of seven trainees who decided cases argued by trainee Judge Advocates and Defense Counsels.¹³³ Devine particularly lauded this system as a means to instill individual responsibility, stating, “Every court case is a lesson in justice and that is a lesson in citizenship.”¹³⁴ In other words, planners believed that trainees would develop democratic values and learn active citizenship when they were encouraged to raise their voices and participate in discussion and self-government. Militarism simply could not flourish in such an environment.

¹³¹ “The Fort Knox Experiment,” PACUT, HST, 1.

¹³² “Universal Military Training,” NARA, 5-6.

¹³³ “The AGF UMT Experimental Unit,” 18.

¹³⁴ “The Fort Knox Experiment,” PACUT, HST, 3.

In the process of producing publicity materials to allay fears about universal military training, the War Department and Army, therefore, constructed an idealized form of virtuous, moral, middle-class, male citizenship. The War Department promised boys poise and confidence, education and skills. They would learn discipline but maintain enough individuality to think for themselves. UMT would reinforce the values of church, home, and family. Thanks to the remediation any illiterate trainees would receive, all UMT graduates would meet at least minimum educational standards, and the available vocational training ensured that all would be prepared to be wage earners. Training would also harden soft bodies and correct the health defects of the nation. *Universal Military Training* promised, for example, that after a trainee had “given up a year to his country,” he would be able to “look forward to a prosperous future untroubled by war.” In return for their time, trainees would gain confidence, new interests, and new knowledge. They would be “more tolerant and understanding,” “physically fit,” and “mentally alert.” Each individual would “look...a man” upon completion of the program and be “ready to take on his new job or school work with satisfaction. Each would be a “responsible citizen, “ and military training would constitute that citizenship.¹³⁵

In June 1947 – the same month President Truman submitted PACUT’s report to Congress – a special subcommittee of the House Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, chaired by Republican Forest A. Harness of Indiana, convened to investigate whether the military had acted inappropriately in its UMT publicity campaign.¹³⁶ It found that the War Department had attempted to influence civilian

¹³⁵ “Universal Military Training,” NARA, 42 (emphasis mine).

¹³⁶ PACUT’s report, *A Program for National Security*, was submitted to Congress on June 4, 1947.

organizations in the hopes that these associations would lobby Congress to pass a UMT bill. Thus, it was guilty of engaging in propaganda. The hearings concluded that Alan Coutts and Helen Hamilton Woods, civilian employees of the War Department, and enlisted men from the Fort Knox unit had used federal funds to finance speaking engagements with civic, educational, women's, parent's and patriotic organizations. Further, the military had chartered planes at taxpayers' expense to fly visitors, especially reporters, to Fort Knox, who subsequently received guided tours that stressed the virtues of universal military training. The Army also inappropriately used Citizen's Advisory Committees, including the one in Louisville, and the *UMT Pioneer* to publicize UMT.¹³⁷

Although public support for UMT ran high in the summer of 1947 based on the positive recommendations of PACUT, the Harness hearings slowed the progress of a training bill that Republican Harry L. Towe of New York, the Chair of the House Armed Services Committee, had introduced.¹³⁸ Towe's committee and then a separate subcommittee of that body held hearings throughout June and July, but the issue had become a political hot potato. Opposition groups clamored to have their objections heard before the hearings, but the Armed Services Committee shut them down before they could all have their say. In its report, the committee defended itself, declaring that the issue had been "thoroughly debated" and a "singular uniformity of argument" presented.

¹³⁷ House Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, *Investigation of Participation of Federal Officials*.

¹³⁸ For information on public opinion, see Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 72, and *A Program for National Security*," 222-242. The bill under consideration was 80 H.R. 4278.

Since “no new light would have been shed on the subject had hearings been extended,” they ended.¹³⁹

Further, as subcommittee members pointed out, the bill had “no hope of passage” since Republican Senator Robert Taft of Ohio had decided to throw his considerable political weight behind the opposition.¹⁴⁰ Taft had always disdained compulsion in manpower policy, believing it an infringement on American liberty. He had voted against the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 and had advocated an all-volunteer military in the wake of World War II. By late 1947, he had turned his attention to UMT, bringing many Republican members of Congress with him.¹⁴¹ The House Armed Services Committee ultimately reported out the Towe bill favorably, but only because of the absence of eleven of its Republican members. It moved on to the Rules Committee, where it languished.¹⁴² Meanwhile, in the wake of the Harness hearings, Congress censured the War Department and, in early 1948, the Department of Justice initiated its own investigation. Publicity in favor of UMT from the War Department (later Department of Defense) all but stopped.¹⁴³ It could no longer advertise UMT as a measure to strengthen America’s manhood or teach citizenship obligations.

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After 1947, UMT did not vanish from the political scene, but the nature of the debate changed. When communists staged a successful coup in Czechoslovakia in

¹³⁹ House Committee on Armed Services, *Universal Military Training*, H. Rpt. No. 1107, Report to accompany H.R. 4278, 80th Cong., 1st sess., 1947, p. 7.

¹⁴⁰ House Committee on Armed Services. *Subcommittee Hearings on Universal Military Training: Hearings on H.R. 4121*, 80th Cong., 1st sess., July 1947, 4443.

¹⁴¹ See Clarence E. Wunderlin, *Robert A. Taft: Ideas, Tradition, and Party in U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005), 131-132.

¹⁴² Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 71.

¹⁴³ Gilbert, *Redeeming Culture*, 110.

February 1948, alarm rippled through the defense establishment. Not only had the last remaining democracy in Eastern Europe “fallen” to communism, but the emergency highlighted the woeful manpower predicament faced by American ground forces. The Army’s available force was 117,000 men below its Congressional authorization, while the Marine Corps fell short by approximately 30,000 men.¹⁴⁴ Moreover, soldiers were mustering out of the Army faster than new men could be recruited. Force strength was falling, leaving the Army, according to Secretary of State Marshall, “a hollow shell, over-deployed.”¹⁴⁵

On March 17, in a speech addressed to a joint session of Congress and broadcast over most major radio stations, Truman outlined his emergency plan. He requested that Congress approve the European Recovery Program without delay, enact a plan for universal military training, and temporarily reinstate the draft.¹⁴⁶ “We have found,” he declared, “that a sound military system is necessary in time of peace if we are to remain at peace.”¹⁴⁷ The U.S., according to the president, was in a liminal state, neither war nor peace. The old objections to a peacetime draft had no place in a Cold War world. New exigencies called for a rethinking of national security policy.

¹⁴⁴ The Navy and Air Force were also undermanned, but these shortages were expected to lighten by July 1. See Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 84-85.

¹⁴⁵ Secretary of State Marshall, quoted in “Secretary is Firm,” *New York Times*, March 19, 1948.

¹⁴⁶ At this point, the European Recovery Program, which became the Foreign Assistance Act (P.L. 80-472, signed on April 3, 1948) and which was later known as the Marshall Plan, had passed the Senate on a bipartisan vote but had yet to pass the House. It was designed to provide money and resources to help European nations rebuild and resist communism.

¹⁴⁷ “The Text of President Truman’s Address to the Joint Session of the Congress,” *New York Times*, March 18, 1948.

Truman had performed another about face, this time by combining UMT with conscription. His administration's previous position had been to separate the two measures, and the push for UMT had been part of the rationale for allowing the draft to expire in 1947.¹⁴⁸ But now he tried to reconcile the two, reassuring the nation that Selective Service would be necessary only "until the solid foundation of universal training [could] be established." In the meantime, UMT would support the reserves, and conscription would fill the ranks of the active forces.¹⁴⁹ Gone was any reference to UMT's possible benefits for the nation's moral, educational, or social welfare; discussion of the meaning of democracy; or consideration of the responsibilities of citizenship. From 1948 on, the administration framed universal training solely as a defensive measure in an increasingly hostile world.

As Cold War tensions escalated with the Soviet blockade of West Berlin, Congressional debate shifted away from whether the U.S. should arm itself and toward the best way to do it. Although some Republicans, like chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee Chan Gurney of South Dakota and chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Arthur Vandenberg of Michigan, continued to support universal military training, most did not. Many followed Taft and lifted their objections to conscription, finding it "more important to be anti-Soviet than antimilitary."¹⁵⁰

Instead, they chose to support the findings of the President's Air Policy Commission, a fact-finding committee formed by Truman in July 1947 that advocated the

¹⁴⁸ Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 87.

¹⁴⁹ "The Text of President Truman's Address to the Joint Session of the Congress."

¹⁵⁰ Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 90; Wunderlin, *Robert A. Taft*, 131-132.

expansion of the newly independent Air Force as the most efficient and realistic way to defend the country. The committee's conclusions clashed with the findings of PACUT. Its report, *Survival in the Air Age*, argued that an attack by the Soviet Union would most likely come from the air. The only way to meet such an aerial threat was through an Air Force of sufficient size and strength to both defend against Soviet air power and powerfully strike back. Where the Truman Administration advocated a 55-group Air Force supplemented by World War II era planes, this report posited a 70-group force consisting solely of modern aircraft as the nation's best defense.¹⁵¹ A specially-created joint Congressional Aviation Policy Board under the leadership of Republicans Senator Owen Brewster of Maine and Representative John Carl Hinshaw of California, concurred.¹⁵²

The issue soon came to the fore in the debate over UMT as the Senate and then the House Armed Services Committees opened hearings to weigh the relative merits of Truman's proposal. Over the course of the proceedings, it became clear that the service branches were not united in their vision for America's national security. Where Secretary of Defense Forrestal advocated a "balanced" force, characterized by an expanded Air Force that would be supported by "a strong Navy, a sizable and well-equipped Army, and the many supporting services," including UMT, Secretary of the Air Force W. Stuart Symington demurred.¹⁵³ Under direct questioning from Democratic Representative Lyndon Johnson, Symington admitted that he would rather have a 70-group air force than

¹⁵¹ President's Air Policy Commission, *Survival in the Air Age* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1947).

¹⁵² Senate Aviation Policy Board, *National Aviation Policy: Report of the Congressional Aviation Policy Board*, S. Rpt. 949, 80th Cong., 2d sess., March 1, 1948.

¹⁵³ Senate Committee on Armed Services, *Universal Military Training: Hearings before the Committee on Armed Services*, 80th Cong., 2d sess., 1948, 32.

UMT.¹⁵⁴ Ranking Democrat Carl Vinson of Georgia seized on this admission and came out in favor of the expanded Air Force as well. With too many powerful members of Congress arrayed against it, UMT had no hope of passage in 1948.

Opponents, meanwhile, had not substantially changed their line of attack since 1944. They continued to object to UMT based on the assumption that the measure would infringe on the citizenship rights of individual men and destroy the moral fabric of American society. Over 100 witnesses either testified or submitted statements to this effect at the Senate Armed Services Committee's hearings. Despite the publicity campaign of 1947, not one major organization or constituency that had opposed UMT in 1944-45 supported it in 1948, though several, including the American Federation of Labor, the American Council on Education, and the American Farm Bureau Federation, lifted their opposition to selective conscription on a limited basis.¹⁵⁵

Labor and civil rights activists A. Philip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and founder of the March on Washington Movement, and Grant Reynolds, the New York State Commissioner of Corrections and former Republican candidate for Congress, added one new element to congressional deliberations. While African Americans had protested discrimination within UMT since it was first proposed in the early 1940s, Randolph and Reynolds pushed the sticky issue of segregation in the military into the limelight in a way civil rights leaders had been hesitant to earlier. In late 1947, the two men founded the Committee Against Jim Crow in Military Service and

¹⁵⁴ House Committee on Armed Services, *Selective Service: Hearings on Sundry Legislation*, H. Rept. 265, 80th Cong., 2d sess., April 8, 1948, 6138, as quoted in Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 100.

¹⁵⁵ See the testimony of William Greene, 840-851; George F. Zook, 891-897; and Herbert W. Voorhees, 138-144, Senate Committee on Armed Services, *Universal Military Training*.

Training to lobby for the desegregation of the military. Testifying under the auspices of that organization, they warned members of the committee that if integration was not made part of whatever training program Congress settled on, they would initiate a broad campaign of civil disobedience against any compulsory service or training “along the lines of the magnificent struggles of the people of India against British imperialism.” Randolph promised to “personally...advise Negroes to refuse to fight as slaves for a democracy they cannot possess and cannot enjoy.” He pledged himself to “openly counsel, aid, and abet youth, both white and Negro, to quarantine any Jim Crow conscription system.”¹⁵⁶ The two men, in cooperation with A.J. Muste and Bayard Rustin of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, a pacifist organization, soon founded the League for Non-Violent Civil Disobedience to back up their threats. They envisioned the League as a clearinghouse for information and a legal resource to defend young men who refused to register with the Selective Service or allow themselves to be inducted into a segregated system.

The founders of the League framed their demands as the logical outgrowth of citizenship in a liberal democracy. If the government of the United States failed to carry out its responsibility to protect the rights of black men to train in or serve with the military on an equal basis as white men, then black men could not be obligated to perform that service. However, this liberal critique was paired with a specifically gendered, civic republican rationale for protest. Like many other civil rights activists, Reynolds and Randolph were not opposed to universal military training in the abstract; they merely rejected any plan that did not concretely outlaw segregation and

¹⁵⁶ See the testimony of Grant Reynolds, 676-685, and A. Philip Randolph, 685-695, *Ibid.* Quotes pp. 680, 687, 688.

discrimination against black participants. They believed that military service could benefit black men, but only if it was on equal footing with their white counterparts. Until that could happen, the struggle for equality would serve the same purpose as military participation. It would be the fight that would teach black men to stand up for themselves as American citizens. If African American men did not serve in the military under segregated circumstances, then their refusal to associate with it would fulfill their responsibility to force the United States to live up to its democratic promise. Randolph characterized this demand for “full, unqualified, first-class citizenship” as a “positive, resolute out-reaching for full manhood.”¹⁵⁷

Reynolds and Randolph’s call for civil disobedience among African American men initiated debate within the black community. Other civil rights organizations, including the Congress of Racial Equality, an offshoot of the Fellowship of Reconciliation; the NAACP; and the National Urban League; all agreed that the military should be desegregated, but they objected to Randolph’s tactics. They felt that supporting Randolph’s methods would be too damaging to their cause, especially after Oregon Republican and civil rights supporter Senator Wayne Morse suggested that Randolph be tried for treason. But, they were able to take advantage of the publicity garnered by Randolph’s demands to push their own anti-segregation agendas. The NAACP, for example, took the opportunity to create its own Council to Abolish Segregation in the Armed Forces. It is impossible to know how much influence this agitation had over Truman’s decision to order the desegregation of the armed forces in 1948, but it is clear that young black men were thinking about the issue. No polls were conducted in rural

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 687.

southern or urban northern areas where the majority of black youth lived, but a survey conducted by the Youth Division of the NAACP found that seventy-one percent of black college students favored a boycott of segregated compulsory military training during peacetime, while fifty percent stated that they would not serve even during a war emergency.¹⁵⁸ In July 1948, Truman issued Executive Order 9981, establishing the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services. Once Truman assured Reynolds and Randolph that segregation would be banned in the military and the draft as a result of this order, the two activists dissolved the League for Non-Violent Civil Disobedience before it could gain any traction.¹⁵⁹

It is clear, however, that the issue of racial equality hampered the passage of UMT legislation even further. The majority of congresspeople preferred to let the military decide its own racial policy, believing that the nation's protection, not social experimentation, was the first priority of the Department of Defense. Walter Andrews, the Republican Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, for example, stated that he "would endorse limited segregation in keeping with Army policy."¹⁶⁰ Morse asserted, "Neither Congress nor the country is ready for a complete anti-segregation policy."¹⁶¹ Most southern representatives would not support any program that mandated integration, and some attempted to have segregation specifically written into defense bills. Georgia Democrat, Senator Richard B. Russell, introduced an amendment to

¹⁵⁸ Paula E. Pfeffer, *A. Philip Randolph: Pioneer of the Civil Rights Movement* (Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana State University Press, 1990), ch. 4.

¹⁵⁹ For further discussion, see Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), ch. 3; Pfeffer, *A. Philip Randolph*, ch. 4.

¹⁶⁰ Swomley, "A Study of the Universal Military Training Campaign," 131, originally cited in the *New York Herald Tribune*, Dec. 20, 1947.

¹⁶¹ As quoted in Pfeffer, *A. Philip Randolph*, 141.

pending draft legislation that would have required the military to assign any man who filed a petition to a unit composed solely of men from his own race. Mississippi Democrat John Bell Williams offered a similar measure in the House.¹⁶² A few, however, including Taft and Senator William Langer, a Republican from North Dakota, actively fought to include integration amendments in UMT bills, most likely as a delaying tactic, since they opposed compulsory training in general.

In the end, this political infighting and lack of public support killed UMT legislation. Truman signed the Selective Service Act of 1948 into law on June 24 without a training provision.¹⁶³ Inductions were scheduled to start ninety days later, but in that time, international tensions calmed somewhat. Although the Berlin airlift continued, it appeared that Soviet Premiere Josef Stalin was unwilling to start another war. As a result, and because the threat of conscription spurred sufficient men to enlist on their own, draft calls stayed low and were suspended entirely by February 1949. Although the issue of UMT came up in the debates over the FY1950 budget, there was no impetus for its passage. Selective conscription barely seemed necessary, let alone training for all American men. Disparities between the House and Senate versions of the bill to renew conscription delayed extension in 1950, but debate centered on the mechanics of the law, not whether conscription should exist.¹⁶⁴ Universal military training was not part of the discussion.

¹⁶² "Race Segregation Still a Live Issue in Draft Program," *New York Times*, May 13, 1948.

¹⁶³ P.L. 80-759.

¹⁶⁴ After the outbreak of the Korean crisis, Congress rushed to extend the draft. 81 S.J. Res. 190 extended the draft to July 9, 1950, and then P.L. 81-599 extended it until July 9, 1951.

Truman, however, continued to lobby. With the opening of hostilities in Korea, he appointed staunch UMT supporter George Marshall as the Secretary of Defense, who, in turn, nominated Anna Rosenberg, a former member of PACUT, as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Personnel. They seized on the Korean emergency as an opportunity to renew their fight for UMT as part of a long-range plan to expand the country's reserves. Their hope was to eliminate conscription after the war ended by authorizing the president to alter the terms of Selective Service legislation. They fought for a law that would allow Truman to shorten the period of training for inductees to six months and either reduce or eliminate the responsibility for active service. This would effectively create a training rather than service program. House and Senate deliberations added restriction on top of restriction to the proposal, however.¹⁶⁵

In 1951, Congress passed the Universal Military Training and Service Act.¹⁶⁶ Although primarily designed to extend the draft, the act allowed for a UMT program, but only after Congress had established provisions for it in a separate law. The separate law never passed. Debates over its details and lack of political will sent the measure back to committee, where it died. Military planners continued to shift their focus to mechanization, air power, and a doctrine of limited engagement. By 1951, training a large reserve of infantrymen seemed obsolete. The Truman Administration had failed to convince opponents that UMT was an American, democratic, or necessary measure. The idea of universal military training was, in effect, politically dead.

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¹⁶⁵ See Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 166-167.

¹⁶⁶ Truman signed the Universal Military Training and Service Act, P.L. 82-51, on June 19, 1951.

Scholar James M. Gerhardt argued that UMT consistently failed because no one could agree on its goals or how to accomplish them. Defense policy in the post-war years was constantly evolving as the geopolitical situation took shape and nations struggled to come to terms with the meaning of atomic weapons. The national security establishment was just starting to name the Soviet Union as America's primary threat at the end of 1947.¹⁶⁷ The role of the infantry, the Air Force, and the reserves were all part of the public debate. But UMT also failed under the weight of its own history. In 1948, Congress was still fuming over the War Department's failed publicity campaign surrounding Fort Knox; all of the same educational, religious, labor, pacifist, and civil rights organizations that had opposed the idea in 1944 continued to do so in 1948; and the Department of Defense had few new arguments to use in its own favor.¹⁶⁸ Despite the various tactics used by the War Department and then the Department of Defense, the idea of UMT had trouble gaining new supporters.

Nevertheless, the failed campaign to pass a national UMT law is historically significant, especially for what it reveals about post-war Americans' understanding of their own democratic principles. Proponents' vision of citizenship did not include all Americans; despite the measure's title, it was not universal. Although the Army advertised the diverse geographical, educational, and socio-economic backgrounds of future trainees, it virtually ignored the question of race. If and when UMT became law, African American men would be held liable for training, but only within a segregated

¹⁶⁷ PACUT's June 1947 report never mentioned a specific enemy, nor did witnesses at congressional hearings on UMT between 1945 and 1947. The reports from the President's Air Policy Commission and the Joint Congressional Aviation Board, however, did, as did witnesses at the UMT hearings in 1948 on.

¹⁶⁸ See Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, ch. 1-2, but especially pp. 104-105.

system. Civil Rights activists refused to support any vision of American citizenship that did not include black men on an equal basis with white men. Moreover, UMT was not designed to benefit women. It defined citizenship as a masculine prerogative. Only men would be obliged to undergo training and therefore only men would derive the secondary benefits of free health care, educational and vocational training, and the intangibles of leadership training, broad socialization, and moral and religious instruction.

Second, the picture the military created was simply too good to be true. Flesh and blood men did not always behave as the staged photographs and carefully worded text indicated. Journalist Alexander Stewart, for example, found that Fort Knox trainees, resentful of being called “the lace pantie brigade [sic],” frequently removed their distinctive badges while on pass in Louisville in order to find beer and women.¹⁶⁹ Clearly the men themselves, fearful that the prohibitions on alcohol and sex would damage their masculine self-image, did not universally buy in to the image of manhood so carefully cultivated by the Army. In fact, some of the independent press coverage took the Army’s carefully controlled message and pushed it farther than the publicity officers intended. A photo essay in *Life* magazine, for example, referred to the UMTees as “kid-glove rookies.” It derisively noted the trainees’ individually tailored uniforms, the unit’s “polite” and “solicitous” officers, and the rug on the club room floor.¹⁷⁰ The end result was not so much an image of wholesome manhood, but an impression of soft, pampered teenagers.

¹⁶⁹ Alexander Stewart, “Is ‘UMTee’ the Answer?” *Christian Century*, reprinted in House Committee on Armed Services, *Full Committee Hearings on Universal Military Training*, 80th Cong., 1st sess., June 1947, 4276.

¹⁷⁰ “The Army’s Kid-Glove Rookies,” *Life*, March 10, 1947, 43-46.

Most importantly, the debate over universal military training illustrates the different ways that Americans defined citizenship and masculinity after World War II. Depending on the point of view, UMT could be seen as either democratic or totalitarian; as the best way to ensure an educated, healthy, involved citizenry or the worst; as vital to the growth of America's manhood or the path to its destruction. In short, it was defined as both a means to shore up America's core values and to tear them down.

The plan gained the most traction in 1947, when the War Department chose to advertise it as a way to educate and improve American manhood, especially through citizenship training. But planners never made clear why the military should be the party responsible for instilling democratic virtues, moral values, and even manners into American men. Such paternalism struck a discordant note with many Americans, especially since it came from the military rather than private or even public civilian sources. Many Americans did not want the military to socialize their children. The absence of rationale was particularly obvious given the lack of stress on UMT as a military measure. The death of UMT was a significant blow to the civic-republican definition of the citizen-soldier.

Finally, the demise of UMT confirmed once and for all the army's commitment to selective conscription rather than universal training or service. Reliance on a selective draft meant that military service did not extend to all men. As strategic needs changed and the likelihood of another global war declined, the armed services found they required fewer and fewer men. In all likelihood, the nation did not need a universal military training program in the years following World War II, but its defeat, by validating

military service as a selective male citizenship obligation, unintentionally paved the way for the mass resistance to conscription that followed twenty years later.

Chapter Two
“Necessary to the Maintenance of the National Health, Safety, or Interest:”
Deferment Policy during the Early Cold War,
1948-1953

When President Harry Truman stood before Congress in March 1948 to ask for a reinstatement of the draft, he fervently hoped selective conscription would be a temporary expedient, in place just long enough to bolster the armed forces until a program of universal military training could be implemented. But it was not to be. UMT never passed, and Selective Service continued to operate until 1973, officially through more years of peace than war. The Selective Service Act of 1948 instituted the United States’ first true peacetime draft.¹

Like America’s other twentieth-century draft laws, the Selective Service Act of 1948 and its successor, the Universal Military Training and Service Act of 1951, allowed men who met certain requirements to defer their military service, in some cases for long enough that they aged out of eligibility altogether. These deferments were designed to protect the nation’s economic stability by preventing the military from drawing men

¹ The Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 is widely considered the United States’ first peacetime draft by both scholars and the legislators who crafted it. It is clear, however, that the 1940 Act was passed with an eye toward America’s entrance into World War II. President Franklin Roosevelt signed it into law on September 16, 1940, close to two weeks after he had traded fifty retired destroyers to the British in exchange for land rights in the Caribbean and Canada and a year after easing the United States’ Neutrality Acts to allow Great Britain to purchase war material on a cash and carry basis. Despite its professed neutrality, the U.S. had already chosen sides in the conflict. In contrast, by the time Truman signed the Selective Service Act in June 1948, the U.S. had defined the Soviet Union as its primary enemy and negotiated diplomatic crises like the communist coup in Czechoslovakia and would imminently face the Berlin blockade, but the law itself was aimed toward a non-specific war to take place sometime in the future. Thus, it created more of a peacetime draft than that of 1940. For more on the fuzzy edges of wartime in the United States, see Mary L. Dudziak, *WarTime: An Idea, Its History, Its Consequences* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

willy-nilly out of the civilian sector. Unlike during World War I and World War II, however, conscription during the Cold War was not framed as an emergency expedient. Rather, after 1948, Selective Service was conceived as a semi-permanent institution necessary to support the large manpower requirements of the Cold War. The period of prolonged military preparedness engendered by this conflict forced manpower planners to rethink the purpose of conscription and the system used to sustain it. For the first time, deferments were used to support an indefinitely militarized peace instead of a temporary war effort. Within this context, meeting long-range defense goals and protecting national values were of greater consequence than during earlier periods of conscription. Sustaining a functional, vibrant, and distinctly American civilian society became as much a goal of military manpower policy as producing a strong military.

The onset of the Korean War brought these issues into sharp relief. The surprise with which the North Korean invasion of South Korea caught Pentagon officials underscored the need for preparedness in an uncertain world. As a result, the armed forces would not be demobilized after the cessation of combat as they had been following every previous American military engagement. Thus, the policy debates over deferments that occurred during the Korean War took on new meanings, as their results would last long into the militarized peace that followed.

This chapter focuses specifically on the debates about which groups of men to protect through deferments during the early Cold War, including the Korean War, as questions concerning men's citizenship obligations moved from theory to actuality. In order to meet the emergency, the U.S. military decided to triple the size of its active forces, just as the nation's population of military-aged young men fell to its lowest

number in decades. Fewer babies born during the Depression years meant fewer men available to be soldiers in the 1950s. Meanwhile, the Selective Service Act of 1948 deferred or exempted veterans; ministers; conscientious objectors; husbands without children; fathers; men considered physically, mentally, or morally unfit; and those in occupations considered in the national interest, including agriculture.² Moreover, the law prevented the induction of men younger than nineteen years old. All of this meant that available manpower was spread thin in both the military and civilian sectors. Yet, in 1951, with congressional and presidential approval, the Selective Service added a deferment category for college students. Moreover, Congress and certain segments of the public proved reluctant to draft eighteen-year-olds or revoke the dependency deferment for fathers even at a moment of heightened concern over the depth of the available manpower pool.

Despite downward population trends and vastly increased induction calls, pressure from professional organizations, federal agencies, and the American public indicated these groups' desire to look beyond the immediate emergency. They considered certain men more valuable to the nation as civilians than as soldiers. Science, engineering, and educational organizations argued that American technological superiority depended on maintaining an uninterrupted supply of bright, young college graduates. Civic organizations, including many that lobbied for universal military

² Occupational deferments were offered to men whose jobs were considered vital to the functioning of the nation. As will be shown, the law was vague as to which jobs qualified, and, often, local boards were left to their own devices to determine whether a man should receive such a deferment. In general, however, men in the fields of science, medicine, education, agriculture, public health and public safety and those who worked in factories producing goods to fulfill defense contracts could gain them *if* their employers could demonstrate that workers with similar skills could not easily be found.

training, hoped to lower the age of induction to eighteen, but the same pacifist and religious groups that fought against UMT also maintained that military service at such a young age would destroy America's youth. Finally, individual citizens and lawmakers alike fretted over what would happen to the institution of the family if fathers were regularly drafted away from their homes. To these groups, national defense included training future generations of scientists, engineers, and doctors; nurturing boys into men; and protecting the nuclear family. The decision of who to draft and who to leave at home would have lasting repercussions. Conditions established during the war would not be temporary; they would be the new "normal" for an indeterminate length of time into the future peace. Therefore, it was imperative that new regulations protect American values.

Policies that protected students and fathers from military service during an active military emergency set an ambivalent precedent. First, they further committed the United States to a system of selective military service. Even though the law ostensibly held all qualified men liable for induction, student and dependency deferments created a situation in which the military establishment purposely kept particular categories of men out of the armed services in the name of national security. More importantly, newly written regulations deferred these men because of their potential to contribute to the nation's defense in the future, not because of what they actively contributed at the moment. These policies helped to militarize the civilian sector, especially the scientific and engineering fields, as they defined certain occupations and domestic arrangements as service to the state. Simultaneously, these deferments limited the role of the military by restricting the reach of conscription and the number of men who actually served in the armed forces. Moreover, deferments were justified because they protected the nation's economic and

familial structures. Therefore, these policies unwittingly privileged economic and domestic forms of citizenship over martial citizenship in the civic-republican tradition. Their unintended result was to further the process of separating military service from masculine citizenship.

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In many ways, the Selective Service Act of 1948 was an ambivalent measure. On one hand, the very existence of conscription during peacetime indicated the intensified militarization of post-war American society. Traditionally, the United States had depended on involuntary inductions only during wartime because the American people historically harbored a deep, suspicion of peacetime conscription. In the late 1940s, however, fear of a third world war trumped such misgivings. In the emerging Cold War environment, national security was seen by many as a more critical issue than the threat of compulsion, which was why former isolationists, like Republican Senator Robert Taft of Ohio, dropped their opposition to conscription in 1948. On the other hand, Congress responded to Truman's request with a limited bill.

Even though the president had spent the previous three years fighting for a program of universal military training, the Selective Service Act of 1948 baldly stated that all men did not have an equal responsibility for military service. According to the legislation, "the obligations and privileges of serving in the armed forces ... should be shared generally," but only "in accordance with a system of selection which is fair and just, and which is consistent with the maintenance of an effective national economy."³ In other words, while universal military service theoretically should be an obligation of

³ Selective Service Act of 1948, Public Law 80-759, *United States Statutes at Large* 62, part 1, (1948): 605.

citizenship, such a program was not a practical reality. The nascent Cold War demanded partial mobilization. Men should expect to serve if called, but the Act would not call all men equally. It authorized the president to defer any individual engaged in work “found to be necessary to the maintenance of the national health, safety, or interest;” whose status as the sole supporter of dependents rendered his “deferment advisable;” whose belief in a ‘Supreme Being’ caused his opposition to all wars;” or who was “found to be physically, mentally, or morally deficient or defective .”⁴ Except for those incapable of or religiously opposed to military service, the law offered deferments to those who could perform service to the country in some other manner, either through their jobs or through their family role as breadwinner.⁵

These broad categories of deferments made sense. They assured equity of national service, if not equality; left enough skilled workers to continue scientific research and maintain a strong economy; and protected the interests of society’s most vulnerable. The armed forces could not expect to draw their personnel haphazardly from the young male populace without ramifications in the civilian sector. Factories and hospitals could only operate when fully-staffed with skilled employees; the nation needed farmers and agricultural workers to maintain its food supplies; schools required teachers to educate children; and many families could not afford to lose their primary breadwinners and caregivers to the low pay of the Army.

Targeted short-term deferments and permanent exemptions from military service had been used during each of the twentieth-century’s previous wars to protect the

⁴ Ibid., 612-13.

⁵ No alternate service was required of conscientious objectors under the 1948 law. The Universal Military Service and Training Act of 1951 added a clause that required alternate service from conscientious objectors as well.

economy as a whole by ensuring enough potential employees remained available to keep it vibrant and healthy.⁶ The Selective Draft Act of 1917, for example, authorized the president to exempt federal, state, and local officials and men working in vital industries, including, “artificers and workmen employed in the armories, arsenals, and navy yards ... pilots; mariners ... [and] persons engaged in industries, including agriculture, found to be necessary to the maintenance of ... national interest during the emergency.”⁷ The Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 simplified the language, but similarly offered deferments to “those men whose employment in industry, agriculture, or other occupations ... is found ... to be necessary to the maintenance of the national health, safety, or interest.”⁸ Occupational and agricultural deferments were of immense importance in keeping the nation on war footing during World War II.

But deferments and exemptions were used to defend social values deemed of national importance as well. For example, the 1948 Act, like other twentieth-century American draft laws, protected the beliefs of those men who could prove they were religious conscientious objectors. Although it was a contested issue, the majority of Americans agreed that compelling a man to compromise his sincerely-held religious ideals, even in the name of national defense, undermined the nation’s foundational

⁶ Technically, a deferment is a short-term postponement of draft eligibility so that a man may fulfill another, more pressing obligation to the state, while an exemption is a permanent release from the responsibilities of military service. Twentieth-century policies and practices have obscured the differences between the two, however. For example, as this dissertation shows, men after 1948 pyramided their deferments, turning short-term postponements from military eligibility into permanent exemptions.

⁷ Selective Draft Act of 1917, Public Law 65-12, *United States Statutes at Large* 40, part I, (1919), 79.

⁸ Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, Public Law 76-783, *United States Statutes at Large* 54, part 1 (1941): 888.

principle of religious freedom.⁹ Ministers and divinity students were exempted from military obligations for similar reasons.

One deferment based heavily on national values was that granted to men with dependents. In part, this deferment indicated the assumption that the father (or occasionally other male family member) was the main source of income within the family. Since the base pay of the enlisted grades was particularly low until reforms in the mid-1950s and military allowances for dependents of soldiers and sailors were not automatic until the Korean War, many families did, in fact, face hardship when the male head-of-household was conscripted.¹⁰ But the application of the dependency deferment historically went far beyond cases of individual hardship.

⁹ The 1917 law allowed members of historic peace churches – Quakers, Mennonites, and Brethren – to apply for conscientious objector (CO) status, but such status did not provide a deferment. At first, non-combatant military service was the only option offered to a drafted CO, but by the end of 1917, alternate civilian service in hospitals became available to a limited number of those who refused to enter the military. Absolutists, who refused to register, and COs who refused their assigned service faced prison sentences. During World War II, the law was broadened to include those outside of the historic peace churches whose religious beliefs led them to oppose all wars under any circumstances. Congress authorized the establishment of 151 Civilian Public Service (CPS) camps to provide alternate service for those COs who refused non-combatant service within the military. 12,000 men worked in these camps over the course of the war, approximately 25,000 served in the military in non-combatant positions, and another 5,000 went to prison for refusing to register or for protest in the CPS camps, where conditions were often subpar. The 1948 law offered religious objectors deferments from service without any obligation for alternate service. See John Whiteclay Chambers II, “Conscientious Objectors and the American State from Colonial Times to the Present,” 23-46, in *The New Conscientious Objection: From Sacred to Secular Resistance*, ed. Charles C. Moskos and Chambers (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

¹⁰ Regulations instituting allotments and allowances for families were established concurrently with each twentieth-century draft, but they were separate and time-limited measures. For example, during World War II, President Franklin Roosevelt signed the Servicemen’s Dependents Allowance Act on June 23, 1942, to provide extra support to the dependents of enlisted men, over a year and a half after conscription had been instituted in September 1940.

How and when the federal government, local boards, and particular men chose to use the deferment illustrates the complex interplay between military service, economic need, competing value systems, and the obligations of masculine citizenship. The 1917 law, for example, allowed the President to “exclude or discharge... those in a status with respect to persons dependent upon them for support which renders their exclusion or discharge advisable.”¹¹ This vague language granted local draft boards wide latitude in classifying individual men, but despite some abuse of the provision, most inductees did not choose to apply for the exemptions to which they may have been entitled.¹² As historian Christopher Capozzola argued, the popular political culture of the day “defined citizenship through its obligations.” Therefore, men who did not serve, perjoratively labeled as “slackers” by the public, “were not just bad citizens,” they were “inadequate men.”¹³ In such an environment, more men preferred to volunteer for service or allow themselves to be conscripted than apply for an exemption.¹⁴ Either they felt that their obligations to the State trumped their responsibilities to their families or they believed

¹¹ Selective Service Act of 1917, *United States Statutes at Large*: 79.

¹² The mere having of dependents was not enough to rate an exemption. Men had to prove that their wives and children were financially dependent on them. A memo from the Provost Marshal General’s office, for example, stated, “The rule does *not* ask, ‘Is the husband, *as a matter of law*, liable to support the wife?’ It asks, ‘Is the wife, *as a matter of fact*, mainly dependent *on the daily labor* of her husband for support?’” Quoted in Dorit Geva, “Different and Unequal: Breadwinning, Dependency Deferments, and the Gendered Origins of the U.S. Selective Service System,” *Armed Forces and Society* 37 (fall 2011): 605.

¹³ Christopher Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You: World War I and the Making of the Modern American Citizen* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 30-31. See also Susan Zieger, “She Didn’t Raise Her Boy to be a Slacker: Motherhood, Conscription, and the Culture of World War I,” *Feminist Studies* 22 (1996): 7-39.

¹⁴ Despite national trends, there was abuse of the system. In mid-1917, some districts reported that up to 80 percent of men filed for dependency exemptions, prompting further clarification of the regulations. See Geva, “Different and Unequal,” 606-609.

that they *were* meeting their familial obligations *through* their service to the State.¹⁵ In response, wives, elderly parents, and children who depended on these would-be soldiers frequently appeared before local draft boards to request the exemptions their loved ones would not. This brought “the state into...personal relationships in unprecedented ways,” and allowed draft board members to evaluate the relative importance of military service *vis a vis* family relationships.¹⁶ That draft board members applied their personal value systems to each individual case in the absence of centralized guidance made this a particularly fraught process.

Congress, the Selective Service System’s national office, and especially local board members again tried to protect fathers from the draft during World War II. The 1940 draft law repeated the language of the 1917 act with respect to dependency. Local boards interpreted this throughout 1940 and 1941 to mean that all married men should receive a deferment, including those whose wives worked. Eleanor Roosevelt, in a January 1941 press conference, explained that “more than ‘dollars and cents dependency’ must be considered.” She supported her point of view with the words of Major Gordon Shaw of the Selective Service’s headquarters in Washington, D.C., who stated, “to say that a man is to be called because his wife and children would not starve is to deny that the wife and children depend upon him for more than his pocketbook. It is to deny his moral leadership and protection.”¹⁷ Roosevelt and Shaw’s assumption was that a husband and father provided a moral compass for his family. The Selective Service agreed that to

¹⁵ Or, as Capozzola points out, for many, the promise of a regular pay check, three square meals a day, and a roof over their heads, may have outweighed the negative aspects of military service. See Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You*, 37.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 37-38.

¹⁷ “Quotes Backing on Draft View,” *New York Times*, Jan. 22, 1941.

draft him away from his home would leave his dependents directionless and do more harm than good.

Even after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the American declaration of war in December 1941, fatherhood remained a protected social role. In April 1942, the Selective Service reclassified men with dependents to indicate who had children and who did not, as well as who worked in war-related jobs and who did not. Although the agency was not yet ready to draft men with dependents, the reclassification effort was designed to encourage men with dependents to bolster their deferred status by taking a job in the national interest as insurance against the time when Selective Service would have to rescind the III-A (dependency) deferment. In the meantime, President Roosevelt recommended lowering the age of induction from twenty-one to eighteen rather than draft fathers.¹⁸

As the war deepened, deferments had to be tightened. Nevertheless, Historian George Q. Flynn argued that regardless of manpower needs, local values, especially the importance of fatherhood, were substantially more influential than national directives. “Local control did lead to unscientific classification,” he wrote, “but the results had public approval. An unscientific father seemed more valuable to the public than a bachelor chemist.”¹⁹ Repeatedly, and despite memos from state directors and the Selective Service’s national headquarters, local boards inducted single farmers, industrial workers, or men with special skills rather than break up families. Even during total war, the so-called “Good War,” the civic-republican impulse to serve the nation through

¹⁸ See George Q Flynn, *The Draft, 1940-1973*, (Lawrence, Kans.: University Press of Kansas, 1993), 68-75, for more information.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 61.

military service came into conflict with the tradition of selective military service designed to protect particular social values.

This trend continued in the post-war years. The language of the 1948 Selective Service Act echoed that of the previous laws in its ambiguity. It authorized the president, and thus the Selective Service, to defer men whose “status with respect to persons dependent upon them ... renders their deferment advisable.”²⁰ As during the century’s previous conflicts, the issue of dependency was complicated, but it was loaded with the era’s unique cultural baggage. The end of almost two decades of Depression and World War led to a new emphasis on the home and family. Renewed economic prosperity, the availability of a broad range of consumer goods, and, perhaps most importantly, the restoration of close to 10 million men to civilian life placed a new emphasis on a “return to normalcy.” Marriage and birthrates skyrocketed.²¹ Prescriptive literature and other forms of media extolled the virtues of the nuclear family. In the first three months of 1951 alone, for example, readers of *Look* magazine learned that married men and women lived longer than those who were single and that couples with children were less likely to divorce than those without. The message to subscribers was that larger families equaled a longer, happier life.²²

While it is unlikely that Truman or Major General Lewis B. Hershey, the Director of Selective Service since 1941, considered parenting advice books when formulating military manpower policy, popular messages about fatherhood filtered into those policies

²⁰ Selective Service Act of 1948, *United States Statutes at Large*: 612.

²¹ By 1950, women, on average, married at the age of 20, and the birthrate peaked in 1957 at 25.3 per thousand. See Nancy Woloch, *Women and the American Experience: A Concise History*, 2nd Edition (Boston: McGraw Hill Higher Education, 2002), 343.

²² “More Children Equal Less Divorce,” *Look*, Feb. 13, 1951, 80; “Married Women Live Longer,” *Look*, March 13, 1951, 21.

nonetheless. According to contemporary prescriptive literature, social stability depended on happy families, which in turn required involved male figures, a phenomenon historian Jessica Weiss, borrowing from *McCall's* magazine has termed “togetherness.”²³ Fathers were of the utmost importance. According to *Look*, it was their “responsibility” to make “the family successful as a unit,” and not just by “concentrating on making money.”²⁴ The June 1950 issue of *Parents Magazine* warned that children would fail to “find emotional fulfillment” or “be good parents...to *their* children” unless “Dad” offered them the opportunity to develop “a warm regard for some of the best qualities of masculinity – tenderness, protection, strength.”²⁵ Fathers could counterbalance the negative effects of overbearing mothers and prevent sons from becoming “sissies.” According to advice manuals, the very future of American society depended on the firm hand and tender heart of a loving, engaged Dad.²⁶ A man in uniform, stationed half-way around the world simply could not fulfill the role.

²³ See Jessica Weiss, *To Have and To Hold: Marriage, the Baby Boom, and Social Change* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), especially ch. 4. An editorial in the May 1954 issue of *McCall's* touted the achievability of the new American Dream – home-ownership, large family, better education, more wealth – and explained, “But the most impressive and most heartening feature of this change is that men, women and children are achieving it *together*. They are creating this new and warmer way of life not as women *alone* or men *alone*, isolated from one another, but as a *family* sharing a common experience.” The magazine pledged, “from this day forward,” to appeal to those looking to share in this new life of togetherness. Otis Lee Weise, “Live the Life of *McCall's*,” *McCall's*, May 1954, 27 [emphasis in original].

²⁴ “The Conspiracy against Chastity,” *Look*, Jan. 16, 1951, 73.

²⁵ O. Spurgeon English and Constance J. Foster, “How to Be a Good Father,” *Parents Magazine*, June 1950, 84 [emphasis in original].

²⁶ For more, see Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988), 146-149; Jessica Weiss, *To Have and To Hold*, esp. ch. 3; James Gilbert, *Men in the Middle: Searching for Masculinity in the 1950s* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), esp. ch. 7; Ralph LaRossa, *Of War and Men: World War II in the Lives of Fathers and their Families* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), esp. Parts III and IV.

Student deferments, meanwhile, had a much shorter history. Although educational groups lobbied for student deferments during World War I, Secretary of War Newton D. Baker repeatedly denied any blanket exemptions, explaining to President Woodrow Wilson, “it...seemed necessary...to let the draft fall where it will and make exceptions after the men are drawn, [rather] than to create classes, and the consequent *class feeling*, by exemptions in advance.”²⁷ Since the Selective Draft Act only conscripted men aged twenty-one or over until August 1918, three months before the end of the war, when the minimum age was dropped to eighteen, most college students who chose not to volunteer for the armed services did not have to worry about induction.²⁸

The Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 allowed students to postpone their inductions until the end of their academic year or until July 1, 1941, whichever came first, but as during World War I, it was not until Congress considered dropping the age of draft liability to eighteen in the fall of 1942 that the issue of student deferment gained much political momentum. College administrators, whose enrollments had already declined by close to 25 percent between 1940 and 1941, vigorously protested the proposed change.²⁹ As a result, the Selective Service piloted a limited student deferment program in 1943. Students who majored in one of twenty science, engineering, and related fields; whose university would certify that they were in good standing; and who would graduate before July 1, 1945 could receive a deferment.³⁰ As manpower needs

²⁷ Newton D. Baker to Woodrow Wilson, May 26, 1917, box 4, Newton D. Baker Papers, Library of Congress, Washington D.C., as quoted in John Whiteclay Chambers, III, *To Raise an Army: The Draft Comes to Modern America* (New York: The Free Press, 1987), 190.

²⁸ Chambers, *To Raise an Army*, 233.

²⁹ Flynn, *The Draft*, 75.

³⁰ “Widens Deferment for Men in College,” *New York Times*, March 5, 1943.

increased, however, these deferments were limited to a total of 10,000 students nationwide in the fields of chemistry, engineering, geology, geophysics, and physics.³¹

World War II, however, jumpstarted the militarization of civilian science and highlighted its importance to military strategy and tactics. The advent and military application of such technologies as radar, synthetic rubber, proximity fuses, penicillin, and especially the atomic bomb brought scientists firmly into the realm of national defense, frequently under the auspices of the federal government. The War and Navy Departments both undertook limited research agendas and awarded contracts to private laboratories to work on specific problems. Defense-related research was conducted in other major agencies, as well, including the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, and Interior.³² In 1941, the White House created the Office of Scientific Research and Development (OSRD) to coordinate research and development efforts between federal and military agencies; liaise with foreign governments and civilian institutions, including universities, the National Academy of Science, and the National Research Council; and develop some of its own programs. Its Section on Uranium (S-1) worked under the Army Corps of Engineers to develop the atomic bomb in what became known as the Manhattan Project. It even stationed civilian geologists, physicists, architects, biologists, and civil and electrical engineers in overseas theaters of operation, through its Office of Field Service.³³ But Vannevar Bush, OSRD's director, envisioned a much stronger connection between science and national defense as the country moved toward peace.

³¹ Flynn, *The Draft*, 79.

³² President's Scientific Research Board, *Science and Public Policy*, vol. 3, Administration for Research (Washington, DC: GPO, 1947), 2-3.

³³ The Office of Scientific Research and Development was created by Executive Order 8807 on June 28, 1941. It subsumed the short-lived National Defense Research

In *Science: The Endless Frontier*, a 1945 report commissioned by President Franklin Roosevelt, Bush encouraged the federal government to “accept new responsibilities for promoting the flow of new scientific knowledge and the development of scientific talent in our youth.” This was “the proper concern of the Government,” he argued, since science “vital[ly] affect[ed] the nation’s] health... jobs, and...national security.” Science, he claimed, had won the war. While he acknowledged that “science, by itself, provide[d] no panacea for individual, social, and economic ills,” he asserted, “without scientific progress we could not have maintained our liberties against tyranny.” Basic scientific research, or work exploring how the natural world functioned rather than that attempting to solve a particular problem, was key to America’s continued safety, since no one could predict what applications new knowledge would yield.³⁴ In order to further such inquiry, he advocated the creation of a permanent Science Advisory Board to help guide the president and Congress as they shaped future scientific policy for the country and a congressionally-funded civilian organization to “supplement and

Committee (NDRC), which awarded contracts for scientific research, and was designed to follow up on development as well as research; coordinate the efforts of the military services, the NDRC, and the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics; and motivate research in military medicine. For more information, see Alan I. Marcus and Amy Sue Bix, *The Future is Now: Science and Technology Policy since 1950* (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2007), 14-23, and Irvin Stewart, *Organizing Scientific Research for War: The Administrative History of the Office of Scientific Research and Development, Science in World War II, Office of Scientific Research and Development* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1948), especially 35-51, 143. Available online at http://openlibrary.org/books/OL6026526M/Organizing_scientific_research_for_war

³⁴ At the time of the report, the existence of the atomic bomb had not yet been made public, but as the director of the OSRD, Bush was instrumental in getting the Manhattan Project off the ground. He was well aware of its development, and therefore, of its importance as an example of basic research. He understood the importance of theoretical physics to national defense in a way that most Americans did not yet grasp.

strengthen” military research. Government funding would ensure that the work got done, while civilian control would guarantee intellectual freedom.³⁵

Adequate numbers of trained personnel were essential to Bush’s vision. “The limiting factor is a human one,” he wrote. “We shall have rapid or slow advance in this direction or in that depending on the number of really first-class men who are engaged in the work in question.” And Bush stressed the importance of numbers. He worried that “too many such men ha[d] gone into uniform” during World War II. The widespread enlistment and conscription of scientifically talented and trained men had created a deficit of approximately 150,000 science and technology students who would have received bachelors degrees and another 17,000 men who would have earned advanced degrees in chemistry, engineering, geology, mathematics, physics, psychology, and the biological sciences by 1955. Therefore, he argued, it was incumbent upon the government to compensate for this imbalance by “remov[ing] the barriers” to scientific education. Federal programs should encourage improvement in science education and offer scholarships and fellowships to talented students looking to pursue advanced degrees. The security of the nation depended on scientifically trained manpower, be it military or civilian.³⁶

Scientific manpower was therefore a subject of great concern to the federal government as it demobilized after World War II and then reorganized its many agencies as the Cold War began to take shape. In October 1946, Truman appointed his Assistant and former Director of the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion, John R.

³⁵ Vannevar Bush, *Science: The Endless Frontier* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1945) <http://www.nsf.gov/od/lpa/nsf50/vbush1945.htm#summary> [accessed Feb. 29, 2012]. His proposals eventually led to the establishment of the National Science Foundation in 1950.

³⁶ Bush, *Science* <http://www.nsf.gov/od/lpa/nsf50/vbush1945.htm#summary>.

Steelman, as the chairman of the President's Scientific Research Board.³⁷ The Board was to "investigate and report upon the entire scientific program of the Federal Government," including the availability and allocation of resources and the training of scientific personnel.³⁸ Its membership consisted of the heads of those federal agencies most involved in scientific research, including Robert Patterson, the Secretary of War; James Forrestal, the Secretary of the Navy; Clinton P. Anderson, the Secretary of Agriculture; Vannevar Bush, as the Director of the OSRD; and David Lilienthal, the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission. These men took it for granted that science was vital to national security. Their five-volume report, *Science and Public Policy*, issued between August and October 1947, opened with the claim that "the rapid extension of scientific knowledge... may reasonably be said to be a major factor in national survival," as proven during World War II, when "the laboratory became the first line of defense and the scientist, the indispensable warrior."³⁹

The members of the President's Scientific Research Board did not find the shortage of trained scientists quite as dire as Bush had in 1945. Their report found that the war had directly cost the United States approximately 90,000 bachelors degrees and 5,000 doctoral degrees in scientific subjects, but it expected these numbers to rise to 100,000 and 8,400, respectively, "before the effects of war-reduced enrollments [were] overcome." Steelman, however, estimated that only one-third of science majors entered research or teaching careers, reducing the deficit to a mere 40,000 scientists and

³⁷ The Scientific Research Board was created by Executive Order 9791, which was signed on October 17, 1946.

³⁸ President's Scientific Research Board, *Science and Public Policy*, vol. 1. A Program for the Nation, (Washington, DC: GPO, 1947), III.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

engineers on the bachelors level. Ninety percent of Ph.D.s tended to enter similar professions, leading to a loss of approximately 7,600.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, the report warned, the nation could not afford to sit idly by and wait for the manpower shortfall to correct itself. To do so would be “dangerous not only to...national welfare but to national security.” As examples, it pointed out that neither the Atomic Energy Commission nor the Army could fully staff their research and development programs.⁴¹ Therefore, it was “of the utmost urgency that steps be taken to increase and improve [America’s] scientific manpower pool.”⁴²

The report concluded that the nation’s universities were the key to solving the scientific manpower crisis. They were sites of both training and basic research. Financial support through grants to improve facilities and equipment, fellowships to augment professors’ salaries, and scholarships to assist the brightest students would all help ease the deficit.⁴³ But it would be a long process. Scientists, according to Steelman, could not be “mass-produced.”⁴⁴ America’s colleges and universities would need 15,000 additional science instructors, including 4,500 with Ph.D.s, a process that would take at least ten years, to reach the pre-war student-teacher ratio. Yet given the huge post-war increase in demand for scientists, that number, according to the report, was not guaranteed to be sufficient.⁴⁵ In short, policies to encourage students to enter scientific fields were vital to national security.

⁴⁰ Ibid., vol. 4. Manpower for Research, 13.

⁴¹ Ibid., 3.

⁴² Ibid., 27.

⁴³ Ibid., 27.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 6-7.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 3.

Science and Public Policy never specifically mentioned Selective Service or conscription as a current or future policy. At the time the report was submitted, the draft had been deactivated, with the hope that it would no longer be necessary. The Army was trying to fill its ranks with voluntary enlistments, and Truman was lobbying hard for UMT. Volume 4 of the report, however, viewed the decision to draft science students during World War II with skepticism. It acknowledged that the pressures confronting policy makers at the time had been “complex,” but the report also pointed out that in “stripping” the nation’s colleges and universities of scientists and students, the U.S. had followed a vastly different policy than its allies, Great Britain and the Soviet Union, which had “sharply increase[ed] their training programs for scientists.”⁴⁶ “In light of the effect of the policy in contributing to the present shortage,” it concluded, “the wisdom of the decision [not to defer science students] seems dubious.”⁴⁷ The message was clear. In the event of another war, at least some student deferments would be necessary to protect America’s scientific development and, by extension, its national security.

Congress listened to these warnings and included broad provisions for deferments in the Selective Service Act of 1948, but granted the President the authority to establish the appropriate regulations. With presidential approval, therefore, the Selective Service designed the subsequent draft to create as little disruption to a student’s academic year as possible. High school students over the age of eighteen who met the physical requirements for induction were classified as I-S and automatically deferred until they graduated from high school or turned 20, whichever occurred first. College students who received draft notices were granted administrative deferments in the II-A category, the

⁴⁶ Ibid., 12, 5.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 13.

same as that used for men deferred for non-agricultural occupations, and allowed to postpone their inductions through the end of the current academic year.⁴⁸ Although the use of the II-A classification prevented the loss of a semester's tuition or academic credit and essentially granted deferments to all college freshmen, it left post-secondary students vulnerable to the draft before they earned their degrees.⁴⁹ Director of Selective Service Hershey realized that further regulations needed to be developed.

* * * * *

In November 1948, the Selective Service and the National Security Resources Board jointly convened the first meeting of six Scientific Advisory Committees and asked them to develop a workable plan for classifying and deferring students in the national interest. Members represented professional organizations and public and private universities in six fields – agricultural and biological sciences, engineering sciences, the healing arts, humanities, physical sciences, and the social sciences – but representatives very quickly realized that they shared common goals and opted to work as a committee of the whole. They elected M.H. Trytten, the Director of the Office of Scientific Personnel of the National Research Council, as their Chair.⁵⁰ None of the men present at the two-day November meeting or its December successor questioned the need to defer college

⁴⁸ United States Selective Service System, *Annual Report of the Director of Selective Service for the Fiscal Year 1951 to the Congress of the United States pursuant to the Universal Military Training and Service Act as Amended* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1952), 18 [hereafter *Annual Report*, (year)].

⁴⁹ 570,000 of the 763,000 men holding II-A deferments in January 1951 were college students. Preparedness Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Armed Services, *Universal Military Training and Service Act of 1951: Hearings before the Preparedness Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services*. 82d Cong., 1st sess., Jan. 1951, 78.

⁵⁰ For more information, see M.H. Trytten, *Student Deferment in Selective Service: A Vital Factor in National Security* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1952), 7-11.

students or the urgency of protecting scientific fields in the name of national security. That these goals were of paramount importance was considered obvious; how to achieve them was not.⁵¹

How deferred students should be utilized ultimately became one of the committees' major points of contention. Was the purpose of this program to allow students time to gain special skills for use within the military or to further civilian research? How did committee members, as a group, define service to the nation? Even as members hammered out the details of their proposal, the rationale for such a proposal remained unspoken until late in the second day of the December meeting, when Harvard professor and economist John Kenneth Galbraith proposed an embargo on occupational and dependency deferments after graduation for men who already had received a student deferment. He feared a public relations disaster if the American people believed college students could go on to become an "elite group" singled out "for protection from the Draft."⁵² George O. Curme, Jr., a vice president of Carbide and Carbon Chemical Corporation, took issue with Galbraith's assumption "that the only way in which a man can serve his country is by being in uniform," a statement that led Hershey's assistant, Colonel Louis F. Kosch, to ask, "Where is the man most valuable to the national defense?"⁵³

⁵¹ See Meeting of Scientific Committees, November 4 and 5, 1948, box 71, Papers of the Planning Office, 1947-1963, Entry UD 24, RG 147, Records of the Selective Service System, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland [Hereafter RG 147, NARA]; Meeting of Scientific Committees, December 9 and 10, 1948, *ibid.*

⁵² Meeting of Scientific Committees, December 9 and 10, 1948, 115.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 117.

Answers to Kosch's question varied, as committee members tried to weigh multiple factors, including public perception. If only certain men could afford college, and these men received repeated deferments, the student program would create a privileged class that, by virtue of its wealth, would never have to face down an enemy gun. Charles W. Cole, the President of Amherst College colorfully, and perhaps presciently, explained, "while it won't be nearly as acute in peacetime as in wartime, I do think we will separate the sheep from the goats in college, and all through life and make a very bad situation publicwise."⁵⁴ On the other hand, other representatives firmly believed that American security depended on the research of talented civilian scientists. Men could contribute just as much to national defense in civilian laboratories, if not more, than they could if they served in the military. As Charles E. Odegaard, Executive Director of the American Council of Learned Societies, put it, the idea that "the only real way to defend your country is in a uniform...is an old idea and is a medievalist one." Unless the men present at a conference of *scientific* advisory committees could jettison the "old tradition that when there is a war Johnny gets his gun and goes off to defend the country," there was no point in continuing to meet. Committee members would never convince the public at large. "We have got to face the facts of an altered technological situation in our society," he expounded. "If we don't believe that it is essential to have this trained personnel, then this whole training program doesn't make sense and there is no point in our sitting here talking about utilization outside the Army...I think we have to work

⁵⁴ Ibid., 117-118.

against a popular conception that war is fought only by the man in uniform.” Service was service, whether military or civilian.⁵⁵

Ultimately, committee members came to agree with Odegaard. They proposed a plan that they believed carefully balanced the democratic values of equality and open access to education with the selectivity necessary to a program defined by its need for special skills. Since no one could determine which skills would be important in the future, they called for a liberal system of deferments, for which students from all fields, not just those related to science and engineering could qualify. To be eligible for the program, students would have to rank in the upper percentile of their college class *and* score a 110 or higher on the Army General Classification Test (AGCT), an exam designed by the Army to test basic intelligence and given to all prospective soldiers at induction and enlistment centers. Committee members wanted to make sure that only the best and brightest would earn the privilege of a deferment. But in order to prevent the perception of elitism, they strongly recommended the creation of a widespread, government-funded scholarship program for qualified students. Moreover, they endorsed the possibility of further deferments for graduating students. The plan proposed a four-month grace period for graduates in order that they might be able to start graduate school or find a job that qualified for an occupational deferment. If they failed to do so, then they would be reclassified as I-A (available for service), and treated as any other draft-eligible male citizen.⁵⁶ The plan created, in Odegaard’s words, “a genuine selective

⁵⁵ For a complete transcript of this discussion, see *ibid.*, 107-135.

⁵⁶ See “Reports of the Scientific Advisory Committees” in Trytten, *Student Deferment in Selective Service*, 81-91.

service system in a much wider sense” that took “into account...other kinds of service that [were] essential to the national interest.”⁵⁷

The Scientific Advisory Committees submitted their report to Hershey on December 21, 1948, but the Selective Service shelved it and dissolved the committees in early 1949 when inductions were suspended. Without a monthly conscription quota to meet, the issue of student deferments lacked urgency. It was not until Cold War tensions erupted into war on the Korean peninsula in June 1950 that the issue of the draft moved back into the public eye and onto the Congressional floor. The Selective Service restarted inductions as the military mobilized to meet the emergency, and Congress quickly extended the Selective Service Act of 1948, which had been due to expire at the end of the month. Lawmakers began working on the legislation that would become the Universal Military Training and Service Act of 1951.⁵⁸ In doing so, they were forced to prioritize those values that they believed deserved special protection.

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Planners in the State and Defense Departments did not envision the Korean War as an isolated emergency of limited duration. Instead, they contextualized it within an environment of Cold War militarization and based American foreign and military policy on their belief in the existence of a continuing global struggle between American democracy and Soviet communism. As the recently-issued, top-secret National Security Council report, NSC-68, made clear, the consequence of losing the war in South Korea would be an ideological victory for the Soviet Union. The U.S. would have to mobilize

⁵⁷ Meeting of Scientific Committees, December 9 and 10, 1948, 114.

⁵⁸ 81 S.J. Res. 190 extended the draft to July 9, 1950, and then P.L. 81-599 extended it until July 9, 1951.

accordingly to defend its ally, but it would not be able to demobilize after the war. America's only viable response to the Soviet threat, whether in war or peace, was a massive buildup of conventional and thermonuclear arms in order to create a "military shield" under which allies could develop political and economic systems friendly to the U.S. America needed the strength "to deter...Soviet expansion, and to defeat, if necessary, aggressive Soviet or Soviet-directed actions of a limited or total character."⁵⁹ Any peace of the 1950s would therefore be a militarized peace.⁶⁰ To maintain a flexible force ready to meet any contingency, the Army, it was believed, would have to rely on conscription to meet its manpower needs. Thus, when the Selective Service sprang into action to meet its quotas in June 1950 after having suspended all inductions the year before, the question of which men to safeguard through deferments quickly became a political issue.

⁵⁹ The National Security Council submitted NSC-68 to President Truman in April 1950, but he quickly shelved it, deeming its conclusions too expensive. The Korean War, however, brought new salience to the report and helped justify the price of rearmament. See "A Report to the National Security Council - NSC-68." April 12, 1950, President's Secretary's File, Truman Papers, http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/coldwar/documents/pdf/10-1.pdf [accessed Feb. 28, 2012]. Quotes, p. 7, 54.

⁶⁰ Even though NSC-68 remained classified, its basic assumptions trickled down to affect the public as well. For example, a proposal considered at the August 5, 1950 meeting of the American Council on Education began with the following premise: "Our colleges and universities may be facing a much more serious situation than that at the beginning of World War II. At that time war was formally declared against specific nations. It was an external conflict, and the victory was a definite goal toward which supreme sacrifice of long-range values was justified to achieve a speedy victory. Today it is a war of basic ideologies. It is internal through infiltration as well as external through armed conflict. In nations that are our allies there are strong factions on the side of our enemies. While armed conflict is now confined to Korea, it may well break out in many other as yet unforeseen areas of the world. It may, as many have predicted, be a long-range conflict with only intermittent periods of armed conflicts. On the other hand, it may be an all-out struggle in the fairly immediate future." See Proposed Statement for the Consideration at Meeting, August 5, 1950, American [C], FRC 82, Central Files, 1948-69, RG 147, NARA.

The vast majority of American men between the ages of eighteen and 26 could not be conscripted because they had not yet reached the legal age of induction, already held deferments, were already in the military or reserves, or were veterans.⁶¹ Moreover, low birth rates during the Depression years had their greatest impact on the draft-age population during the late 1940s and early 1950s, when just over one million men turned eighteen annually.⁶² Hershey feared that if the war continued, too few would qualify for induction to replenish active-duty soldiers who rotated out of service.⁶³ His anxieties increased when the Truman Administration asked for a total military force of 3.5 million men by early 1951. Hershey and the Defense Department worried that the available pool of manpower would not be deep enough to meet the need, especially as mounting casualties in Korea created a need for ever-greater numbers of men.⁶⁴ Nevertheless, under pressure from a variety of sources, the Director of the Selective Service returned to the Scientific Advisory Committees' plan for deferring college students, primarily in order to protect scientific and engineering fields.

⁶¹ Deferred or exempted men outnumbered available registrants by a margin of 4:1. On June 30, 1952, there were 8,563,000 classified registrants between the ages of 18.5 and 25. 4,570,000 were deferred, 2,935,000 were either in the military or reserves or veterans, and 1,118,000 were immediately available. *Annual Report*, 1952, 63.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 1951, 11.

⁶³ See Meeting of Advisory Committee on Specialized Personnel, Washington D.C., December 3, 1951, box 71, Papers of the Planning Office, 1947-1963, Entry UD 24, RG 147, NARA, 25-31.

⁶⁴ Testimony of Anna Rosenberg, Preparedness Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Armed Services, *Universal Military Training and Service Act of 1951*, Jan. 10, 1951, 37-66; Senate Committee on Armed Services, *Universal Military and Service Act: Report of the Committee on Armed Services to Accompany S. 1*, Report No. 117, 82d Cong., 1st sess., February 1951, 8-9 [Hereafter Senate Report 117]; James M. Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy: Issues in Military Manpower Procurement, 1945-1970* (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1971), 148.

Hershey hastily recalled the members of Trytten's advisory group in July 1950, asking them to review their recommendations and issue a new report, which they did in December.⁶⁵ Their new report confirmed the Scientific Advisory Committees' commitment to a liberal deferment program, citing the mercurial nature of scientific advancement. "It is quite possible," it noted, "that fifteen years ago nuclear physicists would have been dismissed as a scientific luxury – as a group of theoreticians not essential to the national defense."⁶⁶ Now, the report implied, theoretical physicists were indispensable to national security. Trytten went on to claim victory in World War II as "primarily the triumph of a virile technology based on the skills and knowledge of scientists, engineers, and other specialists."⁶⁷ Deferments for scientific training, therefore, were not only an acceptable masculine alternative to military service, they were crucial if the United States was to maintain its military and technological superiority. Equally important, he believed, college students contributed to "national preparedness just as certainly as...men in training in the armed services."⁶⁸ Odegaard confirmed this notion at a conference to present the committees' findings to the public. He explained, "National defense is now more than a military affair. It requires as a correlative a concept of civilian defense that involves far more than putting out fires or directing traffic to bomb

⁶⁵ The Scientific Advisory Committees met in Washington, D.C. on July 31, 1950 and again on October 4 and 5, 1950. See Report of the Meeting of the Combined Scientific Committees with the Healing Arts Educational Advisory Committee, July 31, 1950, and Walter R. Krill to Colonel Eanes, September 26, 1950, both in 105 Advisory Committee (Gen), 1950-48, box 34, Central Files, 1948-69, RG 147, NARA.

⁶⁶ "Reports of the Scientific Advisory Committees," in Trytten, *Student Deferment in Selective Service*, 92.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 43.

shelters.”⁶⁹ Civilian work was not throwaway work. It was imperative to national security. Men did not need to don a military uniform in order to defend the nation.

Hershey did not entirely agree. While he supported the group’s recommendations regarding the importance of student deferments, he adamantly believed that a deferment should be a postponement of military service, not an exemption. Not all national service was created equal, at least in his view. He warned members of the Preparedness Subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee evaluating the new Selective Service bill that Congress must carefully frame the legislation, “otherwise a deferment becomes simply a means of evading service by staying out until the program ends or the law expires.”⁷⁰ Lawmakers had to balance Odegaard and Hershey’s competing points of view as they worked to overhaul the 1948 law.

Legislators worked to untangle a welter of competing interests, contradictory scenarios, and contingent statistics in order to hammer out a workable bill that would increase the size of America’s eligible manpower pool. Length of service, age of eligibility, mental and physical standards, and deferment criteria, all faced Congressional scrutiny in 1951, as lawmakers desired a plan flexible enough to meet both the Korean emergency and any future contingencies. Moreover, Congress and the Department of Defense wanted to put the issue of Universal Military Training to rest. “The time has come when we must look beyond the end of our nose,” declared Democratic Senator

⁶⁹ Scientific Advisory Committees Minutes of Public Meeting, December 18, 1950, box 71 Papers of the Planning Office, 1947-1963, Entry UD 24, RG 147, NARA, 14.

⁷⁰ Senate Preparedness Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services, *Universal Military Training and Service Act of 1951*, 508.

Lyndon Johnson, as he opened the Preparedness Subcommittee hearings that January.⁷¹

At issue was the delicate balance between military preparedness, the country's economic welfare, and its social values. That the armed forces needed to pull millions of men out of civilian society was not up for debate. Who to pull certainly was.

Representatives from the Pentagon quickly dismissed groups they viewed as unlikely to be able to fill manpower needs. Assistant Secretary of Defense Rosenberg eliminated the possibility of drafting veterans with less than twelve months of service, pointing out that most of those within the eligible age range would be disqualified for reasons of dependency, occupation, or poor physical condition.⁷² Moreover, the public outcry had crescendoed when reservists, most of whom were veterans of World War II and many of whom had wives and children, had been called up for service during the early months of the Korean War. A renewed draft of veterans was not expected to gain public support. Further, the Department of Defense adamantly rejected lowering its physical and mental standards for induction amidst fears of increased rates of disciplinary problems and high projections for pension expenditures into the future.⁷³ General Omar N. Bradley, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, worried that men who could not meet high mental qualifications would be a "liability," while Chief of Naval Operations,

⁷¹ Senate Preparedness Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services, *Universal Military Training and Service Act of 1951*, 23.

⁷² House Committee on Armed Services, *Universal Military Training: Hearings before the Committee on Armed Services*, 82d Cong., 1st sess., Jan. 1951, 62. Although Congress wished to tighten deferment criteria, it never seriously considered entirely eliminating dependency or occupational deferments.

⁷³ As of early 1951, approximately ten percent of the available manpower pool was classified as IV-F, although the Selective Service expected this proportion to rise as more men were examined and classified. This compared favorably to the 21.8 percent rejection rate from World War II, even though physical standards were concurrent with World War II minimums and mental standards were slightly higher. See Senate Report 117, 7.

Admiral Forrest Sherman, called lowered standards, “a pain in the neck all along the line.”⁷⁴ Neither veterans nor IV-Fs (those rejected for physical, mental, or moral reasons) could be expected to resolve the military’s dire manpower predicament.

The major point of contention, therefore, became whether to draft eighteen-year-olds or married men, either with or without children. Defense officials preferred the younger men. First, they were cheaper. Witnesses estimated that the military could save between \$456 million and \$513 million annually on dependency allotments by inducting eighteen-year-olds instead of older men with family obligations.⁷⁵ Second, they believed, inducting younger men would cause less social damage. As Rosenberg argued, “a draft of husbands and fathers would be much more destructive in its family and community consequences than the calling of eighteen-year-olds.” The “older family man” was more likely to be heavily enmeshed in local businesses, education, and the “life of the community generally,” which meant that drafting men with dependents would cause “a great loss...to the purchasing power of families” and be “more costly in social values.”⁷⁶ At the hearings before the House Armed Services Committee, she also speculated that men with dependents might be less efficient soldiers than those without. She explained that the government could never lose sight of “the morale factor of calling a man in who has dependents and who therefore is at heart and mind somewhat at home while he is in the military.”⁷⁷ She cited experts who had assured the Department of Defense that

⁷⁴ Senate Preparedness Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services, *Universal Military Training and Service Act of 1951*, 627, 667.

⁷⁵ Senate Report 117, 6; Testimony of Anna Rosenberg, Senate Preparedness Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services, *Universal Military Training and Service Act of 1951*, 69.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 68, 69, 70.

⁷⁷ House Committee on Armed Services, *Universal Military Training*, 143.

younger men had less difficulty adjusting to military life than slightly older men because many had “not married or developed permanent roots in their careers.”⁷⁸ Of especial social benefit was the fact that inducting eighteen-year-olds was less likely to break up families, and therefore less likely to contribute to divorce rates. Finally, multiple witnesses insisted that eighteen-year-olds made excellent soldiers.⁷⁹ General Dwight D. Eisenhower, then Supreme Commander of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, insisted that young men “deserved” the privilege of military training so that they could defend themselves and their country in the event of war.⁸⁰ Eighteen-year-olds, therefore, from the Defense Department’s procurement perspective, were the most reliable source of additional manpower.

Civilians outside of the defense establishment, however, were less certain of the wisdom of drafting men just out of high school. They tapped into several of the arguments that had been made by opponents of universal military training. Witnesses from a variety of backgrounds argued that drafting eighteen-year-olds, who could not vote, would militarize American society and regiment boys’ minds. Boys’ immaturity, testified John M. Swomley, Jr., the Director of the National Council Against Conscription and an anti-UMT activist, was one of the major reasons for the “higher prevalence of neurosis among younger persons in the Army,” a situation that could be avoided by keeping this age group out of the military.⁸¹ Mrs. William L. Slagle of Dayton, Ohio,

⁷⁸ Ibid., 172.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 9, 345.

⁸⁰ Senate Preparedness Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services, *Universal Military Training and Service Act of 1951*, 1203.

⁸¹ See, for example, the testimony of Rev. Ezra Ellis, Chairman, Public Affairs Committee of the Minneapolis Church Federation and Minister of Wesley Methodist Church, Minneapolis, Minn.; Robert W. Lyon, Young People’s General Assembly for

lamented, “Our country is not in such dire straits that we need to conscript our babies for a global crusade comparable to the Children’s Crusade of the Middle Ages.”⁸² Other opponents agonized about young conscripts’ moral well-being. Reverend Ezra Ellis, the Chairman of the Public Affairs Committee of the Minneapolis Church Federation, fretted that the boys would “be allowed the freedom to seek their own recreation in strange places under no discipline, with gambling, prostitution, and drinking sources of unusual temptation.”⁸³ Charles W. Elliott of Chicago, Illinois, worried that “the fact that lectures and movies on venereal disease [and] the issuance of preventatives and the location of prophylactic stations is part of GI indoctrination” would both “corrupt” and “debase” draftees.⁸⁴ Finally, some educators warned that conscripting eighteen-year-olds would “liquidate a substantial portion of the higher education” system in the United States.⁸⁵ They feared that if men were taken into the military before they completed one or two years of college, veterans would never return to complete their degrees.⁸⁶ Others believed the measure would demoralize high school seniors.⁸⁷ In all, these arguments capitalized on the notion that eighteen-year-olds were boys who required nurturing rather than men

Peace, Metropolitan Community Church, Chicago, Ill.; J. Raymond Schmidt, the International Order of Good Templars; William H. Neblett, USAF(R), Los Angeles, Calif.; Dr. Ruth Bleier, Chairman, Maryland Committee for Peace; Sidney Aberman, Executive Secretary, War Resisters League; John M. Swomley, Jr., Director, National Council Against Conscription, all excerpted in Senate Report 117, 29-31. Quote, p. 31.

⁸² Ibid., 30.

⁸³ Ibid., 29.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 30.

⁸⁵ Testimony of Ralph W. McDonald, National Education Association of the United States, as quoted in Senate Report 117, 27.

⁸⁶ See also Paul E. Elicker, Executive Secretary, National Association of Secondary School Principals, *ibid.*, 28.

⁸⁷ See the testimony of Elicker and Edgar Fuller, Executive Secretary, National Council of Chief State School Officers, excerpted in *ibid.*, 28.

who would thrive under military training. Conscription at such a malleable age could irrevocably harm their educational, vocational, and moral futures.

Legislators had no choice but to take these concerns seriously, especially since constituents espoused them just as strongly as witnesses before congressional hearings. Letters from average American citizens flooded the White House, the vast majority of which opposed drafting eighteen-year-olds.⁸⁸ In one random sample of 300 letters taken by White House officials in January 1951, only seventeen writers favored the idea. In an April sample, only one did. Analysis of the selection showed that the authors hailed from across the country, in what the report referred to a “bona fide citizen response.” Writers based their opposition on several points, but in the aggregate, they believed eighteen-year-olds were too young and immature for compulsory military service, especially when the men in question were not enfranchised and therefore had no input into the policy; the proposal would militarize the nation; jeopardize liberty; and interrupt men’s educational goals. Letters suggested drafting prisoners, aliens, refugees, and older men instead.⁸⁹

Lawmakers, therefore, were left with a conundrum. The nation needed military manpower. One group or another had to be tapped to fill the armed forces’ need for 3.5 million men, leaving legislators with questions about who the nation valued and how. Which men were most needed on the homefront and which on the battlefield? Who had done their duty, and, for that matter, how was duty to the nation to be defined in the fraught environment of the Cold War? How was manhood to be defined? Were eighteen-

⁸⁸ For examples, see Official File 245 Misc. – Drafting of 18 Year Old Boys, boxes 988-991, White House Official File, Papers of Harry S. Truman, Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, Missouri [hereafter HST]. Of these, three folders contain letters in favor of drafting eighteen-year-olds and 25 contain letters against.

⁸⁹ Eighteen Year Old Draft, n.d. and Random Sample, n.d., both in 245 Misc. 18-year-old-boys, box 988, White House Official File, Papers of Harry S. Truman.

year-olds sufficiently men to be considered eligible for compulsory military service? Was fatherhood – a man’s responsibility to his family – enough justification to exempt a man from military service – his responsibility to his nation? Most of these questions were never explicitly asked, either on the congressional floor or in citizens’ letters, but their themes appeared repeatedly.

While opponents of the eighteen-year-old draft defined teenagers as boys, other Americans, especially women, used their missives to plead with the president to exempt fathers and married men without children from military service.⁹⁰ They argued that “married people [were] the nucleus for the future families of America,” the foundation on which the country was built.⁹¹ Wives needed their husbands’ financial contributions and emotional support. Without these, writers assured Truman, “newly established homes” would “break up,” wives would have “to go out and find work or live off [their] parents,” and “heartbreak and sorrows” would follow.⁹² Mrs. Joseph Pepe of New Britain, Connecticut, complained that she would not be able to maintain payments on her home or furniture if her husband were drafted. “This may not seem important to you,” she wrote the president, “but it is to us and to many of my friends who are in the same position.” The loss of her husband would mean the disintegration of this young wife’s entire world. Meanwhile, she explained, boys of eighteen in her hometown could not find work since employers were “afraid to take a chance,” so teens sat “in confection parlors all

⁹⁰ See, for example, letters contained in Official File 245-Misc. (1950-June 1951), box 845, White House Official File, Papers of Harry S. Truman.

⁹¹ Mrs. Bennett Mr. Groisser to My dear Mr. President, Feb. 5, 1951, OF 245 Miscellaneous (1950-June 1951), box 845, White House Official File, Papers of Harry S. Truman, HST.

⁹² Mrs. Martin Rabinowitz to the President of the United States, Feb. 5, 1951 and Warren Rinda to Mr. President, February 15, 1951, both in OF 245 Miscellaneous (1950-June 1951), box 845, White House Official File, Papers of Harry S. Truman, HST.

afternoon, or in pool rooms,” unable to take on the responsibilities of men. Moreover, she complained, “a married man would be dragged away from home and work,” unable to fulfill his masculine obligations. “How can you raise children and serve your country at once?” she concluded. Mrs. Pepe’s implied answer seemed to be that child-rearing *was* an important form of service, which is how she could justify drafting younger, single men before older, married ones. In a later passage, she directly asked President Truman how he, as an individual and the head of State, could draft the married men who were “raising *your* families and working in *your* factories.”⁹³ Her casual use of the personal pronoun conflated male domestic and occupational responsibilities with vital service to the State.

Pepe’s letter was exceptional, but lawmakers largely sided with those who favored the conscription of eighteen-year-olds, believing the alternatives were worse. Witnesses at congressional hearings offered enough justification to overcome legislative reluctance. High-ranking Army and Navy officers argued that there was no material difference between an eighteen-year-old and a nineteen-year-old; Assistant Secretary of Defense Rosenberg, Secretary of Labor Maurice J. Tobin, and Assistant to the Secretary of Agriculture Edward J. Overby all testified that taking men immediately after they graduated high school would cause the least amount of disruption to their lives, as did several prominent educators. Veterans organizations unanimously came out in favor of the measure.⁹⁴

⁹³ Mrs. Joseph Pepe to Dear President, February 6, 1951, OF 245 Miscellaneous (1950-June 1951), box 845, White House Official File, Papers of Harry S. Truman, HST [emphasis mine].

⁹⁴ General Omar Bradley and Admiral Forrest Sherman spoke in favor of drafting eighteen-year-olds, as did Dr. James P. Baxter, III, the president of Williams College and Chairman of the Committee on Manpower, Association of American Colleges; Dr. Karl B. Compton, the President of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and former Chair

The final version of the bill, which Truman signed into law as the Universal Military Training and Service Act on June 19, 1951, was a compromise that tried to balance all of the competing interests.⁹⁵ Men would be required to register with the Selective Service at age eighteen and would become liable for the draft at eighteen-and-a-half, but only under certain circumstances. A particular draft board would not be able to conscript any eighteen-year-olds until it had exhausted its entire pool of eligible men aged nineteen and over. To ensure a larger supply of older men, married men without children lost their deferments except in cases of extreme hardship. Moreover, conscripts would be responsible for 24 months of active service followed by an eight-year reserve commitment. The Department of Defense reasoned that a longer term of service would offset its need for more men.⁹⁶ Finally, minimum physical and mental standards were lowered so that more men would qualify as acceptable for service.⁹⁷ Taken together, these elements both qualified more men for the draft and held them in active duty for longer, thus lessening the number the Selective Service needed to induct each month.

of the President's Advisory Committee on Universal Training; Dr. Detley W. Bronk, President of Johns Hopkins University; Dr. Harold W. Dodds, the president of Princeton University; and representatives of the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, the Disabled American Veterans, AMVETS, the American Veteran's Committee, and the Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America. See Senate Preparedness Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services, *Universal Military Training and Service Act of 1951*.

⁹⁵ P.L. 82-51.

⁹⁶ The law allowed the term of service to be shortened by executive order in order to make way for universal military training, which is how the law received its name. Separate legislation, which never passed, would have been necessary to fully implement universal military training. See Chapter 1 for a more complete discussion of UMT.

⁹⁷ Additionally, quotas were established so that each of the branches of service would have to take an equivalent number of men from the lowest mental category. This was deemed equitable since only the Army was drawing personnel through the Selective Service.

The law settled, at least temporarily, many of the outstanding questions about the relationship between military service, American manhood, and citizenship. Congress safeguarded fathers, deeming them more important as civilians than married men without children. Protecting children, therefore, was of paramount importance. Young children needed their fathers. Older children, according to the law, also needed certain protections. The law defined eighteen-year-olds as men rather than boys, but only within certain boundaries. They were to be soldiers of last resort. Conscripted eighteen-and-a-half-year-olds could only be deployed overseas after four months of basic training, all but guaranteeing that they would not reach enemy shores before their nineteenth birthdays. Finally, the law itself contained language designed to ensure their moral well-being. The Senate version of the bill had included a clause declaring it to be the duty of every commanding officer to “protect the health, morals, and spiritual welfare of the personnel of his command” in order to protect the values “which are fundamental in the preservation and strengthening of the fiber of American citizenship.” This was weakened in the final version, but the law gave the Secretary of Defense the power to regulate “the sale, consumption, possession of or traffic in beer, wine, or any other intoxicating liquors to or by members of the Armed Forces or the National Security Training Corps at or near any camp, station, post, or other place primarily occupied by members of the Armed Forces or the National Security Training Corps.”⁹⁸ Alcohol was deemed dangerous, and eighteen-year-olds were to be protected wherever possible.

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⁹⁸ Senate Report 117, 72; Universal Military Training and Service Act of 1951, Public Law 82-51, *United States Statutes at Large* 65, part 1 (1951), 88-89.

Interestingly, as badly as the nation's armed services needed manpower, legislators proved unwilling to touch college students. In fact, the implementation of a student deferment – rather than the administrative postponement until the end of the academic year that already existed – proved the least controversial proposal of the new conscription bill. Not one single witness testified against the idea at the Senate Preparedness Subcommittee Hearings.⁹⁹ Even the Secretary of Labor, who estimated that only two percent of men between the ages of nineteen and 26 possessed critical skills, preferred to see occupational deferments eliminated before the student deferment.¹⁰⁰ Instead, Congress only debated the mechanism for administering the student deferment.

Hershey, assuming he would receive congressional approval, started designing a new program for student deferments, based on the recommendations of Trytten's six Scientific Advisory Committees, in late 1950. Hershey wanted local boards to have access to students' scores on aptitude tests before students' initial classifications, which meant the Selective Service needed to administer an exam before students received their induction notices.¹⁰¹ Hershey, therefore, contracted the Educational Testing Service (ETS) of Princeton, New Jersey, to develop a standardized test of verbal and quantitative

⁹⁹ Senate Report 117, 48. It should be noted, however, that the plan debated by the Senate called for 75,000 students per year to be enrolled in a special program whereby they would participate in basic training and then pursue their university studies before fulfilling their active duty obligation. Many witnesses supported the program precisely because these students would either be part of the military or explicitly owe an obligation to the armed forces upon graduation. For more information, see Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 153-161.

¹⁰⁰ He did, however, wish to protect apprentices, equating accredited apprenticeship programs with a university education for working class youth. Testimony of Maurice J. Tobin, Senate Preparedness Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services, *Universal Military Training and Service Act of 1951*, 328-333, 336-339.

¹⁰¹ Lewis B. Hershey to the President, March 3, 1949, 105 Advisory Committee (Gen), 1950-48, box 34, Central Files, 1948-69, RG 147, NARA.

reasoning for the Selective Service.¹⁰² Additionally, instead of insisting that a man be eligible for the deferment by passing the qualifying test with a minimum score *and* ranking in an upper percentage of his college class, Hershey proposed that an individual should be able to receive the deferment if he achieved one *or* the other. As Trytten later wrote, this would allow “highly selective institutions...to hold more of their students, since a higher percentage of these could be expected to qualify on a scholastic aptitude examination. And the less selective institutions would be able to retain at least a fixed percentage of students determined by the specified criterion of academic accomplishment.”¹⁰³ Using “or” rather than “and” provided the program greater flexibility when dealing with the nation’s range of students and academic institutions.¹⁰⁴

Truman approved Hershey’s plan and issued Executive Order 10230 on March 31. In order to prevent a deferment from becoming an exemption, the Universal Military Training and Service Act, which passed subsequently, added a clause that extended to age 35 the draft liability of any man who accepted a deferment before the age of 26 and an amendment confirming the autonomy of local draft boards, which would not be

¹⁰² Henry Chauncy, “The Use of the Selective Service College Qualification Test in the Deferment of College Students,” *Science*, July 25, 1952, 73. The idea of using ETS had been reported to the December 1948 meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committees after it had been suggested at a meeting of the American Council on Education in late November of that year. ETS had administered tests for the Army during World War II and had been administering tests for the Navy ROTC ever since. Apparently, nothing came of the suggestion. See Meeting of Scientific Committees, December 9 and 10, 1948, 9, 26.

¹⁰³ Trytten, *Student Deferment in Selective Service*, 35-36.

¹⁰⁴ College students could receive a deferment if they received a score of 70 on the Selective Service College Qualification Test (SSCQT) *or* ranked in the upper 50% of their freshman class, 66% of their sophomore class, or 75% of their junior class. Students wishing to go on to graduate school would have to either score a 75 on the SSCQT (this was later raised to 80) *or* rank in the upper 50% of their graduating college class. Current graduate students could remain in their programs as long as they remained in good standing. See Trytten, *Student Deferment in Selective Service*, 65.

required to defer anyone. In other words, the law affirmed that all deferments, including those granted to students, were to be considered guidelines for local boards rather than hard and fast rules. Local board members would have to take local conditions into consideration when classifying individuals. This provision would lead to much controversy in the future, but it was added to stave off any claims from the public that the law created a protected class. Congress wanted to make it clear that the student deferment was not a statutory exemption. Students needed to qualify for the deferment, and even then, it was up to the local board whether or not to grant it.

Meanwhile, the Selective Service plunged ahead with the establishment of new regulations. In the summer of 1951, it added the II-S category for deferred students to its classification system and started offering the ETS-administered Selective Service College Qualification Test (SSCQT). Approximately 80 percent of the estimated 450,000 draft-eligible men on American college campuses took the new standardized exam during its first four administrations in 1951.¹⁰⁵ These numbers were significant enough to catch scholars' attention.

In May 1952, three Cornell University sociologists initiated a study of male college students' attitudes towards military service, the draft, and deferments. Close to 3,000 students from eleven college campuses across the nation responded to their questionnaire, and of these, 83 percent expressed negative opinions toward service in the

¹⁰⁵ There were an estimated 1,569,000 male college students in the US in the fall of 1950, the majority of whom were not eligible for the draft, being either veterans, members of the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC), under age eighteen or over age 26, or already classified as IV-F (deferred for physical, mental, or moral reasons), leaving only 450,000 eligible for the draft. A total of 413,392 students took the test between May 1951 and May 1952. 63 percent scored the requisite 70 or higher to obtain a deferment . See Trytten, *Student Deferment in Selective Service*, 68.

military. College men did not want to be drafted, especially to fight in Korea, a conflict that only 46 percent of respondents supported. Moreover, they embraced their newly won deferments. Only one in ten of the students surveyed believed the law granted special privileges, while a full 96 percent claimed they rarely or never felt guilty about not being in uniform, even with their country at war. Nevertheless, as much as they did not wish to be called up, students, by a margin of four to one, acknowledged that military service was a responsibility of citizenship and viewed their deferments as a temporary reprieve. Ninety-one percent believed they would be inducted within three years of graduation, but they hoped the war, at least, would be over by then.¹⁰⁶ They may have understood military service as their duty, but they did not extend their obligation to fighting in an unpopular war.

The instatement of the student deferment did not immediately soothe the panic the war had caused within the scientific community. Leaders in science and engineering fields agonized over what they saw as an impending shortage of trained personnel, regardless of the government's careful planning and new initiatives. Community members held a series of publicly- and privately-sponsored policy conferences between 1950 and 1953 to discuss the problem and issue recommendations.¹⁰⁷ An industrial

¹⁰⁶ Edward A. Suchman, Robin M. Williams, and Rose K. Goldsen, "Student Reaction to Impending Military Service," *American Sociological Review* 18, no. 3 (June 1953): 293-304.

¹⁰⁷ See, for example, Leonard Carmichael and Leonard C. Mead, eds., *The Selection of Military Manpower: A Symposium* (National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council, 1951); Robert A. Walker, ed., *America's Manpower Crisis: The Report of the Institute on Manpower Utilization and Government Personnel, Stanford University, August 22, 23, and 24, 1951* (Chicago: Public Administration Service, 1952); Trytten, *Student Deferment in Selective Service*; National Manpower Council, *Student Deferment and National Manpower Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952); National Manpower Council, *Proceedings of a Conference on the Utilization of*

employers' report cited by *Scientific American*, which devoted its entire September 1951 issue to the problem of manpower, stated that an additional 60,000 engineers alone would be needed in the public and private sectors by 1954.¹⁰⁸

Otherwise, however, the student deferment program proved a great success. In fiscal 1952, 204,446 men were classified as II-S.¹⁰⁹ Although some labor unions, most notably the United Auto Workers, and a few educators, such as Harvard University President James Conant and Princeton University President Harold Dodds, publicly labeled the program “undemocratic” because it granted special privileges to an elite group, the majority of Americans supported it.¹¹⁰ In one 1952 Gallup opinion poll, 69 percent of respondents favored inducting students only after they had completed their studies.¹¹¹ Hershey reluctantly accepted the program as a necessary element of modern manpower planning, even as he lamented his own agency's liberal deferment policies.¹¹²

Although the expectation from both within the Selective Service and among the students themselves was that students would serve in the military eventually, the addition of the II-S deferment set an ambivalent precedent. It created a situation in which the military establishment purposely kept a particular category of men out of the armed services in the name of national security, not because of what those men actively

Scientific and Professional Manpower, Held October 7-11, 1953 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954).

¹⁰⁸ “Students and the Draft,” Citizens and Soldiers, *Scientific American*, Sept. 1951: 48.

¹⁰⁹ *Annual Report*, 1953, 18.

¹¹⁰ See “Deferment Plan Scored,” *New York Times*, May 12, 1951, “Conant and Dodds Assail Deferment on Student Marks,” *New York Times*, April 9, 1951, and B.R. Stanerson to General Hershey, May 4, 1953, American [C], FRC 82, Central Files, 1948-69, RG 147, NARA.

¹¹¹ Flynn, *The Draft*, 143.

¹¹² See *Annual Report*, 1953, 55-57.

contributed to the defense of the nation but because of their potential to contribute in the future. The Selective Service, with the support of the President, Congress, the Department of Defense, and professional and educational organizations, found them more valuable as civilians than as soldiers. Additionally, because the student deferment program hoped to encourage science education in particular, it helped militarize the scientific fields by tying them to the nation's defense efforts. It privileged civilian forms of masculine citizenship at the same time that it militarized them.

* * * * *

Dependency deferments similarly offered advantages to men who took up domestic responsibilities as husbands and fathers by allowing them to avoid the uncertainty of conscription. In wartime, however, rising manpower needs directly conflicted with the national desire to keep families intact. The loss of the deferment for married men without children in 1951 had been a blow to many families, especially as the number of applications for marriage licenses took a marked upswing in June 1950, just as the war began.¹¹³ While it is impossible to know if these couples married to avoid conscription, it is more than likely that at least some did, marking a possible trend.

By mid-1951, the Public Health Service of the Federal Security Agency certainly noticed a trend related to new marriages – a significant increase in first births to new parents. A press release in August noted that the birth rate for the first five months of the year was 8.4 percent higher than that for the same time period in 1950, putting 1951 on track to break 1947's record-high birth rate. The rate for May 1951 was a full 14.3 percent higher than May 1950, a phenomenon the Public Health Service directly related

¹¹³ Press Release, August 3, 1951, 002.40, 1963-48, box 26, Central Files, 1948-69, RG 147, NARA.

to the increase in marriages caused by the start of the Korean War the previous summer. Moreover, the increase in births in 1951 was almost exclusively caused by first births, as opposed to any increases seen in 1948 or 1949, which were caused by second, third, or fourth children.¹¹⁴ Again, we cannot know why these couples decided to procreate, but it is known that most of the men in these families were of the proper age to face conscription, they chose to marry and have children immediately upon the outbreak of war, and Americans continued to resist drafting fathers. A June 1952 Gallup poll found that only 43 percent of Americans favored keeping the armed forces at their current fighting strength through the induction of men with children. By way of contrast, 60 percent supported conscripting men working in vital defense industries. Only the student deferment received more support than that for fatherhood.¹¹⁵

Even so, both classifications faced criticism, especially from those who felt unfairly targeted by the Selective Service system. Foreshadowing the Vietnam War, the Korean War acquired a reputation for being a poor man's fight.¹¹⁶ Those who could afford higher education soon learned to pyramid their deferments, moving seamlessly from II-S (student) to III-A (dependency) or II-A (occupational) deferments. A student who graduated from college and went on to graduate school, had a child, or found a job in the national interest could transform a temporary deferment into a de facto exemption.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ 59 percent of respondents favored allowing college students to graduate. George Gallup, "Draft Deferments for College Men, Fathers Favored," *Daily Boston Globe*, June 1, 1952.

¹¹⁶ See, for example, "Wealthy Men Dodging Draft, Senators Told," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, Feb. 5, 1953; "Why Korea is Called 'Poor Man's War,'" *U.S. News and World Report*, Feb. 20, 1953: 18-20; "Board Quits; Claims Draft Favors Rich," *Washington Post*, July 10, 1953; "Lawmaker's Son Deferred; Draft Board Resigns," *Los Angeles Times*, July 15, 1953.

A few members of Trytten's Scientific Advisory Committees had foreseen this possibility in 1948, but the other members of the committees had largely dismissed their worry with a wink.¹¹⁷ Hershey also downplayed the phenomenon, claiming that no more than three percent of II-S registrants took this path, but negative publicity caused the Selective Service embarrassment.¹¹⁸ Magazines worried about privileged young men shirking their patriotic duty as they "babied out" of military service.¹¹⁹ In mid-1953, local draft boards complained that 13,000 men per month were applying to change from student to dependency categories. This was especially egregious as the nation's manpower woes continued to escalate, despite the 1951 reforms. The military needed men, badly.

In response, various agencies that handled the nation's manpower policy began studying the issue, including the Selective Service's Scientific Advisory Committee on Specialized Personnel. Hershey had constituted the committee in 1951 based on the six Scientific Advisory Committees to help make policy recommendations on issues relating to students and scientists. The group's primary goal was to protect the student deferment. Members, in one set of recommendations, wrote, "Probably nothing would wreck our intricate technological civilization so surely as to divert from their training and development in their specialties for more than three years all those on whose special skills our society will later depend." Moreover, they explained, since the program deferred no more than five percent of any particular cohort, it did not "markedly make

¹¹⁷ Psychology Professor Everett L. Kelly of the University of Michigan brought up the possibility at the November 1948 meeting as did economics professor John Kenneth Galbraith of Harvard at the December meeting. Trytten dismissed both of their concerns by making a joke. See Meeting of Scientific Committees, November 4 and 5, 1948, 65, and Meeting of Scientific Committees, December 9 and 10, 1948, 36-37.

¹¹⁸ *Annual Report*, 1954, 20.

¹¹⁹ Harold H. Martin, "Why Ike Had to Draft Fathers," *Saturday Evening Post*, Aug. 29, 1953, 27.

inroads upon the total manpower pool.” However, they recognized that the program had a serious public relations problem. They acknowledged, “Certain changes may result in insignificant additional yields but may be of great importance otherwise.”¹²⁰ In other words, revoking the possibility of the dependency deferment from any man who had availed himself of a student deferment would not solve the nation’s manpower crisis, but it would make the public feel better about the student deferment program as a whole. The National Manpower Council and the Department of Defense agreed. They both recommended ending dependency deferments for anyone who had used a student deferment.¹²¹

The Selective Service, as an agency, however, was divided. Something needed to be done, but if students were the only men denied further deferments, it could cause an administrative nightmare and public backlash. The issue went around and around. A first draft of a proposed Executive Order for President Dwight Eisenhower suggested ending III-A deferments for any man who previously had held a deferment, but ultimately, the agency’s Manpower Policy Committee suggested fatherhood should no longer be grounds for deferment for any man.¹²² Eisenhower agreed and, in July 1953, ended the

¹²⁰ Scientific Advisory Committee on specialized Personnel Statement and Recommendations, August 18, 1952, 105 Advisory Committee (Gen.), 1952-51, box 34, Central Files, 1948-69, RG 147, NARA.

¹²¹ National Manpower Council, *Student Deferment and National Manpower Policy*, 3.

¹²² Daniel O. Omer to Roger W. Jones, June 1, 1953, attached to Daniel O. Omer to Roger W. Jones, June 5, 1953, 110 General, 1954-1950, box 35, Central Files, 1948-69, RG 147, NARA; Daniel O. Omer to Roger W. Jones, June 5, 1953, *ibid*.

III-A deferment for all men except those for whom military service would cause extreme hardship and privation.¹²³

Eisenhower's revocation of the fatherhood deferment was significant for several reasons. First, it took effect several weeks after the Korean armistice was signed. Even though fighting had ended, defense planners did not foresee American demobilization. Arthur Flemming, Director of the Office of Defense Mobilization, claimed that the military buildup would not reach its peak until 1954 and that the United States would be "involved in some kind of defense-mobilization program for the next 10, 15, or 20 years."¹²⁴ High manpower requirements would be part of the militarized peace outlined by NSC-68. The United States could no longer afford to protect fatherhood in the name of national security, or so planners believed. Rather, the country needed fathers to protect their families by defending their nation as soldiers. Second, the change in regulation occurred amongst a flurry of bad publicity. It seemed to be the only way the public could relinquish its desire to keep fathers on the homefront. Fatherhood ceased being a protected category only amidst explanations that the change corrected an injustice. As Hershey put it, he had to "trade students for fathers."¹²⁵ Under the new regulation, students would no longer be able to shirk their duty as citizens by pyramiding

¹²³ Eisenhower's Executive Order 10469, which he signed on July 11, 1953, allowed men already deferred for fatherhood to retain their III-A classification, but any additional men seeking a dependency deferment after August 25, 1953 would have to prove either that his wife's pregnancy occurred prior to the cut-off date or that his military service would cause undue hardship or privation for his family. See Flynn, *The Draft*, 138; National Manpower Council, *Student Deferment and National Manpower Policy*.

¹²⁴ "Planning Nation's Man Power for 10 Years Ahead," *U.S. News and World Report*, Jan. 4, 1952: 32.

¹²⁵ Bulletin to the Advisory Committee on Specialized Personnel, No. 10, November 15, 1952, 105, Advisory Committee (Gen.), 1952-51, box 34, Central Files, 1948-69, RG 147, NARA.

deferments. Rescinding the privilege was a way to avoid elitism, solve the manpower crisis, and continue training the next generation of defense professionals. But the need for such justification turned out to be short-lived. Fatherhood in 1950s America was simply too important an institution to go without special protections.

* * * * *

As during any modern war, manpower policy during the Korean War was complex. It involved coordinating the preferences and needs of multiple government agencies and civilian special interest groups. The military had to be staffed, war production stepped up, the civilian economy maintained, food produced, and daily life continued, all while allocating a finite number of men and women to military, agricultural, essential, and non-essential occupations in a democratic fashion. Workers, therefore, had to be encouraged rather than coerced to enter particular fields, stay on the job, and increase production, or the United States would risk becoming no better than its communist enemy. But, as during the two world wars, the armed forces could not depend on voluntary enlistment. The federal government and the public deemed the military threat imminent enough to justify conscription. Once again, the United States had to figure out how to balance the ideal of democratic participation with the practice of selective service.

The Korean War was different from earlier wars, however, in that was not considered the main event. Even though it was a hot war with devastating consequences for the people who lived it, it had limited strategic aims. American policy makers believed it a mere distraction from the real threat posed by the Soviet Union. The Cold War would not end when the shooting in Asia stopped, especially with the threat of

atomic war persistently looming. Thus, demobilization after the armistice was not an option. Viewed through a longer lens than, the Korean War signaled the beginning of the heavily militarized peace called for by NSC-68 rather than its own discrete conflagration.

Debates over deferments during the Korean conflict, therefore, took on a special significance. Policy makers were aware that the decisions they made would have consequences that lasted longer than the war itself. Conscription would become the new normal in American society, at least for the immediately foreseeable future. One of the Selective Service's basic premises was that any policy "adopted with a short range perspective" that could impact "the American way of life and its cultural and social values," could "freeze into a pattern" that could "take centuries to eradicate." Consequently, warned the agency, "never before has it been so extraordinarily important to deal sensitively with these intangible values which in the long run form a very large part of the essentials of the way of life we are trying to defend."¹²⁶ The choice of who to defer and who to draft mattered. The U.S. needed the right men in the right place to engage the enemy, maintain the economy, assure the nation's technological supremacy, and preserve its families, but also to ensure that America stayed "America."

In fact, the nature of the discourse over deferments between 1948 and 1953 did not so much indicate a change in the country's social values as a shift in how policy makers understood its defense needs. This is why the addition of the student deferment was so important. The Selective Service had piloted a student deferment program during World War II, but quickly contracted it when manpower pressures grew too great.

¹²⁶ Premises Underlying Manpower Policies, November 30, 1951, attached to Meeting of Advisory Committee on Specialized Personnel, Washington D.C., December 3, 1951, box 71, Papers of the Planning Office, 1947-1963, Entry UD 24, RG 147, NARA.

Although the military desperately needed men during the Korean War as well, Congress, the Selective Service, and the general public were much more willing to protect a plan designed to produce scientists in the name of national defense in the post-atomic bomb era. By 1951, science was seen as a key component to national security, and the only way to obtain scientists was to train them. The introduction of the II-S classification, therefore, helped broaden the definition of service to the nation. College students, like men with vital war jobs and farmers, were defined as performing service that maintained the national health, safety, or interest. The Selective Service accepted their potential contributions as equally valuable as those of the infantry soldier. This would have significant consequences into the future as masculine citizenship obligations continued to separate from military service.

Similarly, the debates over the importance of men's domestic roles in the 1950s did not illustrate a significant shift in the country's social values. Fathers and husbands, for example, did not receive more consideration during the Korean War than they had during World War II, when Congress had also turned to eighteen-year-olds before revoking dependency deferments and local draft boards had gone out of their way to protect family men. But the arguments used by those who wanted to protect fathers in the early 1950s are important to understand, for, as the next chapter will show, the context began to change in the late 1950s. Men's domesticity, like science and engineering, came to be considered a key element of national defense as the Selective Service began to explicitly encourage marriage and fatherhood through a new policy called manpower channeling. All in all, military service became less important for many American men, even as militarization suffused their lives

Chapter Three
“The Keystone...of the Structure”:
Manpower Channeling and the Meaning of National Defense,
1955-1965

In January 1958, Director of Selective Service Lewis B. Hershey was called before the Subcommittee on Independent Offices of the House Appropriations Committee to justify his agency's expenditures. Questioning was friendly, but apparently, the general's responses to questions about negative press coverage were not sufficient to quell Congressional concerns about waste in Hershey's agency. By early February, several members of Congress had written to Hershey asking him to answer charges that Selective Service was “wasteful, expensive,” and “inefficient.”¹ In reply, Hershey penned a pointed letter to Congress explaining the purposes of his agency.

In his letter, which he published in the March issue of *Selective Service*, the agency's news organ, Hershey acknowledged the current low level of draft calls, then only about 13,000 men per month, but emphasized that the procurement of military manpower constituted only about twelve percent of the Selective Service System's operations and six percent of its expenditures.² The rest of its time and resources went

¹ At the very least, Kansas Republican William Avery and Texas Democrats Lyndon Johnson and Joe Kilgore queried Hershey in response to an article by syndicated columnist Paul Harvey. See Lewis B. Hershey to Honorable William H. Avery, February 4, 1958, and attachments, Bala thru Bald, FRC 82, Central Files, 1948-69, RG 147, Records of the Selective Service, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland. [Hereafter Central Files, RG 147, NARA]. Harvey's article, “Recruiting Declared Cheaper than Expensive Selective Service,” ran in the *Topeka State Journal* on Jan. 3, 1958.

² Copies of the letter, addressed to Avery and Johnson, are also located in Bala thru Bald, FRC 82, Central Files, RG 147, NARA, but the choice of *Selective Service* as its main venue is important. The newspaper went to all 42,000 plus members of the Selective Service System, and, according to doctoral candidate Gary Lee Wamsley, was an informal way of disseminating new policies without formulating official dicta that

into the process of classifying the nation's men, screening those members of the Reserves who were on Standby status, planning for future emergencies, and channeling men into the reserves and civilian occupations the federal government defined as critical to national survival.³ "Selective Service has gone so far beyond the simple job of inducting 13,000 men a month into the Armed Forces," he wrote, that the argument that it had become obsolete was "practically pointless." Far from being its main function, induction had "become only a collateral, almost... a byproduct of its operations."⁴ Global and domestic conditions had caused the system to evolve past its original function.

Hershey's testimony and the follow-up letter were significant because they marked one of the first times that the Director explicitly named the Selective Service's policy of manpower channeling, a form of social engineering designed to coax men into designated fields by offering them deferments from conscription. He used the term, however, as a label for a procedure he viewed as already in practice. He argued that the

could come back to haunt Hershey or the Selective Service. In an interview about *Selective Service*, one official at the national headquarters in Washington, D.C., explained, "You have to look for what isn't there with the old man. That's the way it is in this outfit. You get so you're pretty good at reading between the lines. Once you get to know the 'Old Man' [Hershey] its no trick. But I'll tell you this, when he says 'It would be my guess that local boards will,' you can bet that about 4,000 boards are going to do it." See Gary Lee Wamsley, "Selective Service and American Political Culture: The Maintenance of Equilibrium between Demands of Function and Political Culture by an Institution of Civil-Military Justice," (Ph.D. Diss.: University of Pittsburgh, 1968): 167-168, 183-184. Quote p. 168.

³ As will be explained later in this chapter, there are seven reserve components in the American military – the Army National Guard, Air National Guard, Army Reserve, Navy Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Air Force Reserve, and Coast Guard Reserve. All together, they are known as the reserves and all of their personnel are known as reservists. The latter five, which are administered by their respective Pentagon departments rather than the state governments, are known as the Reserves and their personnel as Reservists.

⁴ Lewis B. Hershey, "Altered Role, Continuing Need for Draft Stressed," *Selective Service* 8 (March 1958): 1-2. Quote, p. 2.

agricultural, occupational, and student deferments the agency used during World War II and the Korean War had become “a part of the channeling of people in the direction that they had to go” without “compulsions.” During these wars, in fact, the Selective Service went “to all extremes of alleged volunteering, to make people think they volunteered when they [were] actually being channeled through a process.”⁵ The results of the practice were stark. “The only reason the Nation is not short 40,000 or 50,000 engineers today,” he claimed, “is because they were deferred in 1951, 1952, and 1953.”⁶

Hershey explained that the needs of the military’s reserve programs, America’s technological rivalry with the Soviet Union, and the ever-present threat of nuclear war meant channeling would take on an even greater importance in the future. America needed more scientists, more engineers, more doctors, and more teachers, and offering deferments from military service was one of the most efficient means to ensure that men chose to enter those professions. It was a matter of “national survival.”⁷ And he proved true to his word. By the first half of the 1960s, informational literature produced by the Selective Service System referred to channeling as one of the agency’s main functions and justified its guidance of civilian choices by calling the policy “a counterpart and amplification of the System’s responsibility to deliver manpower to the armed forces.”⁸

⁵ Subcommittee on Independent Offices, House Appropriations Committee, *Independent Offices Appropriations for 1959: Hearings before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives, 85th Cong., 2d sess., Jan. 1958*, 200.

⁶ Hershey, “Altered Role, Continuing Need for Draft Stressed,” *Selective Service* 8 (March 1958): 2.

⁷ Subcommittee on Independent Offices, *Independent Offices Appropriations for 1959*, 197-211. Quote, p. 202.

⁸ Selective Service System, “Channeling,” Orientation Kit, 1965, 1.

This chapter examines the growth and consequences of the policy of manpower channeling. It argues that the idea solved two distinct problems that arose from the inherent contradictions within a system that claimed military service as a responsibility of all able-bodied male citizens but did not demand universal military service. The first was pragmatic. As children of the baby-boom generation started to come of age and the population of young men began to grow in the years after 1955, the number of those eligible for the draft far outpaced the number of men needed by the military. Channeling increased the number of deferments offered to otherwise available men and pushed them into new reserve programs that would allow them to fulfill their obligation of military service without disrupting their civilian lives. The policy reduced the size of the burgeoning manpower pool, making it more manageable, and increased the probability that a man classified as I-A (available) would, in fact, be drafted. This reduction allowed the Selective Service to show that it functioned as a viable system of military manpower procurement.

Second, the policy provided the Selective Service with an ideological justification for its increasingly liberal use of deferments. Through manpower channeling, Hershey and the Selective Service explicitly defined certain civilian occupations and implicitly acknowledged marriage and fatherhood as essential service to the nation. The program's development, therefore, signaled full acceptance of a definition of national service that included civilian activities as well as soldiering. This position stood in contrast to the grudging tolerance the agency had proffered during the Korean War. By 1958, the Selective Service defined men who held occupational and dependency deferments *as* fulfilling their citizenship obligations. According to the Selective Service System's own

publications, military service was not strictly necessary from American men so long as they performed some measure of national service that was sanctioned through the granting of a deferment. The responsibilities of masculine citizenship, therefore, did not have to be fulfilled through uniformed service.

Consequently, the policy of manpower channeling further militarized the civilian sector, as a broader swath of men's activities outside of the military were defined as vital to national defense. Men of draft age were not always conscious of this redefinition. Even though Hershey made no secret of his agency's rationale for deferments, there appears to have been little popular awareness of it. Media outlets found Hershey's pronouncements about channeling unremarkable and rarely reported on them. Nevertheless, the policy provided a mechanism through which men could avoid active-duty military service and devalued military service by identifying civilian pursuits as equally important to national security. Channeling materially limited the number of men who actively served in the armed forces. In so doing, it further separated military service from masculine citizenship.

* * * * *

By the time of his 1958 congressional testimony, Lewis B. Hershey and the Selective Service had become virtually synonymous. Hershey had been helping to shape the agency since he had been assigned to the Joint Army-Navy Selective Service Committee in 1936, and he had been the system's director for eighteen years. He was its public face. He wrote extensively, testified before Congress frequently, and appeared in newspaper articles almost daily. Perhaps more importantly, Hershey's views about the proper role of the Selective Service heavily influenced the agency's policies and

practices. The laws regulating the draft were purposely vague and granted the president the authority to determine the details of its operation. Because the presidents under whom Hershey served usually deferred to the Director's expertise, Hershey shaped the regulations that governed the Selective Service,⁹

Moreover, Hershey's agency was relatively small, especially considering the number of lives it affected. The Selective Service System's national headquarters was in Washington, D.C., but the staff there was kept to a minimum. In fiscal 1958, its staff of 61 commissioned officers and 150 civilians was responsible for studying manpower problems, analyzing demographic trends, conducting research, liaising with state offices and other federal agencies, and devising new policies.¹⁰ Each state and territory possessed its own state director and related staff, but in 1958, these state offices ranged in size from only five to thirty people, for a total of 1,019 employees.¹¹ The responsibility for classification, sending out induction calls, and handling most appeals went to the system's 4,079 local boards and appeal boards, which were scattered in communities across the country. Close to 42,000 people worked on these boards, but the vast majority were unpaid volunteers, appointed by the states' governors and approved by the

⁹ See, for example, the correspondence between Hershey and President Kennedy regarding 1963 change in the order of call for married men without children, discussed below.

¹⁰ United States Selective Service System, *Annual Report of the Director of Selective Service for the Fiscal Year 1958 to the Congress of the United States pursuant to the Universal Military Training and Service Act as Amended* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1958), 5 [hereafter *Annual Report*, (year)].

¹¹ Subcommittee on Independent Offices, *Independent Offices Appropriations for 1959*, 221. New York was the only exception, as it possessed two State Headquarters, one that administered to New York City and one that handled the rest of the state.

President.¹² In 1958, the total budget for the entire system was a mere \$27 million, leading Hershey to complain that he needed to cut off phone service in many of the local board offices due to lack of funds.¹³ In comparison, the National Science Foundation, another independent agency linked to national defense, operated on \$40 million dollars in fiscal 1958 and, as a result of the Soviet launch of *Sputnik* in late 1957, received close to \$100 million more in fiscal 1959.¹⁴ So although over 43,000 people worked with the Selective Service, the system was relatively small and highly decentralized. Policies, regulations, and guidelines were developed by a small group of people working in Washington and carried out by a large number of volunteers throughout the nation who were free to interpret them with additional guidance from state directors.

Hershey sat on top of the organizational pyramid. Scholars James W. Davis, Jr., and Kenneth M. Dolbeare, working in the late 1960s, suggested that the entire diffuse system was held together by the force of Hershey's personality.¹⁵ Because the Selective Service did not pay most of its members, it could not coerce them into conformity. Rather, it had to "rely on normative appeals and the manipulation of symbols to obtain

¹² In fiscal 1958, only 14.3 percent of the System's total employees were paid. *Annual Report*, 1958, 4.

¹³ Subcommittee on Independent Offices, *Independent Offices Appropriations for 1959*, 197, 209-210.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 265; National Science Foundation, *Ninth Annual Report for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1959* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1960), 134. Available online at <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/1959/annualreports/start.htm>.

¹⁵ Wamsley made the same argument in his 1968 dissertation. Through interviews, he documented the admiration and respect members of the Selective Service held for Hershey. Local board members and national officials alike affectionately referred to Hershey as the "Old Man." One State Director, when asked how Selective Service had managed to gain national acceptance, answered, "Well, it all can traced back to one man – one man with wisdom and foresight." He then proceeded with "a fifteen minute eulogy and life history of General Hershey." See Wamsley, "Selective Service and American Political Culture," 164-167, 364-381. Quote, p. 365.

the behavior it require[d].” Hershey, who cultivated a “homey-folksy air,” was that symbol. Davis and Dolbeare pointed out that in 24 issues of *Selective Service* between January 1965 and December 1966, 22 articles in addition to Hershey’s regular, monthly, signed column focused on the Director. Further, close to half of the pictures printed in the newspaper featured Hershey.¹⁶ He appeared just as prominently in earlier issues as well.

Hershey brought a strong sense of civic republicanism to the Selective Service. He grew up on a small Indiana farm, worked his way through college, and entered the military through the National Guard.¹⁷ His world-view was based on a Jeffersonian understanding of virtue and responsibility. He believed that the nation’s greatest asset was the strength of its local communities, and throughout his tenure as Director of Selective Service, he fought to keep the system decentralized.¹⁸ He argued that small, “little groups of neighbors” would know the needs of their own communities better than any bureaucrat in Washington or elsewhere. They would understand who could be spared for military service, the requirements of the local economy, and for whom military service would be a true hardship. Local board members who were connected to the neighborhood would also put a human face on the system and, by virtue of their presence, encourage men to register and serve. Shame and a sense of duty would prevent prospective inductees from doing otherwise, since everyone, especially local board

¹⁶ James W. Davis, Jr., and Kenneth M. Dolbeare, *Little Groups of Neighbors: The Selective Service System* (Chicago: Markham Publishing Company, 1968), 42-46. Quotes, pp. 43, 45.

¹⁷ For more on Hershey’s childhood influences, see George Q. Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey: Mr. Selective Service* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), ch. 1-2.

¹⁸ The idea of decentralization came from the Oakes report, but it was Hershey who molded the system. See Davis and Dolbeare, *Little Groups of Neighbors*, 20.

members, would know if a particular man was medically disqualified, performing an essential job, or a slacker.

And to Hershey, men who did not serve the country when it needed them, were, indeed, shirking their responsibility as American citizens. He developed his civic-republican outlook early in life. As a young National Guard officer, working and often failing to recruit men into his unit, he became frustrated at his peers' lack of loyalty to their country. When few students joined a drill unit he organized at the University of Indiana in 1917, just before American entrance into World War I, he complained, "I fear for my land when this represents their flower of manhood." Easy living made men soft, irresolute, and selfish. It made them unmanly. Ultimately, he welcomed American entrance into World War I, for, as he wrote in his diary, "When the spirit of responsibility dodging is abroad to so large an extent, it certainly seems that only a war with all its horrors can awake us to our obligations."¹⁹ Men had a duty to perform military service, especially in times of emergency. Without a spirit of commitment, the spirit of the nation itself would begin to decay. Hershey designed the Selective Service, therefore, as "an educational tool" that could be used to inculcate and "preserve... traditional values – patriotism, individual responsibility, decentralization of government," as well as a manpower procurement agency.²⁰

Hershey's civic-republican ideas about citizenship did not change substantially throughout his time in the Selective Service, but in the years following the Korean War, his notions about what constituted service to the nation did. This change was primarily

¹⁹ Diary of Lewis B. Hershey, March 12, 1917 and June 7, 1917, personal papers of Gilbert Hershey, Jacksonville, North Carolina, cited in Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 22, 23.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 188.

due to demographic realities. When the population of draft-eligible men began to climb, it became clear that not all of them would be needed to serve in uniform. Yet Hershey saw America as imperiled. The threat of nuclear war with the Soviet Union and conventional war with its proxies threatened the United States domestically and its interests abroad. The populace could not afford to become complacent, he believed, even if induction calls were low. By 1958, the practical and the ideological had combined to produce the new policy of manpower channeling.

* * * * *

Several factors contributed to a reversal of the critical manpower shortage faced by the armed forces during the Korean War. The first was a shift in national security policy. When Eisenhower took office in 1953, his discomfort with an \$85 billion defense budget constituting 60 percent of federal expenditures and 13.8 percent of the gross national product led him to reassess military strategy.²¹ What became known as his New Look threatened the use of strategic – and eventually tactical – nuclear weapons as the best deterrent of communism, in the belief that any nuclear engagement would lead to destruction on such a mass scale that it would be in both the American and Soviet best interest to avoid such conflict. The United States would continue to support its allies in local disputes, especially against communist foes believed to be Soviet proxies, as it had in Korea, but it would do so with economic, air, and naval support, rather than with

²¹ George C. Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations Since 1776* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 653; Robert R. Bowie and Richard H. Immerman, *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 178.

ground forces.²² Under this policy, the military enhanced its nuclear stockpiles, its support and delivery systems, and its transportation and communication capabilities but, with the exception of the Air Force, the armed services scaled back. Emphasis on air power and irregular methods of warfare, including covert operations and psychological warfare, grew while the strategic prominence of the infantry decreased.²³ Between 1953 and 1961, the overall size of the military's active forces dropped from over 3.5 million men to under 2.4 million. The Army contracted the most, losing 675,000 soldiers during Eisenhower's presidency.²⁴

Second, in an effort to boost the military's dismal retention rate, Congress passed the Career Incentive Act in 1955, offering, on average, an eleven percent pay increase to men who remained in uniform after their initial term of service.²⁵ It also offered extra hazard pay for airmen and submariners and a dislocation allowance to permit families to move with servicemen to new permanent duty stations. By all measures, the law was a success. The reenlistment rate across the branches of service rose from 14.9 percent in fiscal 1954 to 44 percent in fiscal 1956.²⁶

²² For a detailed description of the New Look Policy, see Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, esp. ch. 12.

²³ Herring, *From Colony to Superpower*, 660.

²⁴ James M. Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy: Issues in Military Manpower Procurement, 1945-1970* (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1971), 192.

²⁵ Terms of service varied depending on how a man entered the services. Draftees were inducted for two years. Men could enlist in the Army and Marine Corps for three or four years and the Navy and Air Force for four years. President Eisenhower signed P.L. 84-20 on March 31, 1955. Pay increases ranged from between six and 25 percent for officers, six and 22 percent for warrant officers, and seven and seventeen percent for enlisted men. See Senate Committee on Armed Services, *Career Incentive Act of 1955*, S. Rept. No. 125, March 29, 1955, 84th Cong., 1st sess., 1955, 5.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 3; Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 214.

Perhaps most importantly from a procurement perspective, the demographic trends that had been such a problem during the Korean War reversed themselves. Throughout the second half of the 1950s and 1960s, more and more men turned 18 each year, vastly expanding the available pool of manpower. Barely more than 1 million men turned 18 in 1951, but close to 1.5 million reached the age of eligibility in 1961.²⁷ By 1965, the number of 18-year-men had increased by 50 percent over the number from a decade earlier.²⁸ Where there were 9.1 million men between the ages of eighteen and 26 registered with the Selective Service in 1953, there were 10.9 million in 1957, and 13.9 million in 1961.²⁹

Together, these circumstances meant that the armed forces needed fewer men even as more men were accessible to them. Because the size of the active forces was lower, the services were more successful at filling their quotas with voluntary enlistments.³⁰ Between the end of the Korean War and the beginning of the Vietnam War, the Navy and Marine Corps utilized the Selective Service only occasionally, and the Air Force did not use the draft at all. Thus, only the Army was left to regularly augment its numbers with draftees. Consequently, an increasingly small proportion of the available

²⁷ *Annual Report*, 1951, 11.

²⁸ In 1955, 1.15 million men turned 18. In 1965, 1.72 million men reached this milestone, an increase of 50%. House Armed Services Committee, *Review of the Administration and Operation of the Selective Service System: Hearings before the Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives*, 89th Cong. 2d. sess., 1966, 10003.

²⁹ *Annual Report*, 1953, 67; *ibid.*, 1957, 74; *ibid.*, 1961, 58.

³⁰ As will be pointed out later in this chapter, however, one of the main justifications for continuing the draft was that it motivated enlistments. With the potential for conscription hanging over their heads, many men voluntarily chose to enlist in the service branch of their choice in order to maintain some control over the terms of their military service.

manpower pool faced conscription each year. Inductions dropped from 33 percent of total military procurement in fiscal 1954 to 22 percent in 1957 to just 9 percent in 1961.³¹

* * * * *

Small draft calls presented problems for the Selective Service System. Hershey had always insisted that deferments were merely postponements of military service, not exemptions from it. But by the mid-1950s, the numbers were working against him. Where close to 472,000 men had been inducted in 1953, the Selective Service drafted less than 153,000 in 1955.³² Only two years after the manpower crisis of the Korean War had prompted the end of deferments for fathers and three after the draft age had been lowered to eighteen-and-a-half, State Directors of Selective Service started writing Hershey, wondering what was to be done with their excess men. R.T. Finks of Missouri reported in August 1955 that his state yielded approximately 2,000 new registrants each month but received induction calls for only 230 men.³³ Illinois and Massachusetts faced similar situations.³⁴

Members of the Defense Establishment, including Hershey, continued to insist that conscription was necessary to the security of the nation.³⁵ When the Universal

³¹ Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 217.

³² Selective Service, Induction Statistics, <http://www.selectiveservice.us/military-draft/8-induction.shtml>.

³³ Memo: Commencement of Classification, August 1, 1955, attached to R.T. Finks to Major General Lewis B. Hershey, August 8, 1955, 300 Classification – Gen. & Ala-Nev. 1963-1948, box 61, Central Files, RG 147, NARA.

³⁴ See Chester A. Furbish to General Hershey, March 29, 1955, attached to Bernard T. Franck, III, to Colonel Furbish, April 26, 1955, 127 General Mass. 1963-1955, box 47 and Lewis B. Hershey to Colonel Armstrong, January 5, 1956, and attachments, 127 General Ill. 1963-1953, box 46, both in Central Files, RG 147, NARA.

³⁵ See, for example, the statements of Secretary of Defense Charles E. Wilson and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Adm. Arthur Bradford, Senate Committee on Armed Services, *1955 Amendments to the Universal Military Training and Service Act*,

Military Training and Service Act of 1951 came up for renewal in 1955, Assistant Secretary of Defense Carter L. Burgess told the Senate Armed Services Committee that the military would only be able to meet about half of its manpower requirements through voluntarism. Moreover, he explained, “The very existence of induction authority stimulates individuals to enlist.”³⁶ Hershey agreed.³⁷ When faced with the threat of conscription, defense planners believed, many men voluntarily enlisted in order to choose their branch of service and the terms of their enlistment.³⁸ Further, the Director insisted that only five to ten percent of qualified men, who he defined as those in the I-A category, managed to escape military service. “When we deal with masses,” he assured members of the committee, “we are going to have a loss in spite of all that we can do,” just as “no matter how well you turn out...lumber” at a sawmill, there will be “a lot of sawdust.”³⁹ The problem was inescapable, regardless of demographic conditions or the size of induction calls.

Despite Hershey’s confidence, the press soon noticed the effects of the decreasing number of calls. Newspaper and magazine articles reported that a young man’s chances

Hearings Before the Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate on H.R. 3005, H.R. 6057, and S. 1467, 84th Cong., 1st sess., June 1955, 182-185.

³⁶ Ibid., 199.

³⁷ See the testimony of Lewis B. Hershey, *ibid.*, 225.

³⁸ Three years later, in 1958, Secretary of the Army William M. Brucker pointed out that 95 percent of enlistees with no prior history of military service enlisted for only three years, “the minimum period of enlistment under which the volunteer is afforded an enlistment option.” Brucker believed the short nature of their voluntarism was evidence that “a large proportion of those enlistees” volunteered “under direct pressure of the draft.” See William M. Brucker to Everett R. Hopper, Jan. 9. 1959, Interoffice Memos (Admin. Corres.) 1958, box 109, Selective Service System, Training and Conference Files, Inter Office Memos to Conference Three, Entry UD 20, Training and Conference Files, RG 147, NARA.

³⁹ Testimony of Lewis B. Hershey, Senate Committee on Armed Service, *1955 Amendments to the Universal Military Training and Service Act*, 229.

of seeing military service ranged anywhere from between one in four to one in fifteen.⁴⁰ A late-1955 *Washington Post* piece that placed the odds at one in twelve revealed, “many youngsters talk about ‘12 to 1’ being ‘pretty good odds’....With no war on, few apparently think much of their obligation to serve, and talk of ‘waiting it out.’”⁴¹ In an early 1956 Gallup Poll, 26 percent of male teenaged respondents believed that they would never serve in the military, a significant change from the nine percent of male college men who felt they would not serve in 1952.⁴² Of the 74 percent of teens in the Gallup survey who did think they would eventually serve, one third planned to wait for the draft. With no guarantee that the Selective Service would come calling, these men felt no responsibility to preemptively join up. Most likely, they hoped to avoid military service altogether.⁴³

The seeming capriciousness of the system, which had been exacerbated by decreased calls, added to negative public opinion. By early 1955, the news magazine *U.S. News & World Report* began reporting on the fickle nature of the draft. Because the Selective Service conscripted the oldest eligible men first, the magazine reported, “many

⁴⁰ See “Legion Head Says Draft is Unfair,” *Baltimore Sun*, March 28, 1955; David Lawrence, “Young Men Can Relax Again,” *U.S. News & World Report*, Jan. 6, 1956, 52-53.

⁴¹ John G. Norris, “Answer to Lagging Reserve Program is 3-Fold,” *Washington Post*, Dec. 5, 1955.

⁴² Edward A. Suchman, Robin M. Williams, and Rose K. Goldsen, “Student Reaction to Impending Military Service,” *American Sociological Review* 18, no. 3 (June 1953): 293-304.

⁴³ A study conducted by an Ed.D. doctoral candidate for his dissertation supported this assumption. He analyzed 3,045 answers to a questionnaire administered to high school juniors and seniors from 56 schools in 30 states. He found that students’ overriding concern was maintaining control over their lives. They wished to stay out of the military for as long as possible and to be able to choose their own branch of service if military service was required. See Oliver LaVerne Rapp, “Military Problems Facing High School Boys,” (Ed.D. Diss.: University of Illinois, Urbana, 1956): 46, 90.

a young man apparently is to find that the draft will pass him by in his early years, only to catch him and force him into service after he has a job, a wife, perhaps children.” Moreover, logistical strains on the system caused “an increasing number of youths” to “never get so far as to be physically examined for the draft.” They remained unclassified for years. The shrinking proportion of classified men, combined with the fact that one in three men who were examined failed the pre-induction physical and mental exams, meant that a large number of young men were left in their home communities. Most of them, according to the magazine, possessed “no obvious defects,” and therefore did nothing but “heighten the public’s impression that the draft [was] full of loopholes.” Articles also pointed out that “at least several hundred thousand men, now in the draft age bracket, apparently will not be needed” for military service and that “the number of men who escape service could be larger, if voluntary enlistments exceed expectations.”⁴⁴ The overall message was that men who chose to gamble with their futures could lose big, but the odds ran in their favor.

Reports such as these worried members of the Selective Service System and Congress, who were concerned about public apathy toward military service. One particular article, also from *U.S. News and World Report*, sparked controversy.⁴⁵ When, in January 1956, the journal reported on the “remote” prospect of conscription, placing the odds of being drafted at just one in fifteen, John H. Greenaway, the New Hampshire State Director, complained that such reports were “detrimental to the orderly working of the Selective Service.” He specifically linked his state’s drop in registrations to “such

⁴⁴ “The Chance of Being Drafted Now,” *U.S. News & World Report*, Jan. 21, 1955, 32; “Draft to Go On – Who’ll Be Called,” *U.S. News & World Report*, Feb. 18, 1955, 32.

⁴⁵ Lawrence, “Young Men Can Relax Again,” *U.S. News*, 52.

news items,” complaining that negative news coverage led to “callous disrespect” among those who were required to register.⁴⁶ The article also caught the attention of the House Armed Services Committee, the members of which grilled Assistant Secretary of the Army Hugh M. Milton and Hershey about whether the one in fifteen statistic was true. Hershey demurred, claiming that statistics could be used to prove almost anything, depending on how they were used, although he used his column in the February issue of *Selective Service* to fire back.⁴⁷ “A Nation intensely interested in transportation and with innerspring and foam-rubber seats,” he wrote, “will not only be looking for the shortest and easiest method of performing service, but will be impressed by those who continually play up the hope that there is a...great chance of avoiding any service.” But, he warned, such an attitude, “encourages young men to put off military training when they can best undergo it and risks service at a time when there are far more [familial and occupational] complications.” Where news coverage indicated the odds of avoiding service were high, Hershey cautioned that the stakes were even higher. If too many men decided to wait out the draft, then that “gamble” would “probably be the greatest factor in compelling Congress” to start conscripting men into new reserve programs, in which everyone would lose.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ John H. Greenaway to General Hershey, January 6, 1955 [sic], attached to Bernard T. Franck, III, to Mr. Greenaway, January 30, 1956, 127 General N.H. 1963-1948, box 48, Central Files, RG 147, NARA.

⁴⁷ Subcommittee No. 1, House Armed Services Committee, *Review of Reserve Program by Subcommittee No. 1*, Serial No. 41, Jan. 5, 1956, 84th Cong., 2d sess., 4914-15. See also Bernard T. Franck, III, to Mr. Greenaway, January 30, 1956, 127 General N.H. 1963-1948, box 48, Central Files, RG 147, NARA.

⁴⁸ Hershey, “Public Reaction to Settle Fate of Reserve Program,” *Selective Service*, Feb. 1956, 2.

By the mid-1950s, therefore, the military's manpower procurement system was under significant pressure. Although the law that authorized the draft was renewed easily in 1955, the growing draft-age cohort combined with diminishing needs for manpower exacerbated the contradictions inherent in a system that held all men responsible for military service but did not, in fact, require or even want universal participation.⁴⁹ Hershey realized the Selective Service's need to reassess "how the System c[ould] adjust universality as a principle to high selectivity as a reality."⁵⁰ Since virtually no one in power was willing to end the draft, the most obvious solution to the over-supply of eligible men was to reduce the number of men considered eligible for induction.⁵¹

Reducing the size of the available manpower pool would accomplish several things. First, lowering the number of men considered eligible for conscription would increase the odds that the men who remained I-A (eligible) would be conscripted. Second, the threat of coercion would spur enlistments. Finally, the change would lower the national age of induction, or the average age at which men were called by the Selective Service. During the Korean War, when manpower was at a premium, many local boards had exhausted all of the men between the ages of twenty and 26 available to them. When they started conscripting younger men, the national age of induction fell to nineteen-and-a-half. But as manpower needs had eased, the age of induction had crept

⁴⁹ 69 Stat. 223 was passed on June 30, 1955.

⁵⁰ *Annual Report*, 1956, 65.

⁵¹ 1956 Democratic presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson ran on a platform that included the abolition of conscription and creation of an all-volunteer force. He was roundly criticized for this position, especially against the backdrop of the Hungarian Revolution and the Suez Crisis. See "Stevenson and the Draft," *New York Times*, Oct. 20, 1956; Jeff Broadwater, *Adlai Stevenson and American Politics: The Odyssey of a Cold War Liberal* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1994), 168-170, and Charles A.H. Thomson and Frances M. Shattuck, *The 1956 Presidential Campaign* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1960), 233-238, 309-310.

back up. By 1955, it had reached 23, with most men receiving induction notices between the ages of 23 and 25. This situation created difficulties both for men living under the uncertainty of the draft and for the armed forces. The military preferred younger men because they had fewer family responsibilities, were in better physical condition, and were believed to be more malleable than older men. Men without deferments lived under the threat of the draft until age 26 and men with deferments until age 35. By then, they usually were married, had children, and were deeply enmeshed in their careers, making a two-year term of service a true psychological – and frequently material – hardship.⁵²

Hershey began discussing options for shrinking the pool of eligible men in 1955, devoting at least one national conference of officers in the Selective Service System to the subject.⁵³ A poll from national headquarters solicited state directors' opinions on the best way to "reduce and control" the growing number of available men. Despite the assurances of Idaho State Director John E. Walsh to the national director that his state would "be ready to accept any steps that [Hershey] decide[d] to take in order to reduce the manpower pool in Class I-A," the survey's results indicated that the state directors constituted a fairly conservative body.⁵⁴ Of the options provided, which included postponing the inductions of fathers under the age of 26 and men in scientific and related fields, the state directors preferred delaying the initial classification of registrants until at

⁵² "Proposal to Ease Draft is Offered," *New York Times*, Sept. 23, 1955. See also Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 228-229.

⁵³ John E. Walsh to Major General Lewis B. Hershey, July 13, 1955, attached to Dee Ingold to General Walsh, July 26, 1955, 127 General Idaho, 1955-1948, box 46, Central Files, RG 147, NARA.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

least the age of twenty and postponing the induction of all men over the age of 25.⁵⁵ These choices would eliminate the oldest and youngest men from the eligible supply, allowing the Selective Service to focus specifically on men between the ages of twenty and 25. Further, the System could continue to avoid blanket administrative deferments, granting dependency and occupational deferments only on an individual basis to men who requested them. Unanimously, however, the state directors voted to delay any action until after the Universal Military Training and Service Act had been successfully renewed.⁵⁶

Hershey followed the state directors' advice on this last point, but moved beyond their recommendations when he took "unwritten" action to liberalize induction policies in July 1955, only weeks after Congress reauthorized the law.⁵⁷ He chose to postpone induction in all cases brought to his attention where the men were over the age of 26, fathers, or employed in the scientific fields and urged state directors to issue similar directives to all local boards.⁵⁸ Classification procedures, including pre-induction exams to determine if a registrant should be categorized as provisionally capable of military

⁵⁵ Postponement of induction and deferment were similar in effect but not identical in intent. When a man received a deferment, his eligibility for induction was postponed so long as he was infirm or engaged in activities considered to be in the national interest. When a man had his induction postponed, the Selective Service acknowledged that man as eligible for conscription but chose not to exercise its right to induct him.

⁵⁶ William P. Averill to General Hershey, June 10, 1955, 311-General Military Service (I-A), box 63, Central Files, RG 147, NARA.

⁵⁷ Paul G. Armstrong to My Associates in Selective Service, n.d., attached to Lewis B. Hershey to Colonel Armstrong, January 5, 1956, 127 General Ill. 1963-1953, box 46, Central Files, RG 147, NARA.

⁵⁸ Dee Ingold to General Walsh, July 26, 1955, 127 General Idaho, 1955-1948, box 46, Central Files, 147, NARA; Lewis B. Hershey to Colonel Armstrong, January 5, 1956, and attachments, 127 General Ill. 1963-1953, *ibid*.

service, were also delayed until well past the age of eighteen. Missouri, for example, suspended classification until men reached age 21.⁵⁹

Although these were radical – and frequently unilateral – administrative changes, Hershey knew they were unlikely to be controversial. As argued in chapter two, Americans were generally willing to protect fathers and scientists from military service, based on the belief that their civilian roles were more important than any job they could perform in uniform. Similarly, measures to limit eighteen-year-old men’s contact with the Selective Service System were unlikely to be questioned. Finally, Hershey and the states viewed these measures as temporary, in place only until Congress could pass pending legislation on the state of the country’s reserve forces and until Eisenhower could approve an executive order determining the proper order of induction calls, given the present needs of the military and civilian sectors.⁶⁰

* * * * *

It is unclear exactly who named the policy of manpower channeling, but it is clear that it grew out of practices already performed by the Selective Service System. The key to its development was an expansion of the definition of “service” that took place in the wake of the Korean War. Between 1956 and 1959, the system began to accept certain civilian activities as the equivalent of military service, a significant shift from the rationale it offered for deferments during the conflict.

⁵⁹ R.T. Finks to Major General Lewis B. Hershey, August 8, 1955, 300 Classification – Gen. & Ala-Nev. 1963-1948, box 61, Central Files, RG 147, NARA.

⁶⁰ In 1955, as will be discussed below, Eisenhower was considering a measure that would move all fathers to the bottom of induction lists, leaving non-fathers to be called first.

Partially as a result of the growing population of service-aged men who would not see active duty, Hershey instructed his staff to study the best ways to select men “for the task where they might give the greatest service to the Nation.”⁶¹ Concurrently, he amended his own public attitude toward the agency’s role. For example, he altered the basis on which he defended the regulations that extended the age of draft liability from 26 to 35 for men who received deferments. Where he had argued during the Korean War that the extended age limit would ensure men’s military service, he now claimed that the threat of loss of deferment would detain them in essential occupations until an age when other family pressures would probably keep them there.⁶² Where once he had prophesied disaster if Congress allowed too many deferments, writing in 1949, “If we make [a man] too secure [in his job], it will take about three Selective Service Systems to bomb him loose when we finally want him to go out and use [a] weapon,” he now started to advocate a “freer deferment trend” so that men could be released to “make contributions to civil life.”⁶³ The Selective Service’s congressional mandate was to secure *military* personnel, but by the late 1950s Hershey had expanded its purpose to guide the choices of *civilian* men, thus eliding military and civilian procurement in the name of national security.

Such a redefinition of service grew out of the agency’s commitment to civil defense. Hershey and his staff believed that if a nuclear attack were to occur, the Selective Service would be invaluable to the country’s rebuilding and civil defense efforts. Its decentralized structure would allow it to continue to procure soldiers even if

⁶¹ *Annual Report*, 1957, 61.

⁶² Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 240-41.

⁶³ Selective Service: Present and Future, January 5, 1949, 032-GEN, 1963-1948, box 26, Central Files, RG 147, NARA; *Annual Report*, 1955, 17; *ibid.*, 1957, 61-62.

national or state headquarters were destroyed. He complained that few Americans “recognize[d] the importance of having in existence an organization capable...of contributing...to the identification, location and utilization of the manpower which [would] be needed without delay when survival [was] the first and primary necessity.”⁶⁴ As he told the officers present at a reunion for those who had served with the Virginia State Headquarters, “Defense must come not from the top down, but from the bottom up. It must be based on the cellular structure which originated at Jamestown and Plymouth Rock, and which built this Nation into the greatest in the world.”⁶⁵ Each local board, therefore, was “expected to function by itself if isolated.”⁶⁶

The Selective Service liaised with the Office of Defense Mobilization, and the Departments of Defense; Labor; Commerce; Agriculture; and Health, Education, and Welfare; and the Federal Civil Defense Administration in developing plans for a nuclear emergency. National and State headquarters participated in regular relocation exercises, in which essential staff and records were moved to secondary locations, away from major cities and other possible targets of nuclear attack. Personnel also took part in Operation Alert, a federally-organized, national civil defense drill held annually between 1954 and 1961. Designed to test Americans’ readiness at all levels of society, it involved everyone from ordinary citizens in target cities, who were required to take cover within fifteen minutes of the alarm, to the President of the United States, who evacuated the White House with his staff.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Hershey, “Selective Service Obligations,” *Army Digest*, Nov. 1959, 35.

⁶⁵ “Community Defense Emphasized,” *Selective Service* 6 (Oct. 1956): 4.

⁶⁶ Hershey, “Selective Service Obligations,” 38.

⁶⁷ See *Annual Report*, 1956, 53-55; *ibid.*, 1957, 49-51; *ibid.*, 1958, 41-43.

By 1956, Hershey realized that the role of the Selective Service could be far greater than merely raising an army. A nuclear strike was expected to disrupt American transportation and communications networks, potentially destroy the nucleus of the federal government, and reduce major cities to rubble. Hunger, thirst, illness, and death would follow. Some form of community organizing would be required to stave off panic and chaos, and all hands would be necessary to rebuild. Since the Selective Service maintained records on all men, not just those found acceptable for military service, in Hershey's view, it was the logical choice to step into the breach that a nuclear catastrophe would create. It was "the only agency with a complete inventory of the Nation's manpower between the ages of 18 and 35," and thus it had "become...the storekeeper for the manpower supply that can be conceivably needed for survival."⁶⁸ Its mission, therefore, needed to evolve.⁶⁹

In the July 1956 issue of *Selective Service*, Hershey outlined the place of Selective Service in the past and his vision for the future. He wrote, "As the needs of warfare changed the concept of selecting men for the task where they gave the greatest service to the Nation grew." As illustrated by the addition of student deferments during the Korean

⁶⁸ Ibid., 1957, 61.

⁶⁹ New York State took the possible role of Selective Service in civil defense quite seriously. In 1959 the State Director ordered local boards to begin coding all registrants and reservists in the state system by occupation. It also added an Annex to its Catastrophe Plan that would allow the state to "call registrants, by occupation, for utilization by Civil Defense." By March 1960, local board members had coded over 61,000 registrants and they expected to have coded over 162,050 by the end of 1961. National Headquarters conducted a study on the feasibility of registering all Americans between the ages of 16 and 70 for civil defense purposes, but found that it would cost \$878 million. File cabinets alone would cost \$15 million, so the plan was abandoned. See LBH to Colonel Boughton, March 28, 1960 and attachments, 127 General N.Y. State, 1963-1958, box 48, Central Files, RG 147, NARA, and Memo: Oregon Plan, April 18, 1958 and Memo: Oregon Plan, April 9, 1958, both 321 Deferments 1963-1954, box 70, *ibid.*

War, men outside of uniform could be just as important as those in the armed forces. “From the deferment of men to do, came the transition to defer to train to do,” he explained. But student deferments were not enough. Hershey derided the methods currently used to “account for...manpower,” denying that they would “insure a rapid and effective mobilization” and ultimately survival. He particularly decried a system in which a man who had been rejected for military service, especially for reasons of disability or dependency, was given a “basis for believing that he [could] hope to escape his obligations because of his unacceptability.” “We must...cease to encourage large numbers of our young men to believe that they are useless for the primary duty of citizenship,” he exhorted readers.⁷⁰ Participation in the nation’s defense efforts could occur in a civilian capacity as well.

While masculine citizenship should continue to be based on a man’s contribution to the country’s security, eligibility for military service could not and should not be the only measure of that contribution. Rather than conscript all men into military service, Hershey now advocated modifying the meaning of deferments. Instead of signaling that a man had no role to play in the defense of the country, deferments should signify the vital nature of civilian work. “We are now recognizing service in defense and out of uniform,” he wrote. “Warfare, cold or hot, grows more complex as society grows more complex and as technology advances...Skills and abilities we discount today in measuring our strength may be critical tomorrow.” “The men who serve[d] without a

⁷⁰ Hershey, “Storekeeper of Manpower,” *Selective Service* 6 (July 1956): 1-2.

gun or a uniform” were crucial for the nation’s survival and should be recognized as such.⁷¹

According to Hershey, encouraging men to pursue particular occupations was the job of the Selective Service, even if the law governing the draft did not specifically grant the agency such powers. The Universal Military and Training Act stated that national security required “the fullest possible utilization of the Nation’s technological, scientific, and other critical manpower resources,” but as Hershey understood it, Congress, also had “repeatedly indicated its confidence in the Selective Service System to administer broad delegations of authority to aid...the general objective of survival.” Therefore, he reasoned, it had sanctioned the redefinition of service. “The law enumerates the principle of universality of service, which is sound,” wrote the Director, but “great latitude was given in the application of this principle.” Thus, the Selective Service was now “in a position where it [could] exercise leadership in the establishment of the ever-changing concepts of what constitutes essential service for survival.”⁷² Men had the responsibility to serve the nation, but in the environment of militarized peace engendered by the Cold War, when the push of a button could take the world from peace to war and plunge the United States into darkness, the form of that service had to be flexible. Congress had deemed it so. Where in 1950 Hershey had disagreed vehemently that a male citizens’ obligation to defend his nation could be fulfilled in any way other than through the military, by the end of the decade he had changed his stance, stating, “the concept that

⁷¹ Hershey, “Selective Service Obligations,” 37, 36.

⁷² Hershey, “Probabilities and Possibilities – 1957,” *Selective Service* 7 (Jan. 1957): 1-2.

‘duty’ is best exemplified by service in the Armed Forces” should “be interpreted...more broadly.”⁷³

By 1958, this shift in reasoning had coalesced into the policy of manpower channeling, which Hershey referred to as “the counterpart of procuring manpower for civilian activities.”⁷⁴ Channeling encouraged men to enter civilian fields deemed by the Selective Service to be in the national health, safety, or interest by offering them deferments. Such deferments were not seen by the system as “an exemption from...military obligations,” but rather as a sign that the man’s “civilian activities” were “of greater value to the national security than his services in the Armed Forces.”⁷⁵ The policy, therefore, was an admission on the part of the Selective Service, an agency directly tied to the military, that the responsibilities of masculine citizenship in the United States did not have to include military service.

By 1959, in the wake of the panic surrounding the 1957 Soviet launches of two *Sputnik* satellites, the Selective Service had defined channeling as one of its major functions, on par with military manpower procurement. According to Hershey, it was the Selective Service System’s responsibility as the only federal agency capable of cataloguing of the country’s “human resources” to “inventory or reappraise critically” the nation’s “educational, scientific, and technological activities.”⁷⁶ Such classification was vital, he felt, because it would allow the System to “select and deliver...persons of any

⁷³ Hershey, “Selective Service Obligations,” 36; Hershey, “Probabilities and Possibilities – 1957,” 27.

⁷⁴ See *Annual Report*, 1958, 51; *ibid.*, 1960, 25.

⁷⁵ Specialized Personnel and Military Service, Draft Paper, June 19, 1958, Committee on Specialized Personnel – Minutes, etc., box 71, Papers of the Planning Office, 1947-1963, Entry UD 24, RG 147, NARA [Hereafter Papers of the Planning Office].

⁷⁶ *Annual Report*, 1960, 25-26, 29.

class, type, skill, aptitude, or profession, degree of physical fitness, or other category,” regardless of the nature of the national emergency.⁷⁷

The agency shared its newly self-defined mission with other members of the Defense Establishment and civilian agencies. In 1959, the Selective Service received permission from the Assistant Secretary of Defense to pilot an Orientation Course in Washington, D.C. for any government employee who had a professional interest in the workings of the Selective Service.⁷⁸ The course, which was attended by approximately 150 military officers and civilian workers from the Departments of the Army, Air Force, Treasury, Commerce, and Labor and the Office of Civil and Defense Mobilization, was designed around the supposition that channeling was an indispensable function of the agency.⁷⁹ Along with sessions on “The Process of Registration,” and “The Various Classifications Used by the Selective Service System,” the proposed curriculum for the course included classes on “The Channeling of Registrants into Essential Civilian Activities” and “The Channeling of Registrants into the Reserve Forces.”⁸⁰

As part of the planning process for the Orientation Course, Colonel Joel D. Griffing, the Selective Service’s Chief Planning Officer sent a memo to Hershey’s assistant, Colonel Charles H. Grahl, explaining that the Selective Service System possessed “the capability to select” as well as the “power to compel.” It could “place

⁷⁷ “The Emergency Role of Selective Service,” n.d., attached to Joel D. Griffing to Col. Grahl, Dec. 16, 1959, Orientation Course, box 71, Papers of the Planning Office, RG 147, NARA.

⁷⁸ Charles Finucane to General Hershey, July 31, 1959, Orientation Course, box 71, Papers of the Planning Office, RG 147, NARA.

⁷⁹ “Defense, Civilian Officials Attend Sessions on Manpower Held at National Headquarters,” *Selective Service* 10 (Feb. 1960): 1-2.

⁸⁰ Charles H. Grahl to General Hershey, 14 January 1959, Orientation Course, box 71, Papers of the Planning Office, RG 147, NARA.

men” in supporting civilian roles, for the process of classification actually “indicate[d] the area civilian or military in which the individual [would] serve.”⁸¹ Grahl, whom Hershey had charged with planning the session on “The Emergency Role of Selective Service,” responded with an outline for his presentation.⁸² In it, he confirmed that the agency considered the placement of individuals, “whether it be in uniform or whether it be in the civilian area of the war effort, to be the overriding aim and purpose of its actions.” In fact, he claimed that it took “no great amount of insight into the philosophy and principles of manpower utilization to realize that attention to the proper placement of men in the civilian area is quite *as* important as the proper placement of men in the Armed Forces.”⁸³ What is striking about these words is that they were shared, not only with the 150 attendees of the pilot Orientation Course, but with participants in all of the follow-up sessions, which continued through and probably beyond 1965.

George Q. Flynn, Hershey’s biographer, suggests that the General developed the practice of manpower channeling as a rationalization to keep his agency alive during a period of reduced need, but this is an incomplete – and rather cynical – explanation. As policy historian James M. Gerhardt makes clear, virtually no one in Congress, the Department of Defense, or the Joint Chiefs of Staff seriously considered eliminating the draft during the Eisenhower or Kennedy years.⁸⁴ Defense planners believed that the threat

⁸¹ Joel D. Griffing to Col. Grahl, Dec. 16, 1959, Orientation Course box 71, Papers of the Planning Office, RG 147, NARA.

⁸² Lt. Colonel Rankin to Colonel Griffing, 11 December 1959, Orientation Course, box 71, Papers of the Planning Office, RG 147, NARA.

⁸³ The Emergency Role of Selective Service, n.d. attached to Joel D. Griffing to Col. Grahl, Dec. 16, 1959, Orientation Course, box 71, Papers of the Planning Office, RG 147, NARA. [emphasis in original]

⁸⁴ Flynn, *The Draft, 1940-1973*, (Lawrence, Kans.: University Press of Kansas, 1993), 209; Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 229.

of conscription motivated men to volunteer, and they pointed to the low enlistment rates of 1947, when the draft had been suspended, as their proof. Moreover, since the public appeared comfortable with the Selective Service, there was no impetus to overhaul or terminate the system through the 1950s and early 1960s.

Instead, channeling grew out of two sources. The first was pragmatic. The Selective Service expanded its existing deferment structure to accommodate the growing draft-age population and the nation's declining military manpower needs. By defining civilian activities as service to the nation and therefore as essential to national security, the Selective Service solved the problem created by the growing population of draft-eligible young men. Offering deferments to more men checked the expansion of the I-A (eligible) manpower pool, which in turn allowed the agency to apply more pressure to those who remained susceptible to the draft. The increased risk of induction among those men left as I-A spurred draft-motivated enlistments and ensured that a higher proportion of men designated as available would be conscripted. Secondly, the policy stemmed from Hershey's genuine commitment to a civic-republican definition of citizenship. He professed the idea that "freedom is a heady wine and can be drunk only when watered with a high percentage of acceptance of responsibility."⁸⁵ The Director of Selective Service was unwavering in his belief that all men had a "fundamental obligation" to serve their nation, especially in times of emergency. The Cold War, "the gravest threat to its existence" that the United States had "ever faced," certainly filled the bill in Hershey's estimation.⁸⁶ Since universal military service had been deemed unnecessary by Congress

⁸⁵ Hershey, "Rights of Citizens Spring from Duties Performed," *Selective Service* 12 (July 1962): 1.

⁸⁶ Hershey, "Selective Service Obligations," 32.

in 1951, Hershey was free to expand the definition of service. The effect of that expansion was not to strengthen men's commitment to national service in the name of defense, as Hershey might have hoped. Instead manpower channeling provided men with multiple ways to avoid military service, further separating military service from ideals of masculine citizenship.

* * * * *

The first target of channeling was the Reserve and National Guard. In mid-1955, at the same moment Hershey and the states halted the inductions of fathers, men older than 26, and scientists, Congress was deliberating the best way to procure manpower for the nation's military reserve programs, which ultimately increased the responsibilities of the Selective Service. New laws mandated additional deferments for men who entered Reserve programs designed especially for those with designated critical skills and those between the ages of seventeen and eighteen-and-a-half. Moreover, the agency was asked to classify certain Reservists so they could be properly mobilized in the event of war or national emergency.

Mobilization of the Reserves and National Guard for the Korean War exposed deficiencies in the structure and organization of the programs as they were then constituted. When North Korean soldiers invaded South Korea in June 1950, President Truman called up the National Guard and Reserves in order quickly to augment the Regular forces that were stationed in Japan and elsewhere around the world. Because individuals could be activated faster than organized units, however, the Reservists who were deployed first were frequently World War II veterans who had not chosen to fulfill their reserve obligations in organized training programs. They did not train regularly, did

not draw drill pay from the military, and frequently were married, had children, worked in essential occupations, or were past the age of eligibility for conscription, conditions that would have earned them deferments had the terms of their World War II service not left them vulnerable to call up. Second, the Army found that many of its personnel records had not been updated since 1945 and were therefore woefully unreliable. Men had moved, become physically disabled, died, and found new jobs since the end of World War II. Many reservists requested exemptions from service for hardship, dependency, or occupational reasons, but the Reserves and Guard could not grant the exemptions until the men reported for duty. Other men simply could not be found. The whole situation created a logistical nightmare. By the end of August 1950, 96,400 reservists and guardsmen had been recalled successfully, but their units were understrength by 50 to 75 percent. One signal battalion reported with only 23 of its 1,035 authorized personnel.⁸⁷ Finally, once Reservists and members of the National Guard arrived in Korea, their service record was mixed. National Guard members, who were not required to participate in any form of basic training, proved especially inexperienced. The inefficiencies and inequities of this system caused a firestorm of bad publicity.⁸⁸

In 1952, Congress and the Pentagon sought to correct these myriad problems through a complete overhaul of the Reserve and National Guard system. The resulting

⁸⁷ John Michael Kendall, "An Inflexible Response: United States Army Manpower Mobilization Policies, 1945-1957," (Ph.D. Diss.: Duke University, 1982), 183n1.

⁸⁸ For more on the mobilization of the Reserves and National Guard during the Korean War, see Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 162; Michael D. Doubler, *The National Guard and Reserve: A Reference Handbook* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger Security International, 2008), 33-34; Kendall, "An Inflexible Response," 180-183, 206-209.

Armed Forces Reserve Act of 1952 did several things.⁸⁹ First, it explicitly identified the seven components of the reserve forces. Two of them, the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard, were the equivalent of state militias and remained under the control of state governors unless federalized by an act of Congress or by the President, in which case they organized as the Army National Guard of the United States and the Air National Guard of the United States. The remaining five components – The Army Reserve, Air Force Reserve, Navy Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, and Coast Guard Reserve – were directly administered through the Pentagon. Under the 1952 law, all seven components would each contain three separate categories of service: the Ready Reserve, the Standby Reserve, and the Retired Reserve. Members of the Ready Reserve could be recalled to active duty immediately in a time of war. They could either be organized into units that trained regularly on weekends and in the summer and that would be deployed as a whole, or they could serve as individuals who did not train regularly and who could be assigned where needed. Members of the Standby Reserve were usually, though not always, inactive. They constituted a backup pool of manpower that did not train but that could be mobilized in an extreme emergency. Men with rare, specialized skills could also be mobilized from this Reserve, if needed. Finally, all career military men who drew retirement pay were placed in the Retired Reserve.

Second, the law established provisions outlining service obligations for those men who completed their active duty responsibilities. In short, it created an eight-year term of service for all service men, regardless of the method by which they entered the military. Those who enlisted for four years – the only option available in the Navy and Air Force –

⁸⁹ P.L. 82-476 was signed on July 9, 1952.

would accrue an additional four-years of duty in the reserves. Those who enlisted in the Army or Marine Corps for three- or four-year terms of service could complete their eight years in the Reserves or National Guard, and two-year draftees would have a six-year reserve obligation. Men would begin their reserve commitment in the Ready Reserve, but could transfer to the Standby Reserve after a combined total of five years of military service. In almost all cases, should mobilization be necessary, Ready Reservists were to be called before Standby or Retired Reservists.⁹⁰ To avoid the negative experiences of the Korean War, however, the law included provisions to protect veterans of previous wars.⁹¹

Such restructuring was designed to allow for a more orderly mobilization and deployment, should one be necessary, but it left open a number of questions. The 1952 law required the armed forces to keep their records up to date and physically examine every Reservist and Guardsman every four years to ensure that every man could be mobilized if necessary, but it did not prescribe a mechanism for classifying the men.⁹² Second, part of the purpose of the Act was to increase the flexibility of the military in an emergency by providing trained units as reinforcements, but the law did not contain enough incentive for men to join the organized components of the Reserves. Therefore, most Reservists did not drill regularly or receive extra training. Further, the vast

⁹⁰ Ready Reservists could be called up by Presidential Order. Standby Reservists could only be mobilized by an act of Congress or in a national emergency, and they could only be used to help train or expand the armed forces. Only members of the Ready Reserve could be used as an “immediately deployable strike force.” Kendall, “An Inflexible Response,” 246.

⁹¹ Veterans of World War II and the Korean War as well as men with over eight years of service in any reserve component could apply for immediate transfer into the Standby Reserve.

⁹² Kendall, “An Inflexible Response,” 248; Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 200-201.

majority were veterans, who were older, and as a result of the legislation, protected from mobilization if they had served during wartime. By 1955, therefore, it had become clear to defense planners that further legislation was needed in order to fix these problems and to find a way to entice or compel younger men, who were more likely to be deployable for a longer period of time, to join the reserves.⁹³

The Reserve Forces Act of 1955, which Eisenhower signed into law on August 9, addressed many of these issues and granted the Selective Service System new responsibilities.⁹⁴ For example, the legislation charged the president with the establishment of regulations that would allow the armed services to “provide a system of continuous screening of units and members.”⁹⁵ The job of classifying Standby reservists was soon assigned to the Selective Service. As the agency responsible for sorting and classifying those civilians eligible for the draft, it seemed natural that it could also catalogue the nation’s reservists.⁹⁶ Annual vetting and re-classification of Reservists

⁹³ The National Security Training Commission, the body charged with investigating the feasibility of adopting universal military training under the Universal Military Training and Service Act of 1951 first pointed this out in its 1953 report. It recommended UMT as the solution for building a trained reserve. Eisenhower turned its findings and those of a report from the Office of Defense Mobilization over to the Department of Defense for further study. Meanwhile, in 1955, the Ready Reserve was composed of 2.5 million men (1 million past its statutory limit), but only 700,000 drilled regularly and drew pay. Only 17 percent were younger than age 24. See Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 194-195; Kendall, “An Inflexible Response,” 261-262; House Committee on Armed Services, *Reserve Forces Legislation: A Legislative History of the Reserve Forces Act of 1955*, Hearings and Papers No. 82, 84th Cong., 2d sess., 1956, 7525, 7530-7531.

⁹⁴ P.L. 84-305.

⁹⁵ Text of the Reserve Forces Act of 1955, Public Law 305, 84th Congress, reprinted in House Committee on Armed Services, *Reserve Forces Legislation*, 7575.

⁹⁶ Eisenhower suggested the Selective Service adopt this role in his January 13, 1955, “Message on Military Security,” which outlined his plan for overhauling the Reserve system. Reprinted in in House Committee on Armed Services, *Reserve Forces Legislation*, 7523-7526; *Annual Report*, 1957, 62.

undeniably served a military function. It helped the Pentagon keep its rosters current. A situation like that which had occurred in 1950, when the reserve had existed largely on paper alone would not happen again. But the measure fulfilled other functions as well. It protected the families of Reservists in the same way that dependency deferments preserved particular domestic arrangements for civilian men. The military wanted to avoid creating “extreme personal or community hardship” by deploying individual men who could not afford to leave their families. Reservists who acquired significant debt to start new businesses or whose family arrangements changed as the result of illness or additional children could be moved from the Ready Reserve to the Standby Reserve and kept there at the discretion of local Selective Service boards. Standby Reservists, moreover, could not be recalled to service without being declared available by the Selective Service. Finally, the law also recognized the need to maintain a “proper balance of military skills” and “critical civilian skills” both in and out of the reserves.⁹⁷ If Reservists acquired skills deemed as in the national interest, especially in the fields of science or engineering, the law allowed these men to be transferred to the Standby Reserve. The Department of Defense believed that certain men could be of greater use as civilians, even in the event of a national emergency.

The Reserve Forces Act also authorized the creation of several new programs.⁹⁸ The first allowed men to enlist directly into the Reserves. Men who chose this option would still be responsible for the same total number of years of service – reduced from eight to six under different provisions of the law – as Regular soldiers in the Active

⁹⁷ Text of the Reserve Forces Act of 1955, Public Law 305, 84th Congress, reprinted in House Committee on Armed Services, *Reserve Forces Legislation*, 7575.

⁹⁸ For more information on these programs, see Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 203-206.

Forces, but they would be able to postpone their two years of required active duty for up to two years. This option required exactly the same service obligation as was asked of conscripts, but provided a measure of flexibility not offered to draftees. A second program offered men between the ages of seventeen and eighteen-and-one-half the ability to enlist for three to six months of active duty for training and then serve an additional seven-and-a-half years in the Ready Reserve of any reserve component other than the National Guard.⁹⁹ If volunteers satisfactorily fulfilled the terms of their contract, their

⁹⁹ The exclusion of the Army National Guard and Air National Guard from the final bill was the result of intense disagreements between civil rights advocate and Democratic Congressman Adam Clayton Powell of New York and southern lawmakers. The original intent of the reserve bill was to spur enlistment in all of the reserve components, including the National Guard. Slots in the Guard, however, were still not open to African-Americans across the South, a situation that would have discriminated against black men wishing to join the six-month program. On May 13, Powell introduced an amendment to the House version of the bill that would have prohibited the enlistment or transfer of any man into a National Guard unit that discriminated against African Americans. The amendment was approved by a vote of 126 to 87, but without the support of the bill's southern backers. Georgia Democrat and Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee Carl Vinson withdrew the bill. Legislators tried several times to find new ways to pass the same legislation, including attaching it to the bill that would extend the Universal Military Training and Service Act. All failed. Finally, in June, Eisenhower took to the airwaves, telling a radio and television audience that overhauling the reserves was too important to national security to fail. The President also met with Powell and sent Vice-President Richard Nixon to Harlem to apply pressure to Powell's constituents, but the congressman did not withdraw his amendment. Finally, Louisiana Democrat Overton Brooks introduced a compromise measure that omitted all mention of the National Guard. Vinson refused to allow Powell to amend this version, claiming that since the National Guard was not mentioned, Powell's amendment had no place. Powell protested, arguing that the new bill, in fact, amended the Armed Forces Reserve Act of 1952 and that without his amendment, it "offered an escape hatch for those boys who refuse to serve in a United States of America, democratic, integrated army." Nonetheless, the House passed the bill in early July. The Senate followed, and Eisenhower signed it into law at the end of the month, but not before verbally flaying Congress for failing to do its duty with regard the National Guard, which the President believed would suffer as a result of the final legislation. See "Compulsory Service Bill Near Death," *Los Angeles Times*, June 5, 1955; "Ike Flays Congress, Powell Flays Ike, Military Bill is OK'd," *Cleveland Call and Post*, Aug. 27, 1955; Gerhardt, *The Draft and*

draft liability would be lifted at the completion of those eight years. If not, they would be removed from the program and face the possibility of conscription until age 28. The National Guard, which had always allowed men to enlist at age seventeen, was authorized to grant similar deferment benefits if recruits younger than 18.5 volunteered for three to six months of basic training. Finally, the law sanctioned the creation of a Critical Skills Reserve, designed to harness the expertise of scientists and engineers.¹⁰⁰ Any man whose job qualified as a critical occupation or essential activity based on the lists published by the Departments of Labor and Commerce in 1955 could apply for six months of basic training followed by eight years in the Standby Reserve, with no further drilling requirement. All of these options were designed to benefit the Reserves by lowering the average age of members, which, in theory, would increase force readiness. But the enticements these programs offered to potential recruits took the form of draft deferments and reduced expectations for active duty. Such lures minimized the

Public Policy, 201-202. Quote in "Ike's Military Reserves Bill Passes House," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 2, 1955.

¹⁰⁰ Eisenhower established the Critical Skills Reserve with E.O. 10650 on January 6, 1956. It was designed to allow a small number – approximately 2,000 – men with critical science and engineering occupations to undergo military training and then remain safely in the Standby Reserve unless needed in the event of a national emergency. It became the subject of significant controversy within the Defense Establishment, as the branches of service saw it as a waste of their resources and proposed a special order of call for scientists instead, interests within the science and engineering community strongly supported the Critical Skills Reserve, and Hershey continued to insist that occupational deferments were enough of a protection for scientific personnel. The Critical Skills Reserve program stopped enlisting new members in fiscal 1963. See Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 208-209; *Annual Report*, 1963, 24; Stephen S. Jackson to General Hershey, June 10, 1960, 314.1 Gen., 1962-1961-1960, box 67, Central Files, RG 147, NARA; E.L. Keenan to J.F.C. Hyde, Jr., December 4, 1959, 314.1 Gen., 1959-1958-1957, *ibid*; Statement of Policy, Engineering Manpower Commission, Engineers Joint Council, November 1959, attached to Roy Wheelock to Col. E.D. Ingold, November 2, 1959, *ibid*;

importance of participation in the armed forces, even as literature from the Selective Service and armed forces emphasized military service as an obligation.

The six-month program aimed at seventeen- and eighteen-year olds started slowly. The services encountered difficulties filling their quotas. In late 1955, the Army had enrolled only 4,500 recruits for its 8,000 slots. All of the services fell well short of their goal, a combined total of 100,000 men per year, despite a media blitz that included close to 66,000 radio spots, 5,500 special radio programs, over 20,000 television advertisements, 800 special television shows, and more than 7,000 recruitment talks to over 709,000 people from the Army alone. Print ads and articles also ran in *Boy's Life*, *Scholastic Roto*, *Parade*, *Life*, *U.S. News and World Report* and the Boy Scout's *Explorer Quarterly*.¹⁰¹ Recruiters blamed the poor showing on a lagging information campaign. Graduating high school students simply were not yet aware of the new program, officials assured the public. In Washington, D.C. for example, some high schools had refused to allow recruiters access to students, and in others, principals granted Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force personnel a mere fifteen minutes to make a combined pitch for all of their programs. Many teenagers, however, when asked, recognized that the age of induction hovered around age 22 and still preferred to take their chances with the draft.¹⁰² Still others joined the National Guard, which did not require any active-duty training time. They recognized military service as a legal obligation of their citizenship, but did not feel it necessary to voluntarily seek a means of fulfilling that responsibility.

¹⁰¹ National Security Training Commission, *Annual Report to the Congress* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1956), 21-22, 31-32. See pp. 20-41 for the full scope of recruitment efforts from all branches of service.

¹⁰² Norris, "Answer to Lagging Reserve Program is 3-Fold," *Washington Post*, Dec. 5, 1955.

Hershey complained bitterly about the Reserve program's detractors, including the teens who ignored their obligations. He hoped the situation could be turned around once men realized the import of their decisions. "It can be predicted with certainty," he explained, "that equity will tend to reduce the length of the service requirement in the Ready Reserve rather than place the obligations for service in it upon a smaller percentage of our young men."¹⁰³ In other words, if more men chose to fulfill their responsibility to the military, the overall time-requirement for each man eventually would be lowered. Results from a Gallup opinion poll commissioned by the Pentagon seemed to bear out Hershey's admonition. It found that three-quarters of men between the ages of sixteen and twenty thought that military service, whether active duty or with the Reserves, was "something to do if [they] must and get it over with." Forty percent claimed that if they had to serve, they were "going to get it over as quickly as possible and get out."¹⁰⁴ Recruitment efforts that emphasized a kinder, friendlier military fell flat in an environment where it was still possible to escape military service altogether.¹⁰⁵ Subsequent manpower policies would *strengthen* rather than *reduce* this already existing ambivalence to military service among many American men.

¹⁰³ Hershey, "Public Reaction to Settle Fate of Reserve Program," *Selective Service* 6 (Feb. 1956): 1-2.

¹⁰⁴ "Military in Poor Favor, Poll Shows," *Los Angeles Times*, Jan. 1, 1956.

¹⁰⁵ The *Hartford Courant* of Connecticut, for example, reported on a Parade of Youth Forum Panel designed to encourage men to enter the six-month reserve program that ran on the morning of Saturday, December 3, 1955 on WKNB-TV. In it, Captain William B. Lange of Hartford's Army Reserve Advisory Group claimed that the Army no longer depended "on the old first sergeant who was the best fighter in the outfit. Discipline is more psychological today," he explained, "For instance, a man would probably be confined to quarters. There's no rough stuff anymore." See "Army 'Tough Guy' Thing of Past, Youth Forum Told," *Hartford Courant*, Dec. 4, 1955.

By 1957, the Department of Defense and Selective Service were looking for different ways to entice men to join the Reserves and fulfill their military obligation. Hershey proposed changes to the six-month program meant to attract men otherwise ill-disposed to military service. He suggested reducing the period of active-duty training from six months to the Congressionally-mandated minimum of three months and “drastically” reducing the seven-and-a-half-year reserve commitment.¹⁰⁶ Opinion polls showed that of those men who did enlist in the six-month program, close to one quarter did so in order to “curtail their active duty military obligations.”¹⁰⁷ Further limits might lead to more volunteers.

The Pentagon agreed with Hershey. In March, the Department of the Army announced modifications to its Reserve plan. The six-month program was opened to any man under the age of 26 who had not yet been called for induction, and the number of years of service the program required was reduced. Men under the age of eighteen-and-a-half would remain in the Ready Reserve for four-and-a-half years, which was later reduced to three years, after which they would be transferred to the Standby Reserve. Men older than 18.5 would spend six years drilling with the Ready Reserve.

Additionally, the Army National Guard would henceforth be required to provide six months of active-duty training to all of its members.¹⁰⁸ This issue had become

¹⁰⁶ Norris, “Is Birth Rate Making Draft a Clumsy Injustice,” *Washington Post*, Jan. 6, 1957.

¹⁰⁷ Approximately one quarter enlisted in the belief that training would help them find jobs in the future and one quarter to get special training. Other reasons given included school plans, patriotic motives, and reasons not listed. “Reservists Like 6-Month Program,” *Selective Service* 6 (April 1956): 1, 4.

¹⁰⁸ The Army National Guard agreed to the six-month training requirement only after a series of meetings between its representatives, personnel from the Army Reserve, and Representative Overton Brooks to hammer out an agreement. Under the agreement’s

particularly salient as certain Guard units defied orders and continued to advertise their lack of active-duty training as an enticement to potential recruits. Battery “A” of the 128th Field Artillery in St. Louis, Missouri, for example, handed out leaflets entitled, “Are You ‘Draft’ Bait?” The handout, which garnered the attention of Hershey and of Assistant Secretary of Defense Burgess, screamed in capital letters that men could be “DEFERRED FROM INDUCTION” without meeting a “stiff selective service college deferment test.” In fact, enlistment would mean that a man could “forget Selective Service entirely,” an important perk since, as the leaflet warned men, “Your draft board has until age 25 years, 11 months, and 29 days to draft you. Do you think you will escape it?”¹⁰⁹ Recruitment literature such as this and the National Guard’s reluctance to encourage men to take advantage of the provision of the 1955 Reserve Forces Act that allowed for voluntary basic training prompted Secretary of Defense Charles E. Wilson to call the Guard “a draft-dodging business.”¹¹⁰ The notion that military service could be minimized was a potent idea that attracted young men and, in the Pentagon’s estimation, interfered with recruitment for the six-month program, which, ironically, had also been designed to minimize active-duty service.

terms, men under the age of 18.5 who enlisted in the National Guard before January 1, 1958 would be required only to train for eleven weeks. After that, six months would be the mandatory standard. See Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 208 and U.S. House of Representatives, *Extended the Special Enlistment Programs Provided by Section 262 of the Armed Forces Reserve Act of 1952, As Amended*, Rpt. No. 84, 86th Cong., 1st sess., Feb. 1959, 3.

¹⁰⁹ “Are You ‘Draft’ Bait, n.d. attached to Louis H. Renfrow to Ellard A. Walsh, June 21, 1956, 314-1 General, 1956-1954, box 67, Central Files, RG 147, NARA [emphasis in the original].

¹¹⁰ “Draft Dodgers?” *Democratic Digest*, March 1957, 6; Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 207-208.

The Army compelled the National Guard to bring its training standards in line with the other reserve components and to stop publicly deriding the draft. But the promise of a deferment from induction into the Regular Army combined with military service that did not disrupt men's civilian lives proved ample temptation. Results of the new regulations were overwhelming. By August, the Army had to suspend enlistments into the Army Reserve after men flooded recruiting stations. The other branches of service soon did the same, prompting Democratic representative Overton Brooks of Louisiana to exclaim, "We are in harvest season and can't pick the melons."¹¹¹ So many men either enlisted directly in the Reserves or transferred into the Ready Reserve after completing their Regular enlistments that the Army could not handle them all. Rather than requiring weekly drills, as the law demanded, many Army Reservists trained only for 30 days during the summer. But within a year, the numbers had increased so rapidly that many men were only called for training every other year. In 1959, the Ready Reserves consisted of 2.5 million men, but less than 1 million drilled regularly with their units.¹¹²

By channeling men into special programs, then, the military more than met its Ready Reserve manpower requirements while the Selective Service significantly shrank the pool of men who were available for induction. Where there were 300,000 men deferred from induction into the active-duty forces as reservists and ROTC trainees in

¹¹¹ House Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee No. 1, *Review of the Reserve Program*, Hearings and Papers No. 35, 85th Cong., 1st sess., 1957, 1409, as quoted in Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 209.

¹¹² House Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee No. 3, *Consideration of H.R. 3368, A Bill to Extend the Special Enlistment Programs Provided by Section 262 of the Armed Forces Reserve Act of 1952, as Amended*, Hearings and Papers, No. 7, 86th Cong., 1st sess., 1959, 419, as quoted in Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 210.

mid-1955, the number had expanded to 518,000 by mid-1958 and to 849,000 by mid-1961. It was over 1 million by 1965. Gerhardt estimates, therefore, that the reserve programs pulled almost 550,000 men out of the I-A (available) category by the late 1950s, and this number continued to grow.¹¹³ The Army, as Assistant Secretary Milton testified in 1959, was thrilled. “There is no doubt in my mind,” he enthused, “that the Reserve components of the Army have attained the highest degree of mobilization readiness, deployment availability and combat potential in history.”¹¹⁴

These programs brought men into military service, but it was a limited form of service. Evidence indicates that men joined the Reserves to avoid active-duty service, and they were comfortable with this. When President Kennedy mobilized 148,000 reservists in 1961 in response to the worsening situation in Berlin, negative reaction from those who were called up was widespread and public.¹¹⁵ Drafts boards were swamped with reservists wanting to report that they had married, become parents, or acquired more dependents.¹¹⁶ Partially in response to the protest Kennedy garnered, President Johnson chose not to mobilize the Reserves or National Guard when he escalated the Vietnam War in 1965. During that conflict, the Reserve and National Guard were criticized as draft havens, with government reports claiming that between 70 and 75 percent of Reserve enlistments and up to 90 percent of enlistments in the National Guard were draft-

¹¹³ Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 230, 266.

¹¹⁴ As quoted in House of Representatives, *Extended the Special Enlistment Programs Provided by Section 262 of the Armed Forces Reserve Act of 1952, As Amended*, Rpt. No. 84, 86th Cong., 1st sess., Feb. 1959, 5.

¹¹⁵ Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 255; Beth Bailey, *America's Army: Making the All-Volunteer Force* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 2009), 15.

¹¹⁶ See, for example, “Inquiries on Draft Status Swamp Selective Service,” *Washington Post*, July 27, 1961; Uncle Dudley, “To Active Duty,” *Boston Globe*, Oct. 2, 1961; “Questions and Answers on Caught in the Draft are Numerous,” *Chicago Daily Defender*, Aug. 31, 1961.

motivated.¹¹⁷ Waiting lists for the coveted slots in Reserve and Guard units were long. By the end of 1968, the Army National Guard's waiting list numbered over 100,000.¹¹⁸

Without question, Johnson's decision to withhold mobilization of the reserves exacerbated the problem, but the reserves had been re-organized in 1955 partially in order to channel men away from active duty and conscription. Service in the various components was marketed as means for men to fulfill an obligation for military service while avoiding disruption their civilian lives, preventing the discomforts of active-duty service, and ultimately avoiding combat. As *Selective Service* reported in 1956, a man's service in the reserves, "free of worries from his draft board" was "about as easy as required military service" could be.¹¹⁹ Men who enlisted in the reserves during the Vietnam War, therefore, had a decade's worth of tradition on which to fall back as they sought methods to avoid placing themselves in harm's way.

* * * * *

The Selective Service identified men's occupational choices as a second area that was prime for channeling. As argued in chapter two, the Defense establishment had

¹¹⁷ The Gates Commission report, commissioned in 1969 to examine the feasibility of shifting to an All-Volunteer Force, found "perhaps 75 percent of the enlisted personnel fulfilling their initial six-year military service obligation in the reserves are there only because of the draft. See Thomas S. Gates, *The Report of the President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1970), 97, as quoted in Bernard Rostker, *I Want You! The Evolution of the All-Volunteer Force* (Arlington, Va.: RAND Corporation, 2006), 85. According to scholars Laurence M. Baskir and William A. Strauss, a 1966 Pentagon Study put the number at 71 percent. Moreover, in 1970, James Cantwell, the President of the National Guard Association claimed that nearly 90 percent of enlistments in the Guard were draft-motivated. See Baskir and Strauss, *Chance and Circumstance: The Draft, the War, and the Vietnam Generation* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 51.

¹¹⁸ Baskir and Strauss, *Chance and Circumstance*, 51.

¹¹⁹ "Army's New Reserve Program," *Selective Service* 6 (June 1956): 4, reprinted from *The Portsmouth [NH] Herald*, April 27, 1956.

identified science and engineering as fields of great importance to national security after World War II and instituted the student deferment during the Korean War to encourage men to enter them. In the decade after the Korean armistice, the availability of student and occupational deferments expanded significantly, partially as a way to shrink the pool of I-A men and partially to encourage men to enter fields believed to be in the national interest. Both of these rationales helped support the national security state.

Throughout the 1950s, the perception that the U.S. lacked scientists and engineers and was therefore in danger of falling behind the Soviets continued as a topic of national discussion.¹²⁰ In 1955, an interdepartmental committee, chaired by Arthur Flemming, the Director of the Office of Defense Mobilization, recommended the creation of a President's Committee on Science and Engineers based on the understanding that "the struggle for military supremacy" was "being waged" in the fields of science and technology.¹²¹ Eisenhower constituted such a committee in April 1956 for the purpose of "increasing the supply and improving the quality of [America's] technological personnel" and to "assist the Federal Government in identifying the problems associated with the development of more highly qualified scientists and engineers."¹²² The committee, composed entirely of men from private industry, was to make recommendations on how public awareness of science could be heightened and how schools' science curricula

¹²⁰ See Aaron L. Friedberg, "Science, the Cold War, and the American State," *Diplomatic History* 20, no. 1 (1996): 107-118.

¹²¹ President's Committee on Scientists and Engineers, *Final Report to the President*, December 1958, Final Report to the President, box 35, President's Committee on Scientists and Engineers Records, 1956-58, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, Abilene, Kansas [hereafter DDE].

¹²² First Interim Report of the National Committee for the Development of Scientists and Engineers, n.d., First Interim Report to the President, box 35, President's Committee on Scientists and Engineers Records, 1956-58, DDE

could be improved.¹²³ Members, under the leadership of Howard Bevis, the former president of Ohio State University, undertook the objective of raising “public action through public awareness.” The Committee sponsored “utilization clinics” for educators and businesses throughout the country, encouraged local initiatives, helped organize National Science Youth Month to promote scientific interest in school children, worked with members’ personal contacts to encourage publicity relating to scientific endeavors, and even suggested that the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences offer a special Oscar award for “films which contribute most to an acceptance of science and scientific achievement.”¹²⁴ It also recommended the creation of a President’s Science Advisory Committee to “coordinat[e] and stimulat[e] the nation’s efforts in the development and utilization of highly trained manpower” by developing policy, coordinating federal programs related to science, and liaising with private industry.¹²⁵ Eisenhower listened and, in the wake of *Sputnik*’s launch in October 1957, upgraded a pre-existing Science Advisory Committee in the Office of Defense Mobilization to the level of an executive office.¹²⁶

¹²³ President’s Committee on Scientists and Engineers, *Second Interrim Report to the President*, October 4, 1957, Second Interrim Report to the President, box 35, President’s Committee on Scientists and Engineers Records, 1956-58, DDE.

¹²⁴ President’s Committee on Scientists and Engineers, The United States Program of Public Education on the Shortage of Scientists & Engineers, September 18, 1957, Public Relations, box 35, President’s Committee on Scientists and Engineers Records, 1956-58, DDE. Quote, p. 6; Press Release, March 31, 1957, Donnelley – Committee Clippings, box 36, President’s Committee on Scientists and Engineers, 1956-58, DDE.

¹²⁵ President’s Committee on Scientists and Engineers, *Final Report to the President*, December 1958, Final Report to the President, box 35, President’s Committee on Scientists and Engineers Records, 1956-58, DDE.

¹²⁶ Eisenhower announced the creation of the President’s Science Advisory Committee on November 27, 1957. See Zuoyue Wang, *In Sputnik’s Shadow: The*

The Soviet launch of two *Sputnik* satellites in late 1957 gave new life to Americans' fears of being overtaken by their communist rival. Prominent policymakers likened the Soviet achievement to Pearl Harbor, blasting the United States out of its "intellectual complacency." Physicist Edward Teller, the "father of the hydrogen bomb," claimed, "It is as if we had just lost a major battle."¹²⁷ *Life* magazine ran several articles on why the United States lost the space race and warning of the Soviet's "timetable to disaster" if the United States did not change its priorities.¹²⁸ Worries over America's educational system and its potential for scientific advancement abounded. A 1955 book by Rudolph Flesch called *Why Johnny Can't Read – And What You Can Do About It* "suddenly became a smash best-seller," and a rash of other titles soon appeared.¹²⁹ Admiral Hyman Rickover, who oversaw nuclear research and development for the Navy, exhorted the nation to use the shock of *Sputnik* to marshal itself to "perform educational miracles," just as it had used Japan's attack in 1941 to mobilize military and industrial miracles. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles hoped the "wave of mortification, anger, and fresh determination," caused by the launch would inspire the "efforts and sacrifices

President's Science Advisory Committee and Cold War America (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 82.

¹²⁷ Josephine Ripley, "The Challenge in the Classroom: An Intimate Message from Washington," *Christian Science Monitor*, Nov. 27, 1957.

¹²⁸ See for example, C.C. Furness, "Why Did the U.S. Lose the Race? Critics Speak Up," *Life*, Oct. 21, 1957, 22-23; "U.S. Tries Hard to Catch Up," *Life*, Nov. 4, 1957; Robert Wallace, "All Russian Science," *Life*, Dec. 16, 1957, 109-122, 113. Quote from George R. Price, "Arguing the Case for Being Panicky," *Life*, Nov. 18, 1957, 126.

¹²⁹ David Halberstam, *The Fifties* (New York: Villard Books, 1993), 626. See also, for example, Hyman Rickover, *Education and Freedom* (New York: Dutton, 1959); David C. Greenwood, *Solving the Scientist Shortage* (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1958); Grant S. McClellan, *America's Educational Needs* (New York: H.W. Wilson Co., 1958); M. Sheynin Yu, "Two Worlds – Two Paths in Development of Schools and Education," *Russian Education and Society* 1 (April 1959): 57-65.

needed to win” the Cold War.¹³⁰ A poll of American citizens by the Opinion Research Corporation found that the public believed “the country’s prime concerns [were] 1) catching the Russians in the defense race, and 2) training more and better scientists.” Prior to the launch of the two satellites, top worries had been inflation, staying out of war, and racial segregation.¹³¹ The Eisenhower Administration responded to the immediate threat by redoubling efforts to advance America’s space program, but deemed long-term solutions to the nation’s perceived “education gap” as more important.

By the time of the first *Sputnik* launch, the apparent deficiencies of the American educational system already were on the national agenda. They had been the subject of Congressional hearings in 1956 and were a major topic of discussion for the President’s Committee on Science and Engineering.¹³² In the spring of 1957, the President had assured the National Education Association that “our schools are strongpoints in our National Defense...more important than Nike batteries, more necessary than our radar warning nets, and more powerful even than the energy of the atom.”¹³³ Proponents of school reform, including President Truman, had long advocated federal aid to schools, especially for the construction of new facilities, but for the most part they had been

¹³⁰ Ripley, “The Challenge in the Classroom;” “Text of Speech by Secretary Dulles,” *Washington Post*, January 17, 1958, as quoted in Barbara Barksdale Clowse, *Brainpower for the Cold War: The Sputnik Crisis and National Defense Education Act of 1958* (Wesport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1981), 9.

¹³¹ Paul O’Neil, “U.S. Change of Mind,” *Life*, March 3, 1958, 92.

¹³² Subcommittee on Research and Development, Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, *Shortage of Scientific and Engineering Manpower: Hearings before the Subcommittee on Research and Development of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy*, 84th Cong., 2d sess., April-May, 1956.

¹³³ Dwight Eisenhower, “Address at the National Education Association Centennial,” *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*, Dwight D. Eisenhower (Washington, D.C.: Office of the *Federal Register*, National Archives and Records Service, 1953-), 265, as quoted in Clowse, *Brainpower for the Cold War*, 27.

thwarted, caught on the issues of states rights, segregation in southern schools, and the separation of church and state, as Catholic parochial schools demanded support as well.

As a result, federal educational aid had been limited to grants to individuals. The G.I. Bill provided educational benefits to veterans, while the National Science Foundation awarded scholarships and fellowships to exceptional undergraduates and graduate students studying scientific subjects. It also sponsored summer institutes for high school teachers and college instructors, a traveling libraries program, and a traveling science demonstration program for high schools.¹³⁴ But these efforts were severely limited. The launch of the *Sputnik* satellites gave educational reformers and Eisenhower, who had grave misgivings about general federal aid to schools, the opportunity to tie national security to a limited bill designed specifically to aid science education. The result was the National Defense Education Act of 1958, which, among other things, awarded loans and National Defense Fellowships to undergraduates and graduate students studying scientific subjects. It also appropriated funds to states to update equipment for secondary science and language labs and to encourage math and science education.¹³⁵ By 1964, 600,000 college and university students majoring in the fields of mathematics, science, engineering, and modern foreign languages had received loans totaling over \$404 million from the federal government under its provisions.¹³⁶

¹³⁴ For example, the NSF sponsored a Life Sciences Institute at West Virginia University in 1960 for “promising lads.” See O.J. Burger to Science Teachers, West Virginia High Schools, March 11, 1960, folder 64(2), box 418, General File, Eisenhower Central File, DDE; David C. Greenwood, *Solving the Scientist Shortage* (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1958), 22.

¹³⁵ Eisenhower signed P.L. 85-864 on September 2, 1958. For a summary of the law’s major provisions, see Clowse, *Brainpower for the Cold War*, 162-167.

¹³⁶ Fact Sheet on the 1964 Amendments to the National Defense Education Act, October 16, 1964, attached to Legislative Notes, Office of Education, U.S. Department of

The Selective Service took an active interest in the discourse analyzing the relationship between science and national defense, especially since the feeling of heightened need for scientists and science teachers coincided with the agency's development of manpower channeling. That the agency would be responsible for deferring the surge of resultant college students was only the tip of the iceberg. In 1955, Hershey reconstituted the National Selective Service Scientific Advisory Group only two years after dissolving the Scientific Advisory Committee on Specialized Personnel. State Directors began creating similar boards of scientific advisers on the state level as well. These groups were charged with offering advice to local and appeal boards on scientific matters, especially as they evaluated applications for occupational deferments. Members of the national and state Scientific Advisory Committees were expected to help the laymen in local communities translate technical jargon to determine if a man's job really was essential.

Deferments for scientists and potential scientists took on greater importance in such a climate. In 1955, the Departments of Commerce and Labor revised their lists of essential activities and critical occupations, which the Selective Service used to establish criteria for occupational deferments. Local boards generally would not grant an occupational deferment if a man or his employer could not demonstrate that the man was engaged in a job defined as critical or essential. The new lists were shorter than those compiled in 1951. The inventory of essential activities dropped from 25 categories to

Health, Education, and Welfare, October 19, 1964, National Defense Education Act, Box 1, entry UD-UP 3, RG 235, Records of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, NARA.

eleven, for example, as many production jobs were eliminated.¹³⁷ A sense of panic amongst those seeking deferments ensued.¹³⁸ Hershey, however, admitted that although certain occupations were no longer vital, deferments nonetheless would “have to be more liberal” because the military did not need as many men. “Whether they’re in the deferred classifications or in I-A will probably be a matter of method rather than results,” he wrote to Michigan’s state director.¹³⁹ In other words, men would continue to gain occupational deferments as a result of local boards’ leniency, even if their jobs could not be found on the lists of the Departments of Labor or Commerce. Moreover, after much discussion, secondary school teachers of math and physical and biological sciences were added to the list of critical occupations and “educational services” to the list of essential activities.¹⁴⁰

These changes, rather than limiting the number of occupational deferments, opened the door to their expansion. The number of men deferred for jobs in science and engineering grew significantly as more sought degrees in these fields. According to the National Science Foundation (NSF), where 89,452 undergraduates earned bachelors degrees in these fields in 1951, 103,653 did in 1962.¹⁴¹ The numbers of masters and

¹³⁷ “List of Essential Activities,” Appendix 12, *Annual Report*, 1955, 87.

¹³⁸ See, for example, “Slash Draft Exemptions: Farmers Now Eligible,” *Detroit Times*, March 2, 1955.

¹³⁹ Lewis B. Hershey to Colonel Holmes, March 8, 1955, 127 General Mich, 1963-1955, box 47, Central Files, RG 147, NARA.

¹⁴⁰ Memo re: Meeting No. 28, Committee on Specialized Personnel, August 17, 1954, Committee on Specialized Personnel – Minutes, etc., box 71, Papers of the Planning Office, RG 147, NARA; *Annual Report*, 1955, 86-87. The War Manpower Commission began compiling lists of essential activities and critical occupations in 1942, and the task was handed over to the Departments of Commerce and Labor after World War II.

¹⁴¹ National Science Foundation, *Comparisons of Earned Degrees Awarded, 1901-1962: With Projections to 2000*, NSF-64 (Washington, D.C.: NSF, 1964), 10. Available at <http://babel.hathitrust.org>.

doctoral degrees similarly grew.¹⁴² While the NSF admitted, “attainment of a degree in a given field is not concomitant with continuance of work in that field,” the agency also pointed out that a man’s educational background and training were “significant determinants of eventual vocational activity.”¹⁴³ It attributed most of the gains to population growth and the rapid expansion of science programs on college campuses.¹⁴⁴ But population growth alone does not account for the rapid rise in occupational deferments across the same time period, which increased almost 650 percent between 1955 and 1963.¹⁴⁵ Instead, the national headquarters of Selective Service, instructed local boards “to minimize the induction of any registrant in these categories to the point where the induction of any individual in these fields will be the exception rather than the rule.” Local boards, therefore, became more lenient. Between October 31, 1956 and December 31, 1957, the number of men deferred in Class II-A (non-agricultural deferments) jumped from 27,317 to 34,284, a percentage increase that far exceeded either the growth rate of the draft-age cohort or that of college-educated men during the same time period.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴² 13,285 Masters Degrees in science and engineering were awarded in 1951, and 17,605 were conferred in 1962. 4,136 doctoral degrees in these fields were conferred in 1951, and 6,092 were in 1962. Ibid., 20, 30

¹⁴³ Ibid., 1.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 2.

¹⁴⁵ 15,586 men received II-A deferments in fiscal 1955 and 112,000 received II-A deferments in fiscal 1962 (See *Annual Report, 1955*, 22; *ibid.*, 1963; 11); Dee Ingold to the Director and attachments, February 13, 1958, 105 Advisory Committee (Ala-Wyoming), 1963-48, box 34 and Memo, re: Amendments to Selective Service Regulations, November 16, 1962, 110 General, 1963-1955, box 35, both in Central Files, RG 147, NARA.

¹⁴⁶ William S. Perry [Lt. Col. AGC] to Colonel Bossidy, February 3, 1958, Committee on Specialized Personnel – Minutes, etc., box 71, Papers of the Planning Office, RG 147, NARA.

The case of teachers further illustrates this point. Men and women together earned 71,518 bachelors degrees in education in 1951 and 106,359 in 1962.¹⁴⁷ Part of this increase is, no doubt, because of population growth and the growth of college campuses, but these were also years of teacher shortages, which meant publicity and the incentive of a growing job market most likely attracted others into the field. But the growing number of occupational deferments granted to teachers cannot be explained by the simple existence of more teachers. According to a June 1955 Operations Bulletin from the Selective Service, secondary teachers of math and science were eligible for deferments based on the Department of Labor's list of critical occupations. Therefore, national headquarters recommended that local boards give male teachers of these subjects "special consideration" when determining deferments. By 1958, however, the agency had "broadened informally" its policy of deferring only educators in these subjects and began to include others as well. Hershey publicized the national teacher shortage regularly, and "fostered by this and other means a policy of liberality in considering teachers for deferment." Moreover, according to Bernard T. Franck, III, the Chief of the Selective Service System's Office of Legislation, Liaison, and Public Information, it was the "practice of National Headquarters" to recommend either postponement of induction or deferment for educators "in practically all teaching fields."¹⁴⁸ In 1960, the agency officially rescinded the 1955 bulletin, noting that teachers in all fields were in demand, even if their specialties did not qualify them as critical according to the Department of

¹⁴⁷ National Science Foundation, *Comparisons of Earned Degrees Awarded*, 13.

¹⁴⁸ Bernard T. Franck III to Charles A Quattlebaum, January 15, 1958, 321 Deferments 1963-1954, box 70, Central Files, RG 147, NARA.

Labor. Local Boards were told that they should forego “any implication that teachers in specified fields should receive special consideration.”¹⁴⁹

By the early 1960s, local board members were invited to be as liberal as they wished in the granting of occupational and student deferments. In 1962, the Departments of Labor and Commerce revised their lists of critical occupations and essential activities again, adding categories for those working in “Missile and Space Systems” and language education. National Headquarters disseminated the lists to the State Directors in a memo reminding them, “Deferments shall not be limited to registrants engaged in the listed activities or occupations.”¹⁵⁰ Understandably, this vague policy perplexed local boards, which, for the most part tried to apply the standard of “in the national health, safety, or interest” to their deliberations over occupational deferments. But ultimately, as noted above, they deferred more men. One chairman of a local board explained to a new member that the process of deferring was “sort of like an accordion. Sometimes you stretch it out and get generous with deferments and then other times you squeeze it up tight.”¹⁵¹ During the first half of the 1960s, the accordion was stretched all the way out.

Criteria for student deferments, first implemented in 1951, were similarly relaxed. As the age of induction had risen during the later half of the 1950s, fewer and fewer college men applied for these deferments. Most male students preferred to take their chances with the draft rather than pushing their age of liability to 35 by applying for special consideration. This reduction prompted Hershey to limit the administration of the

¹⁴⁹ “1955 Teacher Deferment Bulletin is Rescinded,” *Selective Service* 10 (July 1960): 2.

¹⁵⁰ “New Occupation, Activity Lists Issue to Boards for Reference,” *Selective Service* 12 (Nov. 1962): 1.

¹⁵¹ Wamsley, “Selective Service and American Political Culture,” 242-249. Quote, p. 245. See also Davis and Dolbeare, “Little Groups of Neighbors,” 79-88.

Selective Service College Qualification Test (SSCQT) in 1958 to just one sitting per year. In 1962, President Kennedy signed an executive order altering regulations governing the II-S (student) category.¹⁵² Local boards were invited to consider registrants' classification status without holding students to a particular class standing or score on the SSCQT. Selective Service personnel were welcome to consider these factors in determining a registrant's classification, but as long as students could demonstrate that they were "satisfactorily pursuing a course of instruction," they were no longer necessary.¹⁵³ The SSCQT was eliminated entirely during the 1963-64 academic year due to lack of interest. With the relaxed standards, more students chose to take advantage of the student deferment, despite the high average age of induction. The number of students receiving a II-S classification was nine times larger in 1965 than it had been in 1961.¹⁵⁴

Finally, the Selective Service lent rhetorical support to the Peace Corps, defining it as a program that served the national interest. Although Hershey was not willing to go so far as to accept service in the Peace Corps as the equivalent of military service and therefore worthy of exemption from the draft, his agency helped Peace Corps members obtain deferments on occupational grounds.¹⁵⁵ When, for example, one man's local board turned down his request for a deferment so that he could volunteer in Ghana, officials at the Selective Service System's national headquarters recommended a complete rewrite of the man's application letter. Rather than simply ask for the deferment, the Selective

¹⁵² Kennedy signed Executive Order 10984 on January 5, 1962.

¹⁵³ "II-S Criteria Deleted from Regulations," *Selective Service* 12 (Feb. 1962): 1; "Simplified, Flexible System of Reporting on Status of Student Registrations Adopted," *Selective Service* 13 (May 1963): 3.

¹⁵⁴ Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 270.

¹⁵⁵ See Lewis B. Hershey to Dean Bowman, February 21, 1961, 321 Deferments 1963-1954, box 70, Central Files, RG 147, NARA; Bernard T. Franck III to George H. Link, June 7, 1961, 321 General Occup. Def. Ala-Maine, box 71, Central Files, *ibid*.

Service suggested that all requests highlight the Peace Corps as a “civilian activit[y]...necessary to the maintenance of the national health, safety, or interest.”¹⁵⁶ Men were free to pyramid Peace Corps deferments with marriage, fatherhood, and other student or occupational deferments if they wished. The Selective Service wanted Kennedy to know that the system would “offer...its full cooperation in the launching and operation” of the new initiative.¹⁵⁷

It is impossible to know exactly how many men entered privileged fields in education, science, or engineering because of Selective Service policies. Certainly, the agency believed it played a major role. *Selective Service* crowed, “Selective Service law, regulation and policy...contribute heavily to the Nation’s need for teachers and adequately trained citizens.”¹⁵⁸ Franck explained, “By its liberal deferment policies of teachers, the Selective Service undoubtedly has influenced men to remain in teaching positions rather than to transfer to some more lucrative calling thereby losing opportunities for deferment.”¹⁵⁹ In his 1961 *Annual Report* to Congress, Hershey noted, “Many younger engineers, scientists, technicians and other skilled workers would not remain in their jobs in the defense effort if they did not have occupational deferments.”¹⁶⁰ Anecdotal evidence confirms that the offer of a deferment did affect at least some men’s choices. For example, twelve of nineteen scientists and engineers profiled in a small

¹⁵⁶ Memo: Peace Corps, July 21, 1961, 321 Deferments 1963-1954, box 70, Central Files, 1948-69, RG 147, NARA.

¹⁵⁷ Selective Service Quarterly Report, October-December 1960, attached to Lewis B. Hershey to Leo A Hoegh, December 21, 1960, 100 General, 1961-60, box 29, Central Files, RG 147, NARA.

¹⁵⁸ “Data Disclose U.S. Student, Teacher Status,” *Selective Service* 8 (April 1958): 3.

¹⁵⁹ Bernard T. Franck III to Charles A Quattlebaum, January 15, 1958, 321 Deferments 1963-1954, box 70, Central Files, RG 147, NARA.

¹⁶⁰ *Annual Report*, 1961, 11.

study of men working in the weapons industry in 1967 were young enough to have been affected by the Selective Service's policy. Of these, two openly admitted to choosing their jobs, which they had held since before the war in Vietnam escalated, in order to receive a deferment. The reasons the other nine chose their professions were not discussed, leaving open the possibility that more were channeled into their jobs as well.¹⁶¹

Regardless of the number of men who actively chose their professions in order to avoid military service, the increased availability of occupational deferments is significant. First, it illustrates the spread of militarization in American society during the Cold War. Legislation like the NDEA defined education at all levels as an arm of national defense, but it was deferments in the name of national security that militarized the teaching profession. Deferments for teachers – like those for scientists and engineers – were rationalized as a weapon against Soviet dominance and defined as a civic contribution equivalent to military service.¹⁶² Secondly, occupational deferments allowed an increasing number of men to avoid participation in the armed forces. Whether they internalized their jobs as contributing to the safety of the nation or not, they neither donned uniforms nor drilled with weapons. Their lives remained comfortably civilian.

¹⁶¹ See Jeffrey M. Schevitz, *The Weaponsmakers: Personal and Professional Crisis During the Vietnam War* (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman Publishing Company, 1979), esp. 75, 84. "Russ" and "Pete" both admit to being channeled. Russ knew as early as high school that he did not want to be drafted. He explained that he would have rather traveled after college, but went straight into defense work instead.

¹⁶² In 1959, John C. Esty, Jr., an associate Dean at Amherst College, made this connection explicit in an article in the *Nation*. He argued that the teacher shortage and the fact that so many men were escaping the draft could be solved at the same time by conscripting men into the teaching profession through the Selective Service. See John C. Esty, Jr., "The Draft Dilemma: A Way Out," *Nation*, March 14, 1959, 223-226.

However they chose to define their obligations as citizens or their responsibilities as men, military service was not part of the process.

* * * * *

While the Selective Service overtly admitted it channeled men into particular occupational fields, its policies implicitly affected men's domestic arrangements. Whether explicitly stated or not, as during the Korean War, deferments encouraged early marriage and fatherhood. This practice further privileged civilian pursuits and unintentionally helped define men's domestic arrangements as service to the state.

Historian Robert Westbrook has argued that media during World War II encouraged men to join the military and risk their lives because it was their moral responsibility to protect their loved ones. Advertisements for companies from the American Red Cross to Dixie-Vortex, which manufactured Dixie cups, capitalized on the same formula as Norman Rockwell – the uniqueness of the American home was worth protecting. Wives and children needed to be saved from the evils of fascism and totalitarianism, a feat that could best be accomplished in uniform.¹⁶³ In the post-World War II years, civil defense and military manpower policies sent a different message. Men continued to have a moral obligation to protect their women and children, but they could more effectively accomplish this goal as civilians rather than as soldiers.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ Robert B. Westbrook, *Why We Fought: Forging American Obligations in World War II* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 2004), especially ch. 2.

¹⁶⁴ Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988); Laura McEnaney, *Civil Defense Begins at Home: Militarization Meets Everyday Life in the 1950s* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); Guy Oakes, *The Imaginary War: Civil Defense and American Cold War Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

As discussed in chapter two, Eisenhower signed an executive order ending deferments for fathers in 1953, just as the Korean War was ending. Married men had lost similar protections from the draft as part of the 1951 revisions to the Selective Service Act of 1948. Marriage and fatherhood remained a social value of extreme importance, however. Fathers had only lost their privileged status because of the combination of high manpower needs, low numbers of available men, and criticism of privileged youth pyramiding their deferments into exemptions. But as manpower requirements eased and demographic factors changed, it once again worked to the military's and Selective Service's advantage to exclude fathers from the draft.

In 1956, Eisenhower issued an executive order changing the sequence of induction so that all eligible non-fathers between the ages of 19 and 26 would be called before any otherwise eligible fathers.¹⁶⁵ Technically, fathers were not deferred. They remained in the I-A pool, and were therefore considered eligible to be drafted. With that pool growing ever larger, however, this move all but guaranteed that fathers would not face conscription except in the event of all-out war. In essence, therefore, the president created a de facto exemption for all men with children. From a military standpoint, the new regulation provided the military with "somewhat younger inductees," since the Selective Service called the oldest available men first, and removing fathers from the draft pool tended to push the average age of available men downward. Moreover, the military would not have to pay as many family allotments if fewer of its personnel had families. But Hershey also claimed that the order was "designed to strengthen the

¹⁶⁵ Eisenhower signed Executive Order 10659 on February 15, 1956.

Nation's civilian economy.”¹⁶⁶ Whether he believed fathers were more likely to remain in stable jobs than non-fathers, enhance the purchasing power of their family units, or strengthen the economy in some other way, he did not elaborate.

The measure garnered very little press attention.¹⁶⁷ Wartime fears over the pyramiding of deferments had abated, allowing the federal government once again to define the maintenance of the nuclear family as more important to the containment of communism than widespread military service. “Family life” was added to “industry” and “agriculture” as sectors to which the Selective Service owed “essential support...as related to the country's defense posture.”¹⁶⁸ It is impossible to draw a clear causal relationship between Eisenhower's order and the American birth rate, but according to the 1957 *Annual Report of the Director of Selective Service*, the number of fathers in the I-A category more than doubled between fiscal 1956 and 1957, increasing at an average rate of 18,200 per month.¹⁶⁹ Whether intended or not, this policy may well have channeled men into fatherhood.

By the latter portion of John F. Kennedy's presidency, the Selective Service had so many qualified men that it actively sought methods to justify their removal from the pool of eligibles.¹⁷⁰ On March 15, 1963 Kennedy signed an executive order returning

¹⁶⁶ *Annual Report*, 1956, 28.

¹⁶⁷ Only one article appeared in the *New York Times*, for example, and it ran without commentary. See “Younger Men Placed First in Revised Rules for Draft,” *New York Times*, Feb. 17, 1956.

¹⁶⁸ *Annual Report*, 1957, 3.

¹⁶⁹ The Selective Service's fiscal year ran from July 1 to June 30, so fiscal 1957 ended on June 30, 1957, almost 17 months after the executive order. In absolute numbers, the number of I-A fathers increased from approximately 151,000 in FY 1956 to 369,712 in FY 1957 (*Ibid.*, 1957, 26).

¹⁷⁰ The pool of liable men, defined as the number of living registrants minus veterans was expected to jump to 18,674,578 by January 1, 1965, from 14,253,290 on

fathers to the III-A (dependency) category, where they had been until 1953.¹⁷¹ This action restored official deferments to men with children and eliminated at least 336,446 men from the I-A manpower pool.¹⁷² Ostensibly, Kennedy acted in order to “produce a pool...more realistic as a potential source of military manpower,” since the I-A category was artificially inflated by the inclusion of fathers who, if examined further, would ultimately be excluded from induction for reasons of hardship.¹⁷³ But the ruling made no distinction between those families that faced genuine privation and those that did not. In actuality, therefore, moving all fathers to the dependency category projected a cultural assumption that all families were economically and emotionally dependent on a male head-of-household and sent the message that married men should not be required to perform military service. They were already performing valuable service to their country as fathers.

Hershey and Kennedy continued to look for ways to reduce the number of men liable to the draft. In response to an August 1963 inquiry from Kennedy, Hershey reported that the number of men available for induction could be reduced by one-fifth if the president modified the order of call so that all eligible single men would be drafted before any married men without children.¹⁷⁴ The Selective Service’s General Counsel had

March 31, 1961. See Memo: Liable Registrants, Age 18 to 35, May 16, 1961, 311-General Military Service (I-A), box 63, Central Files, RG 147, NARA.

¹⁷¹ Executive Order 11098

¹⁷² While exact figures are not available, the Selective Service estimated that a significant proportion of the 124,508 I-A men with extended liability to age 35 would also be moved to class III-A. See *Annual Report*, 1963, 13.

¹⁷³ “Many Fathers Move into III-A from Class I-A,” *Selective Service* 9 (Dec. 1959): 2.

¹⁷⁴ Memorandum for Director Selective Service, August 19, 1963, JFKPOF-087-008, President’s Office Files, Presidential Papers, Papers of John F. Kennedy,

already ruled that limiting the liability of this group would violate the Universal Military Training and Service Act of 1951, since the law specifically removed the President's authority to defer married men without children. Associate General Counsel Gilbert Winter wrote, "the placing of these married nonfathers in a separate lower sequence of selection would have the same effect" as a deferment, except that "it would be more permanent" since "under present conditions they would never be reached for selection." In essence, the action would therefore "actually afford them a prohibited deferment."¹⁷⁵ Nevertheless, Kennedy complied with Hershey's request.¹⁷⁶

Once more, the stated rationale for the new executive order was to lower the average age of induction, since married men tended to be older than single men, but its subtext was that married men were more important to the nation as civilians than as soldiers; single men could more easily be pulled out of civilian life without disrupting society.¹⁷⁷ Young men got the message. A 1966 Department of Defense study found that marriage rates jumped considerably among young men in the age brackets most vulnerable to the draft in the months following the change in regulation. Marriage rates were 7.5 and 10.9 percent higher for 20- and 21-year-olds, respectively, between October 1963 and June 1964 than they had been during the previous two years. Marriage rates for

<http://www.jfklibrary.org/Asset-Viewer/Archives/JFKPOF-087-008.aspx>; Enclosure, Lewis B. Hershey to the President, August 30, 1963, *ibid.*

¹⁷⁵ Gilbert H. Winter to Colonel Higgins, July 17, 1963, 311-General Military Service (I-A), box 63, Central Files, RG 147, NARA.

¹⁷⁶ Kennedy signed Executive Order 11119 on September 10, 1963.

¹⁷⁷ Bernard T. Franck, III, to Colonel Traver, November 15, 1963, 314 General, box 64, Central Files, RG 147, NARA.

all other age groups remained static.¹⁷⁸ When President Johnson rescinded Kennedy's order in August 1965, couples rushed to marry before their marriages would no longer protect husbands.¹⁷⁹ Again, the Selective Service's own policies undoubtedly channeled at least some of these men into early marriages, thus privileging domestic masculinity in the name of national defense.

* * * * *

The policy of manpower channeling was not without its critics, even before draft calls rose in 1965. Some academics and politicians had begun remarking on the inequities of the system during the first part of the decade, a message that also trickled down to individual citizens who saw those inequalities in their own communities. In 1963, for example, the members of Local Board 56 in Findlay, Ohio wrote a letter of protest to Hershey, complaining of the Selective Service System's liberal and "undemocratic" policies that forced them to perpetuate "rank injustice" and "class injustice" as they granted "blanket deferments for students, teachers, etc." As a result, they saw themselves as "automatons," unable to make independent decisions.¹⁸⁰ They enclosed an editorial from the *Toledo Blade* that espoused similar opinions.¹⁸¹ The

¹⁷⁸ Appendix 1, House Armed Services Committee, *Review of the Administration and Operation of the Selective Service System: Hearings Before the Armed Services Committee of the House of Representatives*, 89th Cong., 2d sess., June 1966, 10014.

¹⁷⁹ "Many Seek to Beat Deadline," *New York Times*, Aug. 27, 1965; "Draft Dodging: Is It Growing?" *Christian Science Monitor*, Sept. 1, 1965;

¹⁸⁰ Orill L. Alward, Leo C. Friend, and Tell Thompson to General Hershey, January 16 1963, attached to Daniel O. Omer to Gentlemen, February 5, 1963, 300 – Classification—New Hampshire-Wyo. 1963-1948, box 61, Central Files, RG 147, NARA.

¹⁸¹ "Playing the Odds," *Toledo Blade*, Nov. 24, 1962.

Indianapolis Star had made similar claims a full five years earlier.¹⁸² But these objections were remarkably few and far between.

The Selective Service made no secret of its social and civil defense goals through the late 1950s and 1960s. Hershey spoke and wrote openly of the social engineering function of manpower channeling in meetings, articles, letters, and testimony before Congress for close to a decade before the heightened draft calls of the Vietnam War made the practice controversial on a broad scale. Media outlets were aware of the practice. The *Indianapolis Star* complained in 1958, “Selective Service is not a method of channeling all, or even half of our young men into the service of their country. It is merely a device for making a random selection of the relatively small number of men to be conscripted.”¹⁸³ That same year, the *Washington Post* covered a speech Hershey delivered at an event honoring the District of Columbia’s local board members in which he openly discussed channeling.¹⁸⁴ Certainly all those who attended the Selective Service’s Orientation program between 1960 and 1965 were aware of it. In 1963, an anti-military flyer circulating in New York City also used the term.¹⁸⁵ Yet these examples were exceptions. Despite Hershey’s outspokenness, most reporters did not find the policy important enough to report on it. Channeling, as a practice, did not register with most Americans until the Vietnam War brought the inequities of the system more visibly to the fore.

¹⁸² “Manpower for Defense I,” *Indianapolis Star*, Nov. 10, 1958, 14, in 020 Gen., 1963-1948, box 27, Central Files, RG 147, NARA.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ “Draft Seen to Guide Science, Teaching,” *Washington Post*, April 23, 1958.

¹⁸⁵ How to Beat the Draft, n.d., attached to Paul Akst to Daniel Omer, April 8, 1963, 127 General N.Y. City, 1963-1956, box 49, Central Files, RG 147, NARA.

In January 1967, Peter Henig of the Ann Arbor, Michigan chapter of Students for a Democratic Society wrote a scathing article on channeling in the organization's newsletter, *New Left Notes*.¹⁸⁶ In it, he quoted widely from a 1965 Selective Service memo that originally had been included in information kits put out for high school guidance counselors and other interested parties.¹⁸⁷ In it, the agency denied compelling people "by edict...to enter pursuits having to do with essentiality and progress," but it acknowledged using "pressure" as the "indirect way of achieving what [was] done by direction in foreign countries." Rather, the Selective Service used the "club of induction" to "drive" individuals "out of areas considered to be less important to the areas of greater importance in which deferments were given."¹⁸⁸

The memo's words sparked outrage among anti-war activists from the political Left, who, unsurprisingly, used them as an example of state-sponsored elitism and military imperialism. Activist Michael Ferber, founder of the Boston-based Resistance and one of the Boston Five arrested for anti-draft activity, labeled the practice "a kind of indirect totalitarianism" and wrote that it provided members of his organization with the resolve "to oppose not only the draft but the system of coercion it serve[d]."¹⁸⁹ But many from the political Right were horrified as well. To conservatives, the practice infringed on individuals' liberty and sounded too much like communist interventionism. Conservative economist and professor at the University of Chicago Milton Friedman

¹⁸⁶ Peter Henig, "On the Manpower Channelers," *New Left Notes*, Jan. 20, 1967: 1, 4-5; Michael S. Foley, *Confronting the War Machine: Draft Resistance during the Vietnam War* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 61.

¹⁸⁷ "Selective Service Softens Policy of Channeling," *Washington Post*, Dec. 14, 1967.

¹⁸⁸ Selective Service System, "Channeling." Quotes, pp. 3, 6, 8.

¹⁸⁹ Michael K. Ferber, "The Resistance," *Boston Globe*, Aug. 18, 1968.

became one of the draft's greatest foes. He argued that conscription was "used as weapon...to discourage freedom of speech, assembly, and protest," and that "a voluntary army would permit young men...to plan their schooling, their careers, their marriages, and their families in accordance with their own long-run interests" rather than allowing the fear of conscription to guide these choices.¹⁹⁰ In hearings before the House Armed Services Committee in May 1967, Pennsylvania Republican Richard Schweiker and Wisconsin Democrat Robert Kastenmeier both used channeling and the inequities it exemplified to argue for a complete overhaul of the law governing the draft.¹⁹¹ Once criteria for deferments were tightened, however, protest against military service increased. Most men had become comfortable with deferments and did not want to see them rescinded.

Activists' and politicians' anger at the high-handedness of channeling added fuel to the fire of Americans' discontent with the federal government and the draft. As historians from David Cortright to Beth Bailey have argued, the anti-military sentiment engendered by the specific circumstances of the Vietnam War was a major reason the Department of Defense shifted from conscription to an All-Volunteer Force in 1973.¹⁹² But channeling, as both a pragmatic solution to the growing pool of available men and an ideological means to ensure more men served their country in the spirit of civic-

¹⁹⁰ Milton Friedman, "Why Not a Voluntary Army?" 201, 202, in *The Draft: A Handbook of Facts and Alternatives*, ed. by Sol Tax (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967).

¹⁹¹ House Armed Services Committee, *Extension of the Universal Military Training and Service Act*, 90th Cong., 1st sess., May 1967, 2024, 2030. Schweiker went on to serve as Ronald Reagan's vice-presidential running-mate in the 1976 election and then as the Secretary of Health and Human Services in Reagan's cabinet from 1981-83. Kastenmeier was a sixteen-term member of Congress.

¹⁹² David Cortright, *Soldiers in Revolt: G.I. Resistance during the Vietnam War*, revised edition (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2005); Bailey, *America's Army*.

republicanism, already had helped devalue military service even before the United States deployed ground troops to Indo-China. This policy simultaneously militarized civilian pursuits and privileged domestic masculinity at the expense of military service.

Chapter Four
**“The Most Important Human Salvage Operation in the History of Our Country”:
The Military Establishment and the War on Poverty,
1961-1969**

When newly sworn-in President John F. Kennedy delivered his inaugural address to the nation on January 20, 1961, he reminded his fellow citizens of their proud heritage of freedom and their responsibility to support democratic movements abroad. “The torch has been passed to a new generation,” Kennedy admonished – a generation “unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this nation has always been committed...at home and around the world.” Protecting human rights, however, would require a show of national strength, including a strong defense establishment. Weakness, Kennedy believed, would beget war, for, in his words, “only when our arms are sufficient beyond doubt can we be certain beyond doubt that they will never be employed.” “We shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty,” he assured the American citizenry.¹

But national strength came from many sources. Over the course of Kennedy’s presidency, the fear that the United States was somehow falling behind the Soviet Union accelerated. What had started with the successful Soviet test of an atomic bomb in 1949 and gained momentum with the launch of the *Sputnik* satellites in 1957 expanded beyond the military and engineering sectors in the early 1960s. Government officials and the public alike started to focus on the problem of poverty amidst American affluence.

¹ John F. Kennedy, “Inaugural Address,” January 20, 1961, available at *The American Presidency Project*, University of California, Santa Barbara, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=8032>.

Policy makers turned to social scientists for responses to the problem of poverty, and together, members of these groups began to untangle the threads of unemployment, poor education, lack of health care, powerlessness, racism, and hopelessness that seemed to trap nearly one fifth of all Americans in a seemingly permanent underclass.²

The Kennedy administration addressed these issues tentatively as part of its New Frontier. Lyndon Johnson continued the fight when he launched a full-scale War on Poverty as part of his Great Society initiative. Liberal supporters of these programs believed it was America's moral responsibility to guarantee its citizens equal economic opportunity, but they also supported these initiatives as a way to reinvigorate America's sense of national greatness. The strength required to remain an international beacon of freedom, to maintain American preeminence, and to win the Cold War depended on healthy citizens and a vital economy.

Between 1961 and 1969, agencies and departments throughout the federal structure – both on the national and the state level – conducted studies and piloted programs designed to alleviate the suffering of individuals, train and retrain the un- and underemployed for a modern job market, create new jobs, diminish discrimination, provide healthcare to those without it, and empower the powerless. The passage of the Economic Opportunity Act in 1964, which created the Office of Economic Opportunity

² In 1964, according to the Report of the President's Council of Economic Advisors, about 13 percent of all American families and 17 percent of American citizens lived below the poverty line. Where that line was located, however, was a subject of some discussion throughout the 1960s, as it depended on the size of the family as well as how much the members of the family earned. See Robert H. Haveman, "Introduction: Poverty and Social Policy in the 1960s and 1970s – an Overview and Some Speculations," 4, in *A Decade of Federal Antipoverty Programs: Achievements, Failures, and Lessons*, ed. Havemann (New York: Academic Press, 1977); Charles Brecher, *The Impact of Federal Antipoverty Policies* (New York: Praeger Press, 1973), 19-24; John A. Andrew III, *Lyndon Johnson and the Great Society* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1998), 57.

to spearhead many of these initiatives, was the high point of the effort. But the Departments of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW); Labor; Agriculture; Commerce; and – perhaps surprisingly – Defense all had their roles to play as well.

This chapter examines how military manpower policy was used as weapon in the War on Poverty, which I define broadly to include its origins in the Kennedy administration. Programs, both voluntary and compulsory, conducted through the Selective Service and the Department of Defense, were designed to identify and rehabilitate young men who could not pass their mental or physical pre-induction and induction exams. Since these men overwhelmingly hailed from the lowest echelons of society, planners hoped that remedial education, health care, and job skills training would allow them to break the cycle of poverty that kept them – and their families – from contributing as American citizens in ways the policy community defined as meaningful. Rehabilitation programs run with the help of the Selective Service and Armed Forces Examining Stations (AFES) aimed to fit men for future civilian or military service, while Project 100,000, a measure instituted by Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, attempted to provide low-aptitude soldiers, sailors, and marines with skills they could use after their enlistments ended.

Taken together, these programs indicated a shift in how the defense establishment reflected national values. As the broader policy community turned its attention toward strengthening the nation's economy and alleviating poverty, so too did defense planners. Their initiatives were similar to the universal military training proposals of the previous generation in that they were designed to enhance the overall health and productivity of American men. Unlike the push for UMT, however, the programs of the 1960s did not

call for universal service across social classes. Instead, they explicitly targeted victims of poverty, especially minority men. Moreover, their goal was to provide poor men with the healthcare and skills they would need to get and hold good jobs in their civilian lives. New initiatives were to help these men achieve full economic citizenship outside of the military. Earlier proposals for UMT had touted vocational training as one benefit of military service, but had not isolated it as the main purpose of such training. The programs of the 1960s, therefore, exclusively focused on helping marginalized men conform to a civilian breadwinner ideal in a way that earlier proposals had not.

This chapter argues that these programs contributed to the reframing of national service in two ways. First, rehabilitation programs run through the Selective Service and AFES as well as Project 100,000 emphasized economic productivity as male citizens' main responsibility to the nation. Only the barest lip service was paid to the civic republican obligations of military service. The rhetoric of universal obligation to serve was all but dropped as these programs zeroed in on poor and minority men. Middle-class men were free to pursue other paths toward economic citizenship in the name of national service without remedial help provided through the induction system and by the military. Secondly, and relatedly, the strong connection these programs made between poverty and military service provided another justification for middle-class men to avoid donning a uniform. The policy of granting deferments for college education and occupations that required post-secondary degrees combined with publicity linking the armed forces with poor and minority men added one more layer of removal between military service and citizenship obligations for middle-class men. Ultimately, these policies further separated military service from the obligations of masculine citizenship in the United States.

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Military manpower policy has been linked to Americans' physical and economic well-being since at least the end of the nineteenth century. The "closing" of the frontier, the simplification of the tasks performed by working-class men as a result of mechanization, and the sedentary, office-based lifestyles of middle- and upper-class men caused intellectuals great worry by the 1890s.³ Politicians and other public figures – most notably Theodore Roosevelt – advocated "the strenuous life" as a remedy to the neuroaesthesia and softness that seemed to plague American men. As scholar Gail Bederman has argued, "Ideologies of manliness were...similar to – and frequently linked with – ideologies of civilization." If America was to evolve as a world power, reasoned intellectuals of the era, then its male population needed to perfect itself.⁴ Historian Kristen Hoganson demonstrated that such concerns were one of the major causes of American involvement in the Spanish-American War, as military service was seen by many as a way to reinvigorate the country's manhood.⁵

³ See, for example, T.J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981); David Axeen, "'Heroes of the Engine Room': American 'Civilization' and the War with Spain," *American Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (Autumn, 1984): 481-502; E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1993), ch. 10; Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* (New York: Free Press, 1996), ch. 4; Martin Summers, *Manliness and its Discontents: The Black Middle Class and the Transformation of Masculinity, 1900-1930* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 251-253.

⁴ Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995). Quote. p. 27.

⁵ Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1998).

World War I appeared to confirm fears that the U.S. was becoming a nation of weaklings, as 34 percent of men were rejected from military service for physical incapacity alone.⁶ It also marked the beginning of the military establishment's concern with the quality of American manpower, as the draft forced the armed forces to integrate large numbers of poor farmers, urban workers, and immigrants into their operations. The discovery that seven percent of conscripts could not speak English and 25 percent were illiterate in all languages fueled new calls for programs to "Americanize" immigrants and legislation to restrict immigration.⁷

During World War II, federal concern over military rejection rates – and the state of male bodies – climbed. The military rejected just over one third of all volunteers and draftees examined between November 1940 and August 1945.⁸ The Selective Service struggled to settle on standards stringent enough to meet the military's need for capable men but that were sufficiently lenient to fill the armed forces' manpower quotas. By the

⁶ J. Howard Beard, "Physical Rejection for Military Service: Some Problems in Reconstruction," *Scientific Monthly* 9, no. 1 (July 1919): 5.

⁷ John Whiteclay Chambers, II., *To Raise an Army: The Draft Comes to Modern America* (New York: Free Press, 1987), 251. During World War I, the military turned to intelligence testing as a way to quickly classify men for officer training and determine the proper placement for draftees. By the end of the war, 200,000 men per month were being administered either the Alpha test for literate men or the Beta test for men who could not read or write in English. Both tests, although purported to measure "native intelligence," rather than educational attainment, required significant American cultural knowledge. Poorly-educated, minority, and foreign-born men performed significantly worse on these exams than well-educated, white, native-born men. See Daniel J. Kevles, "Testing the Army's Intelligence: Psychologists and the Military in World War I," *Journal of American History* 55, no. 3 (Dec. 1968): 565-581. Quote, p. 576.

⁸ Between November 1940 and August 1945, 35.8 percent of all men examined – or approximately 6.5 million men – were rejected for military service. During the first year, before standards were lower, the rejection rate was 52.8 percent. See Christina S. Jarvis, *The Male Body at War: American Masculinity during World War II* (DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 2004), 19, 61-63.

end of the war, mental standards had been lowered so far as to admit men who were functionally illiterate.⁹

Officials in the Selective Service, especially Colonel Leonard Rowntree, the agency's medical director, viewed many of the maladies keeping men from fulfilling their obligation to serve in the military as remediable. Men with certain dental problems, vision defects, hernias, sexually transmitted diseases, and who were either over- or under-weight could benefit from basic medical help, he reasoned. During the first part of World War II, the agency considered several ideas for voluntary and compulsory rehabilitation programs, including partnerships with the Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Youth Administration to bulk up underweight men.¹⁰ Most of these proposals never came to much, especially because they relied on the voluntary participation of young men who may or may not have had access to local medical care. The Selective Service

⁹ At the beginning of World War II, the Army accepted men whose test scores put them at roughly the equivalent of a fourth grade education, but beginning in August 1942, a quota system was implemented so that up to ten percent of new accessions could be illiterate. See James M. Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy: Issues in Military Manpower Procurement, 1945-1970* (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1971), 46-47; Janice H. Laurence and Peter F. Ramsberger, *Low-Aptitude Men in the Military: Who Profits? Who Pays?* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1991), 20. The term "mental standards" is somewhat misleading. It is the phraseology used by the Selective Service, which classified men as IV-F if they did not meet "physical, mental, or moral" qualifications. However, while this encompassed men who were mentally disabled, it also referred to men who did not meet educational standards or did not score highly enough on aptitude tests.

¹⁰ For more information, see Rachel Louise Moran, "Body Politic: Government and Physique in Twentieth-Century America," (Ph.D. Diss.: Pennsylvania State University, 2013), ch. 5. It should be noted that the Civilian Conservation Corps also operated in partnership with the U.S. Army, which was responsible for operating and staffing its work camps. See Michael W. Sherraden, "Military Participation in a Youth Employment Program: The Civilian Conservation Corps," *Armed Forces and Society* 7, no. 2 (Winter 1980): 227-245.

abandoned its own pilot programs for a large-scale, national rehabilitation program in 1942, deeming the job too large.¹¹

The Selective Service did, however, continue to pursue relationships with other federal and local agencies in its quest to create voluntary rehabilitation programs.¹² When Congress established the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation within the Federal Security Agency in 1943, the Selective Service sought out a partnership with the new unit. Along with state vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation helped men find state- and federally-funded medical care in their local communities. The agreement reached between the Selective Service and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation led to procedures whereby the Selective Service furnished the names of rejectees to state rehabilitation agencies “so that eligible individuals might be prepared for employment in critical industries.”¹³ State directors, moreover, were instructed to liaise with state VR agencies. Local board offices were to be supplied with instructional literature on the VR services available in their states.¹⁴ While the program was beset by troubles, including massive backlogs of names and rejectees’ failure to

¹¹ Richard H. Hanes to James A. Crabtree, March 2, 1949, 002 National Security Resources Board, 1948-63, box 21, Central Files, 1948-1969, RG 147, Records of the Selective Service, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland [hereafter, RG 147, NARA]; “Former Rehabilitation Programs Recalled in Which Selective Service Played a Role,” *Selective Service* 14, no. 8 (Aug. 1964): 4.

¹² See, for example, Betty Birmingham Moorehead, “The Work of a Family Welfare Agency in Investigations for Selective Service Boards Where Deferment is Requested because of Family Problems” (M.S.S.S. Thesis: Boston University School of Social Work, 1944).

¹³ Cooperative Relationship Memorandum No. 9 (Revised), February 18, 1949, attached to Phyllis W. Francis to Richard H. Eanes, July 11, 1958, 002 National Security Resources Board, 1948-63, box 21, Central Files, 1948-1969, RG 147, NARA.

¹⁴ State Director Advice No. 73, February 9, 1949, attached to *ibid.*

follow up on services, the relationship between the two agencies lasted in some form until 1961.¹⁵

Moreover, as argued in chapter one, proposals for universal military training were, at least in part, a response to perceptions that American men had grown soft. Common training, according to some of the plan's proponents, would enhance national security by strengthening the nation's male populace. Physical activity combined with military training would ensure men's ability to mobilize quickly and effectively against any foe, should the need arise. UMT's secondary benefits, including remedial healthcare and vocational training, would also guarantee that all men had the means to contribute to America's growing post-war economy. Trained individuals, equipped with healthy bodies and the occupational skills necessary in a modern, mechanized economy, would strengthen the civic foundation of the United States.

The military establishment, therefore, was firmly connected to programs – both proposed and realized – designed to enhance the welfare of individuals and the nation through the first half of the twentieth century.¹⁶ The armed forces were vitally concerned with the quality of the men who would fill their ranks. Potential soldiers required good physical health, educational ability, and an understanding of national values in order to

¹⁵ The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation was moved to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare when the new cabinet position was created in 1953. Cooperative Relationship Memorandum No. 9 (Revised), February 18, 1949, attached to *ibid.*; Dear General Hershey, December 2, 1963, attached to memo card, Miss Switzer to Mr. Nestingen, 12-3-63, Selective Service Rejectees, Box 2, entry UD-UP 3, RG 235, Records of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare [Hereafter RG 235], NARA.

¹⁶ Moreover, military service in the U.S. has been connected to other types of welfare programs since the Revolution. Service earned veterans certain benefits, including pensions for themselves and their families, medical care, and housing. This project, however, is concerned with the benefits connected with the ability to serve and does not directly address veterans' benefits. For more, see introduction.

succeed in modern warfare. Ideally, the thinking went, these qualities should be nurtured from childhood, but this was not always possible in the diverse, growing population of the twentieth-century United States. The federal government, including the military, needed to step in to build strong, dedicated, focused men, who could take the lessons they learned in the military back into their communities after discharge. So, when federal initiatives turned toward strengthening the nation's populace and alleviating poverty in the 1960s or in the postwar period, it seemed natural that the defense establishment would have a part to play.

* * * * *

The end of the Korean War brought anxiety over national strength into sharper focus. Even though, by most measures, the United States was doing remarkably well – unemployment was relatively low, the economy had grown overwhelmingly since the end of World War II, standards of living for most Americans continued to rise, and the U.S. was an undisputed world power – fear remained.¹⁷ The United States had just lost its first war. Up to one-third of men registered with the Selective Service had not qualified for

¹⁷ The economy grew at a staggering pace in the 15 years after World War II. For example, the gross national product increased by 56 percent between 1947 and 1960, growing from \$282.3 billion to \$439.9 billion. Similarly, personal consumption increased from \$195.6 billion to \$298.1 billion between 1947 and 1960. Over four million jobs were created between the same years, growing from 60,168,000 jobs in 1947 to 64,520,000 in 1960. However there were periodic recessions and the percentage of unemployed grew from 3.9 percent in 1947 to 5.7 percent in 1960. See Robert M. Collins, "Growth Liberalism in the Sixties," 13, in *The Sixties: From Memory to History*, ed. David Farber (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1994); Gladys Roth Kremen, "MDTA: The Origins of the Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962," Department of Labor, <http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/history/mono-mdtatext.htm>.

military service.¹⁸ A handful of American prisoners of war refused repatriation after the armistice, leading to worry that Americans were mentally weak.¹⁹ The Soviet Union appeared on the brink of technologically eclipsing the U.S. The mass media, through movies and publications, capitalized on and spread fear that the nation's citizens were somehow not strong enough for the possible fight ahead, that America's strength and manhood were on the decline, and that the U.S. could be easily infiltrated by communists.²⁰

¹⁸ Bernard D. Karpinos, "Fitness of American Youth for Military Service," *The Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly* 38, no. 3 (July 1960): 213-267.

¹⁹ Virginia Pasley, *21 Stayed: The Story of the American GI's who Chose Communist China: Who They Were and Why They Stayed* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Cudahy, 1955); H. H. Wubben, "American Prisoners of War in Korea: A Second Look at the 'Something New in History' Theme," *American Quarterly* 22, no. 1 (spring 1970): 3-19; Colin Flint, "Mobilizing Civil Society for the Hegemonic State: The Korean War and the Construction of Soldiercitizens in the United States," 345-361, in *War, Citizenship, Territory*, ed. Deborah Cowen and Emily Gilbert (New York: Routledge, 2008).

²⁰ For more on the existential crisis of the 1950s, see K.A. Cuordileone, *Manhood and American Political Culture in the Cold War* (New York: Routledge, 2005); James Gilbert, *Men in the Middle: Searching for Masculinity in the 1950s* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005); Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988); Michael S. Sherry, *The Shadow of War: The United States since the 1930s* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1995); Tom Englehardt, *The End of Victory Culture: Cold War American and the Disillusioning of a Generation* (New York: Basic Books, 1995); John D'Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988), ch. 10; Suzanne Clark, *Cold Warriors: Manliness on Trial in the Rhetoric of the West* (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000); Robert Corber, *Homosexuality in Cold War America: Resistance and the Crisis of Masculinity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997); Corber, *In the Name of National Security: Hitchcock, Homophobia, and the Political Construction of Gender in Postwar America* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993); Robert Genter, *Late Modernism: Art, Culture, and Politics in Cold War America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010); David K. Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994); Carolyn Herbst Lewis, *Prescription for Heterosexuality: Sexual Citizenship in the Cold War Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

As a result, the movement to improve national strength that developed in the 1950s and 1960s was unique because of the way it responded to the threat of the Cold War. A strong, well-educated population came to be understood as a weapon against communism. As historians have shown, a particularly masculine cult of toughness and strength arose within political and foreign policy circles during the 1950s.²¹ Policy-makers, like John Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, McGeorge Bundy, and Robert McNamara attended elite private boys' boarding schools and Ivy League universities, where they were members of selective fraternities and secret societies. Their sex-segregated, upper-class upbringings inculcated in them a culture of manliness that was forged through a series of ordeals – “the ordeal of boarding school, the ordeal of nature, and the ordeal of battle.”²² Exhibiting weakness in this environment was unacceptable. Strength of body and mind were essential, as was a refusal to be “soft” on communism.²³ They, therefore, saw physical fitness as something of immense importance.

Fear that Americans' level of physical strength was falling behind that of their European competitors intensified through the 1950s in a phenomenon sociologist Jeffrey Montez de Oca has termed the “muscle gap.” He traced its rise in American print media between 1945 and 1965 and found that unease over the state of American men's bodies compared to those of other nations originated in the aftermath of World War II, grew

²¹ Donald J. Mrozek, “The Cult and Ritual of Toughness in Cold War America,” 257-267, in *Sport in America: From Wicked Amusement to National Obsession*, ed. David K. Wiggins (Champaign, Ill.: Human Kinetics, 1995).

²² Robert D. Dean, “Masculinity as Ideology: John F. Kennedy and the Domestic Politics of Foreign Policy,” *Diplomatic History* 22, no. 1 (Winter 1998): 29-62. Quote, pp. 31-32.

²³ K.A. Cuordileone, “Politics in an Age of Anxiety: Cold War Political Culture and the Crisis in American Masculinity, 1949-1960,” *Journal of American History* 87, no. 2, (Sept. 2000): 515-45.

following the Korean War, and spiked significantly in 1961 as Kennedy took office.²⁴ Articles expressed apprehensions similar to that expressed by Marine Colonel Lewis “Chesty” Puller, when he told the men under his command, “Our country won’t go on forever, if we stay as soft as we are now. There won’t be an America. Because some foreign soldiers will invade us and take our women and breed a hardier race.”²⁵

Even though the U.S. was not actively engaged in a hot war by the late 1950s, concerns over America’s viability centered on its lack of fitness and pervaded media and policy circles, especially after doctors Hans Kraus and Sonja Weber released the results of a study comparing the fitness levels of American and European children in 1955.²⁶ They found that close to 58 percent of American children aged six to sixteen failed at least one of a series of six strength and flexibility tests, while only 8.7 percent of European children failed. “It seems difficult to avoid the conclusion,” fretted Harvard professor Jean Mayer in the *New York Times*, “that our motorized, mechanized, ‘effort-saver’ civilization is rapidly making us as soft as our processed foods, our foam rubber mattresses, and our balloon tires.”²⁷ John B. Kelly, a former Olympian and Franklin Roosevelt-appointed U.S. Director of Physical Fitness during World War II, warned that the Soviets spent \$5 billion annually on physical fitness programs, “an expenditure

²⁴ Jeffrey Montez de Oca, “‘As Our Muscles Get Softer, Our Missile Race Becomes Harder’: Cultural Citizenship and the ‘Muscle Gap,’” *Journal of Historical Sociology* 18, no. 3 (Sept. 2005): 152.

²⁵ Quoted in *ibid.*, 148.

²⁶ Specifically, the European children were from Austria, Italy, and Switzerland.

²⁷ Jean Mayer, “Muscular State of the Union,” *New York Times*, Nov. 5, 1955. Mayer also pointed out that in 1940, the Harvard Fatigue Laboratory did a “classic step test” on male draftees and found that their physical endurance was no better than that of girls from Wellesley who were given a similar endurance test.

exceeded only by their defense budget.”²⁸ President Eisenhower, who had advocated universal military training after World War II as a remedy for American unfitness, found the results “even more alarming” than he had thought.²⁹ In 1956, he established the President’s Council on Youth Fitness (PCYF) to encourage children to exercise and develop healthy bodies so that the U.S. would not fall further behind the other nations of the world.³⁰

In 1957, the Soviet Union launched the world’s first Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) and low-orbit satellites. Fear that the U.S. was falling behind the Soviets, therefore, was thoroughly enmeshed in heightened concern over the nation’s fitness and security. As demonstrated by chapter three, efforts to develop American bodies existed alongside measures to augment the country’s educational system, expand the fields of science and engineering, and grow the economy, all in the name of national defense. America in the late-1950s, therefore, was a nation simultaneously at the peak of its strength and wracked by self-doubt.

* * * * *

John F. Kennedy capitalized on these fears as he campaigned for the presidency.³¹ Through stump speeches and publications, he painted a picture of a country and a people

²⁸ “Grace Kelly’s Dad Urges Physical Fitness Program to Aid U.S. Youth,” *Philadelphia Tribune*, March 3, 1956.

²⁹ “Condition of Youth Alarms Eisenhower,” *Washington Post*, July 12, 1955.

³⁰ Eisenhower signed Executive Order 10,673 on July 16, 1956. It established the President’s Council on Youth Fitness and a Citizens Advisory Committee, designed to offer guidance to the PCYF. For more on the PCYF and its subsequent campaign for fitness, see Moran, “The Body Politic,” ch. 6.

³¹ Christopher A. Preble, *John F. Kennedy and the Missile Gap* (DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press), 7.

“in trouble,” of a “tired” America, trapped in a period of “relative decline.”³² He worried that if the nation did not take immediate measures to halt the slow slippage of American prestige, the people would one day take stock and realize that their nation had been overtaken by its communist foe, “like the slow rotting of a great tree...which ultimately blows over from the first small wind that passes.”³³ If the newly independent nations of the world felt “that the sun of the West [was] setting and that the sun of the East [was] rising,” that the United States was “unable to solve [its] problems,” they would cease looking toward the U.S. for leadership, and all would be lost.³⁴

Strength, according to Kennedy and the men he surrounded himself with, was the key to American greatness – strength of character, strength of body, strength of conviction – and the nation’s full potential could not be reached without a well-equipped military and an expanding economy.³⁵ National vigor, therefore, had to be restored through better national defense, renewed economic growth, and a firm pledge to use American “moral and spiritual strength” to wage “war on poverty and misery and disease,” all of which Kennedy vowed to accomplish as president.³⁶

These three areas for improvement were intimately linked. In terms of defense, Kennedy believed the U.S. had fallen far behind the Soviets in the production of ICBMs

³² Kennedy, Speech, September 2, 1960, Fairgrounds, Bangor, Maine, JFKLink, http://www.jfklink.com/speeches/jfk/sept60/jfk020960_bangor.html; Kennedy, Speech, September 3, 1960, San Francisco International Airport, San Francisco, California, JFKLink, http://www.jfklink.com/speeches/jfk/sept60/jfk030960_sfairport02.html

³³ Kennedy, Speech, September 6, 1960, Pocatello, Idaho, JFKLink, http://www.jfklink.com/speeches/jfk/sept60/jfk060960_poca01.html

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood: Gender and the Making of Cold War Foreign Policy* (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001) and Cuordileone, *Manhood and American Political Culture in the Cold War* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

³⁶ Kennedy, Speech, October 5, 1960, Fordham University, Bronx, New York, JFKLink, http://www.jfklink.com/speeches/rmn/oct60/rmn051060_bronx.html

and that this so-called “missile gap” was an untenable weakness. He made the gap a major issue in the 1960 presidential race. Eisenhower tried to assure voters that no such missile gap existed and that American nuclear stockpiles were far superior to the communist enemy’s. He could not, however, reveal his evidence, which was gleaned from the top-secret U-2 spy plane reconnaissance program.³⁷ Democrats used Republican foreign policy failures, including the perceived missile gap, as a major point of attack throughout the 1960 campaign, and continued to use the fears the gap engendered as a justification to enlarge the American ICBM stockpile once Kennedy was elected.³⁸

President Kennedy also rejected Eisenhower’s New Look Strategy, deeming the doctrine of massive retaliation dangerous. According to the new president and his Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara, the threat of nuclear retaliation was not adaptable to the brush wars popping up around the world in the wake of decolonization, nor did long-range bombers make much sense after the Soviets had successfully tested its first ICBM . Moreover, nuclear weapons were not always an appropriate response to

³⁷ Sherry, *In the Shadow of War*, 217-219, 232; Preble, *John F. Kennedy and the Missile Gap*, 104-105. Eisenhower allowed Kennedy access to classified intelligence information once the senator became the Democratic Party’s official candidate for the presidency, but Kennedy would not let the issue die. See Preble, *John F. Kennedy and the Missile Gap*, 108.

³⁸ McNamara accidentally admitted that there was no gap in front of reporters at a conference at the Pentagon on February 6, 1961, but the administration viewed his statements as a gaffe. It wasn’t until Deputy Secretary of Defense Roswell Gilpatric announced that the U.S. was more than capable of defending itself against a Soviet attack that the issue was fully settled. See Lawrence S. Kaplan, Ronald D. Landa, and Edward J. Drea, *The McNamara Ascendancy, 1961-1965*, History of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, vol. 5 (Washington, D.C.: Historical Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2006), 299, 302; “Missile Gap? Kennedy Says He Awaits Completion of Studies by the Pentagon,” *Wall Street Journal*, Feb. 9, 1961; “Symington Claims Ike Withheld Missile Data,” *Washington Post*, Feb. 10, 1961.

international tensions, as Kennedy learned in the early days of his administration through the Bay of Pigs debacle and the Berlin Crisis.³⁹ Instead, the president initiated a new guiding strategy that came to be known as “Flexible Response.” While nuclear weapons remained important, the Kennedy administration shifted the military’s method for their delivery from bombers to missiles. The Department of Defense reversed Eisenhower’s cuts to conventional forces. It expanded active forces across all branches of service by 171,000 between 1961 and 1965, a move that required greater manpower procurement efforts. It also cut the size of the reserves by 50,000, and devoted special attention to counterinsurgency forces, like the Army’s Green Berets, which could be deployed quickly to the world’s hot spots.⁴⁰ According to the official history of the Department of Defense, the Pentagon chose the strategy of flexible response, including a buildup of ICBMs, because counterforce was seen as a “more humane alternative to the indiscriminate doctrine of massive retaliation.” It gave American armed forces the ability “to target military installations while sparing heavily populated cities.”⁴¹

Historian Christopher A. Preble, however, interpreted Kennedy’s decision differently. He argued that Kennedy’s defense strategy was tied to his economic plan. If the populace remained fearful of Soviet dominance, then voters would be more likely to approve increased defense spending, which, in turn, would boost the economy and further bolster America’s position as a super power.⁴² Where Eisenhower had “soft-pedaled talk of recession,” the Kennedy administration emphasized the nation’s economic woes. In

³⁹ Kaplan, Landa, and Drea, *The McNamara Ascendancy*, 294.

⁴⁰ The Army and Marine Corps, which used infantry troops, received the lion’s share of the increases. See Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 253-259.

⁴¹ Kaplan, Landa, and Drea, *The McNamara Ascendancy*, 309.

⁴² Preble, *John F. Kennedy and the Missile Gap*.

1961, Labor Department officials pointed out that with 5.4 million people out of work, unemployment had reached its worst levels since World War II. More than half of the nation's 150 leading production centers had unemployment rates over six percent.⁴³ Walter Heller, the Chair of Kennedy's Council of Economic Advisers, told Congress in May 1961 that the economy would have to expand by more than 3.5 percent per year just to hold the status quo of 6.8 percent unemployment.⁴⁴

The postwar American economy especially depended on the vitality of the defense sector. The defense manufacturing industry had been hard hit by cuts related to Eisenhower's New Look program. Where more than 50 percent of the Department of Defense's procurement budget had gone to weapons, ammunition, tanks, automotive hardware and production equipment in 1953, the Pentagon expended only 13 percent of its budget on the same items in 1961.⁴⁵ Almost a quarter of the nation's aviation workers lost their jobs between 1957 and 1960 as contracts dwindled.⁴⁶ Something needed to be done or Americans risked falling farther behind the Soviets. Kennedy believed that "defense contracts [could be used] to strengthen the economy as well as strengthen the country."⁴⁷ Within the first few months of his presidency, he increased defense spending

⁴³ Richard L. Strout, "Economic Straws Watched," *Christian Science Monitor*, Feb. 11, 1961.

⁴⁴ Alan L. Otten, "The Gap Crisis: How Council of Economic Advisers Gets Output Gap that 'Justifies' Spending," *Wall Street Journal*, May 4, 1961.

⁴⁵ Preble, *John F. Kennedy and the Missile Gap*, 134.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁴⁷ Seymour E. Harris, "Economics of the Kennedy Years," 65, in *John F. Kennedy and the New Frontier*, ed. Aida DiPace Donald (New York: Hill and Wang, 1966). Quoted in Preble, *John F. Kennedy and the Missile Gap*, 130. For more on Kennedy's fiscal conservatism, see James M. Giglio, *The Presidency of John F. Kennedy*, 2nd edition, revised (Lawrence, Kans.: University Press of Kansas, 2006), 126-128.

by \$7.2 billion; domestic expenditures rose by only \$2.3 billion.⁴⁸ Moreover, in his first message to Congress on defense, the president proposed an \$890 million increase over Eisenhower's proposed \$42.9 billion defense budget for fiscal 1962, much of which would go toward developing Polaris, Minuteman, and Skybolt missiles.⁴⁹ The spending, as part of a larger system of growth economics, worked. The recession the new administration had been so worried about ended by February 1961 and the economy began a slow recovery.⁵⁰

Kennedy's election also set a new tone for discussions of the nation's moral responsibility and what kinds of citizens it would take to support those obligations. As Kennedy explained in his speech accepting the 1960 Democratic nomination, "We must prove all over again whether this nation – or any nation so conceived – can long endure – whether our society –with its freedom of choice, its breadth of opportunity, its range of alternatives – can compete with the single-minded advance of the Communist system."⁵¹ The U.S. needed more than strong national defense and a thriving economy. National success would stem from those things that could be obviously measured against the Soviet Union – GNP, unemployment rates, numbers of missiles – but also from the intangibles, like its commitment to freedom, liberty, and equal opportunity. Capitalism and democracy had to prove that they were superior. Poverty had to be eradicated,

⁴⁸ Giglio, *The Presidency of John F. Kennedy*, 129.

⁴⁹ "Kennedy Adds \$890 Million to Ike's Fiscal '62 Defense Spending Figure," *Wall Street Journal*, March 29, 1961.

⁵⁰ The major part of Kennedy's economic plan was to increase economic output, which was accomplished through tax credits, the introduction of manpower development and education programs, tweaking long-term interest rates, and through federal spending. Defense spending was a major component of this plan. See Collins, "Growth Liberalism," 18-22.

⁵¹ Kennedy, speech, July 15, 1960, Memorial Coliseum, Los Angeles, California, JFKLink, http://www.jfklink.com/speeches/jfk/misc60/jfk150760_acceptance.html.

schooling improved, legal discrimination quashed. The “slippage” in American “intellectual and moral strength” had to be reversed, for only then would the newly emerging nations around the world legitimately turn to the United States, with its democratic system and talk of freedom, as an example to emulate.⁵²

Historians have criticized the Kennedy administration for its slow response to many of the pressing social problems of his presidency, especially his record on civil rights, but poverty was of early concern to the president.⁵³ Conditions he encountered on campaign trips to Appalachia disturbed him, and he worried that “the blight of West Virginia” would spread across the country.⁵⁴ The issue became more visible in policy circles with the publication and success of Michael Harrington’s *The Other America* in 1962 and a 1963 *New York Times* article on Kentucky coal miners that launched an occasional series on American poverty.⁵⁵ According to Harrington, close to 50 million

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Kennedy hoped that equality would develop “gradually, smoothly, and with a minimum of conflict,” and acted slowly until the events of his presidency forced him to take more decisive action. Giglio, *The Presidency of John F. Kennedy*, 173. For more on Kennedy’s record, see Bruce Miroff, *Pragmatic Illusions: The Presidential Politics of John F. Kennedy* (New York: Longman, 1979); Taylor Branch, *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954-1963* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988); Robyn Muncy, “Coal Fired Reforms: Social Citizenship, Dissident Miners, and the Great Society,” *Journal of American History* 96, no. 1 (June 2009): 72-98.

⁵⁴ Kennedy, Speech, September 5, 1960, Flint, Michigan, JFKLink, http://www.jfklink.com/speeches/jfk/sept60/jfk050960_flint02.html

⁵⁵ Michael L. Gillette, *Launching the War on Poverty: An Oral History* 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 1. Michael Harrington, *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* (New York: MacMillan Press, 1962); Homer Bigart, “Kentucky Miner’s: A Grim Winter,” *New York Times*, Oct. 20, 1963; “Misery in the Mine Patches,” Editorial, *New York Times*, Oct. 21, 1963; Pat Gish, “In the Midst of Poverty, People’s Stories are Hard to Tell,” *Nieman Reports*, Summer 1999, <http://www.nieman.harvard.edu/reports/article/102224/In-the-Midst-of-Poverty-Peoples-Stories-are-Hard-to-Tell.aspx>. For more on how poverty became a major issue in policy circles in the 1950s and 1960s, see Jennifer Mittelstadt, *From Welfare to Workfare: The*

people, almost one quarter of the population lived below the poverty line, trapped in a “culture of poverty,” characterized by poor education, poor healthcare, poor housing, poor nutrition, few jobs, and structural discrimination that had led to political powerlessness and general hopelessness.⁵⁶

This situation rankled members of Kennedy’s administration, especially Heller, but also Robert Lampman, a member of the Council of Economic Advisers; Wilber Cohen of HEW; Daniel Patrick Moynihan, the Assistant Secretary of Labor; Kennedy’s Special Counsel and Adviser, Theodore Sorenson; and William Cannon of the Bureau of the Budget. Together, they started a Saturday morning discussion group that soon became the Interagency Task Force on Poverty.⁵⁷ This group generated the idea of using the government to spur community action programs, an initiative that would become one of the core features of Johnson’s War on Poverty. More immediately, Kennedy’s domestic agenda came to focus on rehabilitation of particularly depressed areas, educational reforms, aid to senior citizens, job training, and remediation of the particular problems faced by the nation’s youth.⁵⁸

Unintended Consequences of Liberal Reform (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

⁵⁶ Harrington, *The Other America*, revised edition (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1971), ch. 1. Quotes pp. 3, 16.

⁵⁷ Gillette, *Launching the War on Poverty*, ch. 1.

⁵⁸ Kennedy had difficulty passing bills designed guarantee more workers a minimum wage, increase federal aid to public education, and extend medical insurance to the elderly. However, he was able to get the Area Redevelopment Act, which targeted depressed areas for economic and industrial development, and a Housing Act, to extend public housing programs and provide low-interest loans to prospective homeowners, in 1961. He also threw his support behind the successful Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Offenses Control Act. In 1962, Congress passed the Manpower Development Training Act, discussed below, and an omnibus education bill passed both houses of Congress the following year. During his presidency, task forces and special committees also examined the problems of juvenile delinquency, education, youth fitness, equal employment

One of the areas that the administration zeroed in on was the military rejection rate. The Interdepartmental Committee for Children and Youth, a task force charged with following up on the recommendations of the 1960 White House Conference on Children and Youth, began to examine the issue in 1961. It worried that men who were turned away when they tried to enlist because they could not meet the military's minimum qualifications would be damaged emotionally, economically, and socially.⁵⁹ The Social Security Administration, meanwhile, with the cooperation of the Selective Service, also began investigating how 40,000 men rejected from military service for illiteracy had fared over past decade. By examining Baltimore's Old-Age, Disability, and Insurance (OASDI) records, the Administration hoped to determine the rejectees' economic and social standing, working on the assumption that those who had been turned away would be poorer, on average.⁶⁰

But it was a memo sent by Secretary of Labor W. Willard Wirtz to Kennedy that truly made the plight of military rejectees a national issue. Wirtz sent Kennedy the memo in early September 1963, following a report by the President's Committee on Youth

opportunity, employment for people with disabilities, and the status of women. For more, see Irwin Unger, *The Best of Intentions: The Triumphs and Failures of the Great Society under Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), ch. 1; Giglio, *The Presidency of John F. Kennedy*, ch. 5.

⁵⁹ Three of the 210 workgroups called to examine the status of young people at the 1960 White House Conference on Children and Youth studied "The Obligations of Military Service." National Committee for Children and Youth, *Experimental and Demonstration Manpower Project for Recruitment, Training, Placement, and Followup of Rejected Armed Forces Volunteers in Baltimore, Maryland and Washington, D.C.: Final Report*, March 1, 1965 to June 30, 1966, 2; Child Welfare League of America, "The History of White House Conferences on Children and Youth," 9, at Child Welfare League of America, <http://www.cwla.org/advocacy/whitehouseconfhistory.pdf>.

⁶⁰ Katherine Oettinger to F. Robert Meier, October 3, 1963, Selective Service Rejectees, Box 2, entry UD-UP 3, RG 235, NARA; Manpower Conservation for Selective Service Rejectees: Program Operations, and Preliminary Estimates for DHEW (FY 1964-65), *Ibid.* I was unable to locate the results of the Baltimore study.

Employment, explaining that close to one quarter of all men failed their induction exams for “mental reasons,” meaning they scored too low on the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT).⁶¹ To Wirtz, such a high rate of failure on the test, which measured basic literacy, mathematics, spatial relations and mechanical skills rather than IQ, was indicative of a much larger social problem. He estimated that little more than ten percent of those rejected were, “in fact mentally retarded.” Instead, these results indicated that schools were failing American students, especially African Americans, who failed at a rate more than three times higher than that of white men. Wirtz called the failure rate a “national disgrace,” and pointed out that men rejected from military service frequently became “a long-run burden to their communities” because they spent years “drifting.” Their poor educations and low skill levels, which according to the test were not even at a seventh-grade level, often kept them from contributing meaningfully by holding a job and earning a living. Moreover, he pointed to the Selective Service as an “incomparable

⁶¹ The Army General Classification Test (AGCT), mentioned in chapter one, was administered, starting in 1941, after a man had been inducted or had enlisted and was used to help sort him into the proper military specialty based, in theory, on his ability to learn. Naval recruits during World War II took a separate but similar test, the Navy General Classification Test (NGCT). In 1950, the service branches shifted to a common test, the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT). Similar to its predecessors, it was considered an aptitude test, not an intelligence test. Unlike the earlier exams, it was also used to qualify or disqualify men for service *before* they enlisted or were inducted. See Ulysses Lee, *The Employment of Negro Troops*, Special Studies, United States Army in World War II (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, 1966), 241-243, available at <http://www.history.army.mil/books/wwii/11-4/chapter9.htm>; Milton H. Maier, *Military Aptitude Testing: The Past Fifty Years*, DMDC Technical Report 93-007, Defense Manpower Data Center, Personnel Testing Division, June 1993, 67-70, available at <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA269818>.

asset” in locating the “25% or more” of the population that would “unquestionably cause 75% or more” of the nation’s “social and economic problems.”⁶²

As a result of Wirtz’s proposal, Kennedy officially established the President’s Task Force on Manpower Conservation on September 30, 1963. The study group, chaired by Wirtz and composed of Hershey, McNamara and HEW Secretary Anthony J. Celebrezze, was charged with examining why close to fifty percent of all men called in the draft failed their preinduction exams either for physical or mental reasons and with proposing solutions.⁶³ In his statement, Kennedy repeated Wirtz’s warnings that such high failure rates portended a social and economic crisis. “A young man who does not have what it takes to perform military service,” he fretted, “is not likely to have what it takes to make a living. Today's military rejects include tomorrow's hard core unemployed.”⁶⁴ The media agreed that something had to change. The *Boston Globe* called the rejection rate “dismal” and a “crisis.”⁶⁵ The *Hartford Courant* termed it “ominous.”⁶⁶

During the Kennedy era, therefore, fitness, the economy, and national security became inextricably linked. Men who could not serve the military could not advance

⁶² Just over 56 percent of African Americans failed the AFQT in 1962, while the failure rate for white men was 15.4 percent. Memorandum to the President, September 10, 1963, attached to Secretary Wirtz’ Proposal to Work with the Selective Service System in Identifying and Training a Large Group of Young Men Rejected for Military Service because of “Mental Reasons,” September 23, 1963, Selective Service Rejectees, Box 2, Entry UD-UP 3, RG 235, NARA.

⁶³ The study did not include men who volunteered for military service, who, in general, were more likely to pass their preinduction exams than draftees. The overall failure rate was closer to 1/3.

⁶⁴ Kennedy: “Statement by the President on the Need for Training or Rehabilitation of Selective Service Rejectees,” September 30, 1963, *The American Presidency Project*, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=9446>.

⁶⁵ “Dismal Fact: 1 Out of 2 Draftees Rejected,” *Boston Globe*, Oct. 1, 1963.

⁶⁶ “Draft Study Ordered on Rejections,” *Hartford Courant*, Oct. 1, 1963.

America's economic position, creating a double burden for the nation as it struggled to stay ahead of the Soviet Union. In Kennedy's words, "Softness on the part of individual citizens...strip[ped] and destroy[ed] the vitality of a nation." Unfitness, posed "a menace to... security" by keeping men from physically fighting the enemy with the necessary vigor and threatening "the activities of peace" as well as "those of war."⁶⁷

* * * * *

In January 1964, the President's Task Force on Manpower Conservation issued its report, *One-Third of a Nation: A Report on Young Men Found Unqualified for Military Service*. Through a study of statistics provided by the Department of Defense and Selective Service, the task force confirmed the earlier finding that almost fifty percent of draftees failed their preinduction exams and approximately one-third of all young men turning eighteen could not qualify for military service.⁶⁸

Members found that of the men who failed for physical reasons, 75 percent could benefit from medical treatment. They acknowledged that some of the conditions considered defects by the armed forces, including not meeting height requirements, would not be considered problematic in the civilian sector, but they argued that most of

⁶⁷ Kennedy, "The Soft American," *Sports Illustrated*, December 26, 1960, available at <http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/vault/article/magazine/MAG1134750/1/index.htm>

⁶⁸ Volunteers, because they self-selected and because of the initial screening, failed their induction exams at a much lower rate than draftees. Additionally, men deferred for other reasons, including dependency, may never have faced examination. Therefore, while 49.8 percent of conscripted men failed their preinduction exams, the overall rejection rate was somewhere between 31.7 and 36 percent of all those entering military service. The exact failure rate was not known because the military modified the way it scored its mental aptitude tests in 1963. For more information, see President's Task Force on Manpower Conservation, *One-Third of a Nation: A Report on Young Men Found Unqualified for Military Service*, January 1, 1964, 7-8, 11, Selective Service Rejectees, box 2, entry UD-UP 3, RG 235, NARA.

the men who failed could live fuller lives if they received help. Ten percent of the rejectees had conditions, including tuberculosis, syphilis, hernias, and cleft palates, that could be cured completely. Another 20 percent could achieve significant relief from conditions like epilepsy, asthma, and heart disease with significant treatment. Amputees, the partially deaf, and other men who could benefit from long-term medical service, constituted another 25 percent of the physical rejectees.⁶⁹ These findings indicated a deficiency in the nation's health system. Men who should have known of their infirmities frequently did not, possibly signaling inadequate access to health care, and many of those who knew could not afford services.

More disturbingly, the data on men who failed their aptitude tests combined with the results of a nation-wide survey of 2,500 recent rejectees indicated disturbing geographic variability and that mental rejectees were overwhelmingly from backgrounds of poverty. While fewer than five percent of men from states like Minnesota, Utah, Montana, and Vermont failed mental aptitude tests, the rate was higher than 30 percent in all of the southeastern states, topping out at over 50 percent in Mississippi and South Carolina.⁷⁰ Four out of five of the men surveyed had dropped out of school, and only 75 percent had finished elementary school, compared to 95 percent of all American men between the ages of 20 and 24.⁷¹ The report estimated that the unemployment rate for these men was four times the national average and their poverty rate was at least twice that of the rest of the country.⁷² The men who failed their induction or preinduction exams had poor access to decent schools and health care. More than half of their fathers

⁶⁹ Ibid., 25.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 13.

⁷¹ Ibid., 16.

⁷² Ibid., 16, 17.

had never finished eighth grade, and only 20 percent of their fathers were skilled workers. The rest were either unemployed, or employed in agricultural, unskilled or semiskilled jobs, all of which meant that the rejectees' families overwhelmingly lived in poverty.⁷³ One-fifth of the rejectees' families had received public assistance in the previous five years, when on average, only 4.2 percent of children in the U.S. received benefits from the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program. One-third of the men came from broken homes.⁷⁴ *One-Third of a Nation* was a striking indictment of many American institutions: the health care system, schools, and economic safety net.

The results also indicated the particularly difficult time faced by African American men. Black rejectees had completed more years of schooling than their white counterparts, were more likely to have dropped out in order to support their families, and yet were more likely to fail the mental aptitude tests, illustrating both their dire economic straights and the especially poor quality of their often segregated schools.⁷⁵ On average, they were more likely to be unemployed, and those who did work earned more than \$1000 less per year than the national average and more than \$600 less than the white rejectees.⁷⁶

The report pointed out that many of the rejectees, both black and white, had already been in the labor force for many years. They had dropped out of school at a young age and they worked "in jobs which offered little or no advancement opportunities

⁷³ Ibid., 16.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 20.

⁷⁵ Ibid, A-7, 16.

⁷⁶ Twenty-nine percent of the black rejectees were unemployed, compared to 26 percent of the white rejectees. Men of all races between ages 20 and 24 averaged \$2,656.00 per year. The white rejectees earned \$2,173.00 and the black rejectees earned \$1,563. Ibid.,15, 16.

and which could be filled by persons with a minimum of education and training.”

Therefore, it was “difficult to envisage these jobs making it possible for them to save for contingencies, and to raise families in a manner that would permit their sons and daughters to do better.”⁷⁷ Thus, they had been born into poverty and were likely to pass that poverty on to their children. They were trapped in a vicious cycle. As Wirtz wrote in his letter of transmittal to the President, “Far too many of these young men have missed out on the American miracle. This level of failure stands as a symbol of the unfinished business of the Nation.”⁷⁸

Yet, explained the report, America’s business could be completed. Eighty percent of the mental rejectees surveyed claimed that they would participate in programs offering job training and/or basic educational skills. African Americans were even more eager for remediation, with over 90 percent asking for such services.⁷⁹ And members of the task force felt that it was high time that the United States offered help to these men. “The profile of the medical and mental rejectee that has emerged from the studies,” they wrote, “leaves no question as to where the national interest lies in this situation.” Both “national defense” and “national welfare...clearly require[d] that a conservation program be undertaken by the Federal Government, with the fullest possible cooperation of State and local bodies.”⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Ibid., 18.

⁷⁸ Ibid., i.

⁷⁹ President’s Task Force on Manpower Conservation, *One-Third of a Nation: A Report on Young Men Found Unqualified for Military Service*, January 1, 1964, 20, 22, digitized version available at Hathi Trust Digital Library, <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015035832677;seq=30;view=1up;num=20>.

⁸⁰ President’s Task Force on Manpower Conservation, *One-Third of a Nation: A Report on Young Men Found Unqualified for Military Service*, January 1, 1964, 29, Selective Service Rejectees, box 2, entry UD-UP 3, RG 235, NARA.

The task force recommended taking several steps in order to maximize rehabilitation opportunities. First, members suggested that all men be fully examined and appropriately classified at age 18, when they first registered with the Selective Service, so that defects could be identified and services rendered earlier. Second, they wanted AFES personnel to apprise all rejectees of why they had failed their preinduction exam rather than simply tell them that they were not fit for military service. Third, they recommended that units within the Departments of Labor and HEW coordinate to create referral programs whereby rejectees could be sent, on a voluntary basis, for appropriate help within their home communities. This would particularly affect the Public Health Service, Office of Education, Vocational Rehabilitation Administration, and Welfare Administration in HEW and the Manpower Administration and Bureau of Employment Services in the Department of Labor. Together, these offices could create “a systematic program of experimental and demonstration projects...to develop new techniques for diagnostic testing, basic education, vocational and psychological counseling and methods for motivating rejectees.”⁸¹ Fourth, they advocated the creation of Manpower Development and Training Advisory Committees consisting of representatives from local Selective Service boards and members of local educational and welfare organizations that could “assume leadership in organizing community action to work with young men rejected for military service.”⁸²

According to the task force members, one of the main advantages of these recommendations was that they could all be carried out through programs that already

⁸¹ Ibid., 4.

⁸² Ibid., 3-4.

existed or that were pending before Congress.⁸³ No new legislation would be required, and additional expenditures would be relatively low. Yet, they explained, “When...the program is in full operation, the additional investment in human resources will be repaid many times in higher tax revenues flowing from rejectees who will be working at higher wage levels, and in lower welfare and social costs to the Nation resulting from their rehabilitation.”⁸⁴ In other words, a minor financial outlay now would be paid back many times over in the future, as it would enable this huge group of men – estimated to approach 600,000 per year by 1965 – to “become effective citizens and self-supporting individuals.”⁸⁵

One-Third of a Nation was significant for several reasons. President Lyndon Johnson used its release to fire one of the opening salvos in his War on Poverty, and its findings added evidence to the argument that such a war was necessary.⁸⁶ But it was also noteworthy because it proposed using the military system to identify and remedy social problems. It signaled a new concern on the part of the military establishment – including the Selective Service, the director of which was on the task force – with poverty. Any new rehabilitation programs that stemmed from the report would use an infrastructure designed to procure military manpower to prepare men for full economic citizenship as

⁸³ The plan would use resources provided by the Manpower Development and Training Act, 1963 amendments to which provided for greater support to youth job training programs; and the Vocational Education Acts and the National Defense Education Act, which provided funding for work-study and vocational programs. Pending legislation included bills to create a Youth Conservation Corps to offer job training and a National Service Corps that could provide workers to staff agencies and liaise with men receiving services. See *Ibid.*, 33-35.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 33.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁸⁶ See text of Johnson’s statement announcing the release of the report, reprinted at “Examination at Age 18 Ordered by President,” *Selective Service* 14 (Feb. 1964): 3-4.

civilians rather than to be soldiers. The resources of the Selective Service and the Department of the Army, which administered the AFQT and ran the AFES, would be diverted toward the new War on Poverty.

Equally important, the report established the problem of poverty as distinctly male. It identified the AFQT as the most efficient available means to identify those Americans who could most benefit from rehabilitation because the test was the only “major post-school examination” administered in the United States.⁸⁷ While the report admitted that more Americans than those who failed induction exams could use government services, it singled out military rejectees as those “*most* in need.”⁸⁸ Only men took the exam, meaning any programs stemming from the test’s failure would be open only to men. No equivalent test would be used to locate women with physical and educational deficiencies. The report’s authors assumed that offering remediation to men would uplift women and children too, illustrating how ingrained was the notion that breadwinning was a masculine responsibility. Full participation in the workforce remained a male prerogative.⁸⁹

* * * * *

Johnson took the findings of *One-Third of a Nation* seriously. On January 5, 1964, less than two months after taking office, he ordered the Selective Service and the Department of the Army to make plans to examine young men as close to their eighteenth birthdays as practicable. He also asked the agencies of the federal government to examine

⁸⁷ President’s Task Force on Manpower Conservation, *One-Third of a Nation: A Report on Young Men Found Unqualified for Military Service*, January 1, 1964, 29, Selective Service Rejectees, box 2, entry UD-UP 3, RG 235, NARA.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 30 (italics in original).

⁸⁹ For the way the policy community approached the problem of poverty among women, see Mittelstadt, *From Welfare to Workfare*.

the problem and develop programs designed to rehabilitate those men who failed.⁹⁰ The explicit purpose of such rehabilitation was to outfit men with the skills they would need in order to get and hold a job in the civilian sector. While it was never specifically stated, however, men whose health improved as a result of treatment would be reclassified as eligible for service.⁹¹ While several agencies had been studying the issue already, discussion within the Selective Service, HEW, and the Department of Labor stepped up after Johnson's announcement. Officials of these agencies founded an Interdepartmental Task Force on Selective Service Rejectees to coordinate proposals and programs.⁹² By July 1, when 18-year-olds started to be called for their preinduction exams, a national referral program through the Department of Labor had already been in operation for five months. It was, according to Wirtz, "the most important human salvage program in the history" of the United States.⁹³

The new program had its precursors in a pilot initiative conducted by the Public Health Service in Philadelphia, New York, and Denver in 1961 that had been based on

⁹⁰ Anthony Celebrezze to Governor, December 7, 1964, Selective Service Rejectees, Box 2, entry UD-UP 3, RG 235, NARA; "Examination at Age 18 Ordered by President," *Selective Service* 14 (Feb. 1964): 3-4;

⁹¹ Local boards reviewed the status of men classified as IV-F annually to ensure that the men's health conditions had not improved. Men who were classified as ineligible because they had not scored highly enough on the AFQT generally would not have the aptitude test readministered to them, however, so those who learned to read or gained other forms of education would not, therefore, be made eligible for service outright. However, as will be shown below, if admission standards changed, as with the institution of Project 100,000, men who had been rejected previously for mental reasons could still be inducted.

⁹² Such coordination was essential. See discussion below. Francis Keppel to Ivan A. Nestingen, March 10, 1964, attached to Francis Keppel to Ivan A. Nestingen, June 2, 1964, Selective Service Rejectees, Box 2, entry UD-UP 3, RG 235, NARA.

⁹³ "Salvaging Young Americans," *Washington Daily News*, Jan. 15, 1964 in News Items, January 16, 1964, Poverty (Economic Opportunity Act), Box 1, *ibid.*

the earlier “explorations” of the ICCY.⁹⁴ These three demonstration projects referred men rejected from the military for physical and psychiatric reasons to local social services, including vocational rehabilitation offices, hospitals, and universities. In the second half of 1963, units within the Department of Labor and HEW started discussing plans to widen referrals to men who failed mental aptitude tests as well. One proposal, stemming from the Vocational Rehabilitation Administration in HEW, suggested placing demonstration projects in Appalachia, where there were “larger numbers of school dropouts, culturally deprived youth, and underdeveloped human resources.”⁹⁵ Even before the report of the President’s Task Force on Manpower Conservation issued its report, therefore, military rejection was understood as a problem of the poor and rehabilitation programs as a possible remedy for structural poverty in the United States.

In February 1964, the Department of Labor, with the cooperation of HEW, the Selective Service, and state and local agencies, launched the first phase of a national rehabilitation project for men who failed the AFQT. It was aimed at the estimated 63,000 unemployed and underemployed men who the Department expected to be rejected from the military because of educational deficiencies between February 1 and June 30, 1964. Officials planned to add 18-year-olds to the target population once AFES started

⁹⁴ National Committee for Children and Youth, *Experimental and Demonstration Manpower Project for Recruitment, Training, Placement, and Followup of Rejected Armed Forces Volunteers in Baltimore, Maryland and Washington, D.C.: Final Report*, 2; Rehabilitation of Physically Rejected Registrants, December 13, 1961, Interoffice memos (Admin Corres.) 1958, box 109, Selective Service System, Training and Conference Files, Inter Office memos to Conference Three, Entry UD 20, Training and Congerence Files, RG 147, NARA.

⁹⁵ Proposed Demonstration Projects: vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons who are Disqualified for Military service, n.d. attached to Memo card, Miss Switzer to Mr. Nestingen, 12-3-63, and attachments, Selective Service Rejectees, Box 2, entry UD-UP 3, RG 235, NARA.

examining them, as per Johnson's order. Finally, they hoped to begin working through the backlog of 3.5 million men between the ages of 18 and 26 who had been rejected prior to February 1964.⁹⁶ Local draft boards were asked to "encourage all educationally deficient rejectees," whether employed or not, to report to public employment service offices, where they would be further evaluated to determine which services would be most beneficial. Men in the program were to "receive intensive counseling, testing, job development, and referrals," with a special emphasis on employment counseling.⁹⁷ By early March, the Department of Labor had the cooperation of the related state agencies in all states except Louisiana, which came on board that summer.⁹⁸

At the same time, however, HEW and the Department of Labor began to look for more efficient methods to refer men to available services. In mid-February, they experimented with a joint program in Salt Lake City, Utah. Rather than rely on local boards to notify men via letter, the Public Health Service, Vocational Rehabilitation Administration, and Bureau of Employment Services all stationed counselors directly at the Salt Lake induction center. Counseling personnel could contact rejectees immediately and in person and then conduct follow-up interviews at a later date. The pilot program proved such a success, with 100 percent of rejected men volunteering to

⁹⁶ John F. Henning to Ivan A. Nestingen, February 19, 1964, attached to Ivan A. Nestingen to John F. Henning, March 20, 1964, *ibid.*.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and Department of Labor Coordinating Committee Meeting, March 2, 1964, MDTA-DHEW-Labor Coordinating Committee (Minutes of Meetings), box 4, *ibid.*

participate in follow-up services, that the model was extended to Detroit, Newark, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, New Haven, and Columbia, South Carolina.⁹⁹

Regardless of how men were identified, the process of finding them, notifying them, and referring them to appropriate services was an immense undertaking. It involved the coordination of multiple national and state level offices. Clients for the new programs were to be identified through the Selective Service, which was responsible for issuing preinduction notices and forwarding men along to AFES for examination. The Department of the Army conducted physical examinations and administered the AFQT. In general, HEW was to handle programs for men who were rejected for physical reasons through its Vocational Rehabilitation Administration and the Public Health Service. The Department of Labor was to handle men who were rejected for mental reasons, primarily through its Bureau of Employment Services. There was considerable overlap in goals, however, so care had to be taken to avoid redundancies. Moreover, local programs were funded through grants from the national offices, but administered on the state and local levels. So, for example, in 1965, Rhode Island's AFES hosted four "overlapping programs" at the same time: a Public Health Service health referral program, a national study of mental rejectees conducted by the Vocational Rehabilitation Administration, a Rhode Island Department of Educational Services training and placement program, and a state-administered Department of Vocational Research demonstration project. This last initiative, designed to "immediately expand the range" of VR services available to rejectees, "facilitate early identification of medical, vocational and educational

⁹⁹ Ibid.; Minutes of DHEW-BES-OMAT Coordinating Committee Meeting, March 16, 1964, MDTA-DHEW-Labor Coordinating Committee (Minutes of Meetings), box 4, *ibid.*

handicaps,” and “develop and test new techniques and contexts for rehabilitation counseling,” was funded by a grant from HEW’s Rehabilitation Services Administration.¹⁰⁰ In other states, non-governmental institutions, including universities, evaluated the programs, adding another layer of bureaucracy.¹⁰¹

Funding for the programs came primarily from appropriations for the 1962 Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA) and its subsequent amendments.¹⁰² The original measure, a Kennedy initiative, was proposed as a partial solution to the problem of automation, which had been a subject of concern throughout the 1950s. Increased mechanization in a variety of fields had made many manufacturing jobs obsolete, leading to the layoff of large numbers of factory workers whose job skills were not relevant in an increasingly service-oriented economy. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, white men between the ages of 25 and 54, who frequently had family responsibilities that prevented them from moving to find jobs, were particularly hard hit.¹⁰³ Rising unemployment, especially among breadwinners, was seen as problematic because it strained the economy, but also because it prevented the United States from living up to its full potential as a world power. As early as 1955, Secretary of Labor

¹⁰⁰ Rhode Island Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, “Why I-Y: A Research Study of the Rehabilitation of Selective Service Rejectees in Rhode Island,” 1967, 2, 5.

¹⁰¹ In Tennessee, for example, the Tennessee State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation and the United States Public Health Service granted the Bureau of Educational Research and Service and the Department of Health Education of the University of Tennessee a grant to study the state’s health referral program. See Cyrus Mayshark and Ralph Balyeat, *Analysis of Selective Service Health Referral Patterns in Tennessee*, December 1967, 5.

¹⁰² P.L. 87-415. Kennedy signed it on March 15, 1962. Other funding came through the Area Redevelopment Act of 1961, the Vocational Education Act of 1963 (PL-88-210, signed December 18, 1963), and eventually the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (PL 88-452, signed August 20, 1964).

¹⁰³ Kremen, “MDTA.”

James P. Mitchell had warned, “The United States’ margin of advantage in the Cold War is slipping.” The only prevention was a program to “develop and use” the nation’s skills.¹⁰⁴

As passed in 1962, the MDTA provided funds through both the Department of Labor and HEW for institutional and on-the-job training. HEW was responsible for disbursing funds to state vocational agencies, but the Department of Labor had to approve individual programs and paid weekly allowances to participants. The law required participants to be unemployed, male, heads-of-household with prior work experience, as its original purpose was to retrain redundant workers, allowing them to succeed in new types of employment and therefore better their families. The legislation assumed that men were most able to accomplish this goal of full economic participation for families.¹⁰⁵ In 1963, the law was amended to allow anyone from families where the primary male breadwinner was unemployed to participate and lowered the minimum age of participants from 19 to 17.¹⁰⁶ With these changes, Selective Service rejectees, who generally did not yet have dependents, could take part.¹⁰⁷

The Selective Service and AFES examinations, therefore, became one of the major sources of participants for all MDTA programs by 1964.¹⁰⁸ Once men received

¹⁰⁴ National Manpower Council, *Improving Work Skills of the Nation: Proceedings of a Conference on Skilled Manpower* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955), 149, as quoted in Kremen, “MDTA.”

¹⁰⁵ *The Impact of Federal Antipoverty Policies*, 32.

¹⁰⁶ PL 88-214, the amendments to the MDTA, was signed into law on December 19, 1963. Women could also take part in the program, but the vast majority of clients continued to be men.

¹⁰⁷ U.S. House of Representatives, *Amendments of Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962*, H. Rpt. 861, 88th Cong., 1st sess., October 18, 1963, 1-3.

¹⁰⁸ Under the 1963 amendments to the MDTA, up to 25 percent of all men receiving literacy or occupational skills training could be under the age of 22. Most other

their referrals from either their local boards or from counselors at AFES stations, they were funneled into programs that served other youth as well. HEW and Labor officials hoped such training would create “new attitudes in families of the underprivileged.” Men who failed the military entrance exams were seen as a particularly rich source of candidates because, as *One-Third of a Nation* indicated, they were likely to be poor and they were all men. Even after the MDTA was amended, its primary aim remained to lift all Americans out of poverty by providing services to current and future heads-of-household. As HEW’s 1965 report on the status of the program explained, “A new home and orientation comes to an entire household when its head finds a way to break through the self-perpetuating cycle of poverty and deprivation that comes from lack of skill.” Job training, therefore was the best way to encourage both self-respect and economic citizenship. “To feed, clothe, and house himself and his family – to have the material base of dignity – a man must have the opportunity to work,” claimed HEW.¹⁰⁹

The results of the referral programs were mixed. Without question, they offered services and opportunities otherwise unavailable to many men rejected from the military. Job training, literacy classes, and referrals for medical treatment no doubt altered the course of some men’s lives. The National Committee for Children and Youth (NCCY), an organization that provided rehabilitation service to men who had tried to volunteer for military service but who had been rejected, for example, crowed about its successes in

clients of MDTA programs were identified after they voluntarily registered with local Employment Service offices. See Institute of Management and Labor Relations, *The Selection of Trainees under MDTA*, Rutgers University, 1966, 2.

¹⁰⁹ U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, *Education and Training: The Bridge Between Man and His Work: Third Annual Report of the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare to the Congress on Training Activities Under the Manpower Development and Training Act*, April 1, 1965, x, 2.

Washington, D.C. and Baltimore. It declared its final report in 1967, “a valedictory.” The report used case studies to illustrate the life-changing effects of the program. Clorester W., Sandy Z, Stephen J., Michael E., Larry W., Larry T., and Larry P. – all from poor or working-class families and all either high school dropouts or experiencing significant academic delay – managed to pass the Armed Forces entrance exams after receiving intensive literacy and numeracy tutoring through the NCCY. As a result of these successes, Clorester became “a very happy young man,” Michael “achieved his ultimate goal,” Larry W. was “very proud,” and Larry T. would be able to “work as a motor mechanic” after discharge. The NCCY had seen such success in its three years of operation that it had expanded its program to Chicago, St. Louis, San Antonio, Los Angeles, and Rochester, N.Y. and was poised to make the entire program permanent through the Bureau of Employment Services in the Department of Labor.¹¹⁰ The NCCY program was unique, however, in that it was open only to men who had failed their entrance exams after *volunteering* for enlistment. Participants had not been identified through the draft, so they were particularly motivated to raise their test scores in order to enter the military.

Other demonstration projects proved less attractive to the men they were intended to help. The Department of Labor had originally estimated that it would be able to help approximately one half of all rejectees, but the results of pilot programs in several states

¹¹⁰ National Committee for Children and Youth, *NCCY Youth Services Project: Final Report to the Office of Manpower Policy, Evaluation and Research, United States Department of Labor*, 1967, v, 75-81. Quotes, pp. v., 76, 78, 79, 81.

fell well short of the half-way mark.¹¹¹ A vocational rehabilitation program at the Rhode Island AFES found that only 12.7 percent of the men rejected for military service were eligible for VR services, and of those, only about 2/3 accepted the proffered help. In total, only 417 of the 8,824 men rejected by the Rhode Island AFES between January 1965 and May 1967 accepted services.¹¹² The results of a pilot study in South Carolina were no better. This project, which centered on the five counties around the AFES at Fort Jackson, offered physical rehabilitation in addition to VR services, yet in the three years of its existence, only 7.7 percent of the total number of men rejected, or 165 men, were accepted for services, and of these, only 112 accepted help.¹¹³ These numbers were particularly dismal given that the program offered hospital care, including surgery when needed.¹¹⁴ Moreover, South Carolina, which rejected close to 66 percent of its potential

¹¹¹ John F. Henning to Ivan A. Nestingen, February 19, 1964, attached to Ivan A. Nestingen to John F. Henning, March 20, 1964, Selective Service Rejectees, Box 2, entry UD-UP 3, RG 235, NARA.

¹¹² The Rhode Island AFES examined 24,941 men between January 1965 and May 1967. It rejected 8,824, or 35 percent of them. Of the rejectees, 1,125 were determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services. 514 of that number, however, were already in the state's Department of Vocational Rehabilitation's system, leaving only 611 men as new clients. Of these, only 417, or 4.7 percent of the total male population accepted services. See Rhode Island Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, "Why I-Y," 10-11.

¹¹³ The Fort Jackson AFES rejected 1,450 men between May 1, 1964 and April 30, 1967. Of these, 347 were referred to the program and 165 were accepted for services, but only 112 of the men chose to participate. See Hubert M. Clements, Jack A. Duncan, and Richard E. Hardy, *The Unfit Majority: A Research Study of the Rehabilitation of Selective Service Rejectees in South Carolina*, South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department, October 1967, 10, 25-26.

¹¹⁴ It is unlikely that the infamous Tuskegee Syphilis Study, which was concurrently being conducted by the Public Health Service, had any effect on the African Americans who were chosen to participate in this program. Although the Tuskegee study had been in operation since 1932, news that the PHS unethically denied black men treatment for their syphilis did not break until 1972, after this program had already ended. While the race of men accepting medical treatment was not published in the South

draftees as compared to Rhode Island's 35 percent, was seen as one of the major potential beneficiaries of the national initiative.¹¹⁵

The two studies listed several reasons for men's failure to participate, including poor communication between counselors and potential clients and staffing deficiencies, but the major, overarching problem identified by both was the fact that the programs were tied to military service. Correcting their defects would have made the men eligible to be drafted. Both programs spanned the years of major escalation of the Vietnam War. Men who were found acceptable for military service, especially through the draft rather than enlistment, were highly likely to find themselves assigned to infantry units stationed in Southeast Asia. VR personnel in South Carolina termed this threat an "intangible" that "pervade[d] the entire study." "This hypothesis," they concluded, might "help explain why [53.5 %] of rejectees failed to answer the several letters sent to them by the Counselor-Coordinator."¹¹⁶ Rhode Island researchers similarly believed the "loss of about one in three between screening and actual service would not be expected to be as large if the examining program was a routine one without relationship to military induction." The report emphasized, "Many [men] preferred to retain their disability rather than risk later military induction by undergoing corrective treatment."¹¹⁷

A third project, a health referral program in Tennessee with similarly poor participation rates, denied that the draft had anything to do with men's failure to accept services. One of its counselors concluded, however, "The program would be much more

Carolina report, 56 of the men who accepted any type of treatment were black and 56 were white. See *ibid.*, 30.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, forward; "Why I-Y," 8-9.

¹¹⁶ *The Unfit Majority*, 33.

¹¹⁷ "Why I-Y," 10, 31.

effective if the counselors could be located somewhere completely independent of the examining station. The majority of the boys...are either...elated to have been rejected, or terribly frightened.”¹¹⁸ He did not elaborate on why the men were happy following their rejections, but it is fair to assume that the fact that they could no longer be compelled to serve in Vietnam was at least part of the answer.

The war affected these programs in other ways as well. As it escalated, AFES stopped examining men as they turned 18, focusing instead on evaluating the men who faced immediate induction. Between July 1964, when the Army first started examining 18-year-olds, and January 1965, AFES evaluated an average of 30,000 of these men per month, in addition to the usual load of men about to enlist or be conscripted. In September 1965, after all of the service branches began to use to Selective Service to fill their ranks, AFES examined only 11,953 18-year-olds.¹¹⁹ By January 1966, the number had dropped so low that *Selective Service*, which since mid-1964 had published a monthly article featuring the number of 18-year-olds the system examined, ceased running the column. Examination stations were too busy inducting soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines to be able to devote extra resources to the War on Poverty. Older men who failed their AFQT’s continued to be referred to pilot programs for another two years, but it appears that funding for this particular Great Society initiative petered out after 1968.

¹¹⁸ The Tennessee program, which operated at the AFES stations near Memphis, Knoxville, and Nashville between October 1, 1965 and September 20, 1966, successfully referred only 207 of the 10,344 men rejected for physical reasons to health services. See Mayshark and Balyeat, *Analysis of Selective Service Health Referral Patterns in Tennessee*, 6-7, 31-32. Quote pp. 64-65.

¹¹⁹ “July Examinations of 18-Year-Olds,” *Selective Service* 15 (Sept. 1965): 3.

Nevertheless, these referral programs are important. First, the failure of men to participate in them, especially during wartime, indicates that many of the targeted men were not all that eager to serve in the military, even if they could have learned job skills or gained free medical care along the way. They did not want to qualify for military service. Whatever they felt their obligations were as citizens or as men – supporting their families, defending their nation, or something else – survival took precedence. These men, who were overwhelmingly from poor and minority backgrounds, joined the college-educated of their age cohort in looking for ways to avoid military service.¹²⁰

Second, these programs illustrate the military establishment’s willingness to participate in social welfare programs at a moment when domestic issues were of paramount importance to the rest of the policy community. The Department of Defense and Selective Service System, as members of that community, reflected the values of the day. In that regard, they came to focus on helping men achieve full economic citizenship. They committed resources to help other federal agencies train the nation’s least privileged men to become breadwinners. Developing domestic strength through a strong economy and full employment became a goal of national defense alongside the projection of military might – at least until the Vietnam War eclipsed the Great Society as the primary priority of the Johnson administration.

* * * * *

¹²⁰ Gerald Gill similarly argued that African American men sought methods to evade the draft. Poor and working-class black men variously committed petty crimes prior to being inducted in order to be disqualified on moral grounds, deliberately failed to register with the Selective Service, chose not to appear when called for preinduction or induction exams, and simply melted away in urban environments. For a full discussion of African-American draft avoidance during the Vietnam War, see Gerald Robert Gill, “Afro-American Opposition to the United States’ Wars of the Twentieth Century: Dissent, Discontent, and Disinterest” (Ph.D. Diss: Howard University, 1987), 212-231.

As might be imagined, Hershey involved himself in the discourse on physical fitness, national security, and service to the state from the beginning. He sincerely believed that disqualifying a man from military service did both the man and the nation a disservice. By declaring a registrant IV-F (unfit for service), he wrote, “the Government gives him some evidence from which he can infer that he is relieved from further obligation to serve his Government in the Armed Forces,” a patent fallacy in Hershey’s civic-republican philosophy of citizenship.¹²¹ Eliminating a man from the manpower pool as a result of remediable defects robbed him of the “self confidence and vigor” that would follow from full participation in the military and robbed the government of that man’s possible defense contributions.¹²² The problem of unfitness, both physical and mental, therefore, was of the utmost concern to the Selective Service.

Hershey supported Eisenhower’s goals for the PCYF. “It behooves us to eradicate those conditions which make the United States less effectual in peace or in war,” he told a 1956 meeting of the President’s Conference on the Fitness of American Youth in Annapolis, Maryland. “It is not enough that a schoolboy should be taught to arise and salute the flag but he should be taught that he must be physically and mentally capable of service to the flag which cannot be satisfied with a salute.” In order to accomplish this goal, Hershey lobbied for the creation of “facilities available to everyone

¹²¹ Hershey, “The Need of a Yardstick,” *Selective Service* 6 (Sept. 1956): 2.

¹²² Summary, n.d., attached to Ted Reardon to the President, August 9, 1961, Council on Youth Fitness, February 1961- November 1962, series 07, Departments and Agencies, President’s Office Files, Presidential Papers, Papers of John F. Kennedy, John F. Kennedy Library Online, Digital Identifier JFKPOF-094-001, <http://www.jfklibrary.org/Asset-Viewer/Archives/JFKPOF-094-001.aspx>.

for the correction of correctable defects,” for it was the “responsibility of the lower echelons of Government to assist the needy citizen.”¹²³

When Kennedy and then Johnson asked him to take part in the War on Poverty, Hershey threw the full weight of his agency behind the initiative. He sat on the President’s Task Force for Manpower Conservation and fully endorsed the committee’s findings. He lent the resources of the Selective Service to the referral program for 18-year-olds, appearing before Congress in the fall of 1964 to ask for supplemental appropriations in order to complete the task.¹²⁴ He highlighted the Selective Service’s role in the War on Poverty at the 1965 annual meeting of state directors and the bi-annual regional conferences for reserve officers attached to the agency, going so far as to require personnel to attend lectures by officials with the Office of Economic Opportunity, HEW, and the Department of Labor.¹²⁵ When Johnson asked Hershey to sit on the President’s Committee on Manpower and the Economic Opportunity Council, he readily agreed.¹²⁶

¹²³ “Campaign for Physical Fitness Urged,” *Selective Service* 6 (Sept. 1956): 1.

¹²⁴ Hershey was semi-successful in this effort. He asked for an additional \$11.4 million for fiscal 1965, but the Senate granted him only \$6.5 million, and then only as a temporary expenditure. The Senate Committee on Appropriations made it clear in its report that it did not think the Selective Service the “appropriate agency of the Federal Government to examine young men for participation in the manpower conservation program.” See Senate Appropriations Committee, *Supplemental Appropriation Bill, 1965*, S. Rpt. 1604, 88th Cong., 2d sess., September 29, 1964, 11.

¹²⁵ “State Directors View Role of System in Poverty War,” *Selective Service* 15 (April 1965): 4; Report of the State Directors Meeting, Region III, September 23-24, 1964, Region III Correspondence (Training) 1960, box 109, Training and Conference Files, Entry UD 20, RG 147, NARA; John W. Barber to William Kizer, June 18, 1965, Conference One-Region VI-10-24, July 1965, *ibid.*; Memo, Regions V and VI, June 11, 1965, *ibid.*

¹²⁶ The Committee, under the chairmanship of the Secretary of Labor, consisted of the Director of Selective Service; the Secretaries of Defense, Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, and HEW; the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission; the Director of the National Science Foundation; the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration; and the Chairman of the Civil Service Commission. See

As a member of the latter group, he solicited suggestions from the entire Selective Service System on how to best meet the problem of poverty, writing an article in *Selective Service*, mailing a letter directly to the reserve officers assigned to the agency, and issuing a State Director Advice memo. Within two months, he had already heard from 70 of the 134 Reserve and National Guard units attached to the Selective Service and from local boards and state offices across the country.¹²⁷

Hershey also proudly described the agency's other contributions. By March 1965, it had established a library of reference material on poverty at national headquarters; "classified, sent for physical examination, and referred as appropriate to the Department of Labor for counseling" approximately 80,000 18-year-olds; sent letters referring another 250,000 older registrants to rehabilitation services; participated in at least 20 pilot programs through AFES; put fliers from the newly created Job Corps in over 4,000 local boards; and discussed deferment options with representatives of the Volunteers in Service for America (VISTA) program. Moreover, many State Directors had joined advisory committees on the state level.¹²⁸ The agency took part in the Youth Opportunity Program to offer summer jobs to disadvantaged youth.¹²⁹ Hershey wanted his agency to be front and center in the War on Poverty.

Hershey's biographer, George Q. Flynn, argued that as a "conservative Republican," Hershey "was uncomfortable serving as an agent of social reform," and

"President Creates Committee on Manpower Needs, Resources," *Selective Service* 14 (May 1965): 3-4.

¹²⁷ Hershey, "SS Personnel are Invited to Joint Poverty War," *Selective Service* 15 (Jan. 1965): 1-2; "Efforts of Selective Service in Poverty War are Extensive," *Selective Service* 15 (March 1965), 1, 4.

¹²⁸ Ibid. Quote p. 1.

¹²⁹ "Summer Jobs Being Sought for Ages 16-21," *Selective Service* 16 (June 1966): 3.

implied that Hershey participated in Great Society programs in order to keep his agency politically relevant.¹³⁰ Such an interpretation, however, overlooks the implications of Hershey's civic republican mindset. Hershey strongly believed that service to the state was every male citizen's responsibility, but as shown in chapter three, his definition of "service" evolved through the late 1950s and early 1960s. Military service was best, but in a technological age when nuclear war threatened the nation's survival, men could serve the state through their occupational choices. Scientists and engineers were vital, as was a successful educational system to train them. The U.S. also needed a strong economic base and a functioning civil defense structure. These needs could only be met with a healthy, educated civilian populace. As he told the readers of *Selective Service*, ensuring national success was a task "far too big for anything less than a combined coordinated drive by...government at all levels and nongovernment at all levels, and citizens everywhere" to help the nation's "youth so they [could] help themselves." The Cold War could not be won unless all young men came "to accept the full responsibilities of American citizenship," including "the will to work" and "confidence that the Nation [was] worth the best they [could] give." "It must be realized by us all," he exhorted his readership, "that our very survival is at stake. The responsibilities [of citizenship] must be shared by all. The burden is too heavy for the few."¹³¹ Training men for national defense, whatever form that defense took, was an obligation of the federal government, even if that meant a war on poverty. By defining social welfare as a security issue, the Republican Hershey was able to support a Democratic president's initiatives. Indeed,

¹³⁰ George Q. Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey, Mr. Selective Service* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 227, 232.

¹³¹ Hershey, "SS Personnel are Invited to Join Poverty War," *Selective Service* 15 (Jan. 1965): 1-2.

growth of the federal government in the name of defense was a hallmark of the Cold War era Republican Party.¹³²

As part of his crusade to make civilians understand their responsibility to the nation, Hershey campaigned for a new system of classification that would shift those men whose physical or mental condition could allow them to participate in civil defense, if not the armed forces, into a separate category of call. He believed this new rating would “tell a young man what he [could] do rather than give him basis for believing that he [could] ... escape his obligations because of his unacceptability.”¹³³ Hershey introduced the idea as early as 1956 and finally succeeded in January 1962, when the I-Y category was added to the Selective Service classification system. It encompassed all men with minor physical defects and those who did not meet the heightened mental standards of peacetime but who would have qualified for military service under wartime standards. Approximately forty percent of the men who had previously failed their pre-induction exams were moved from the IV-F category into the new I-Y classification.¹³⁴ By early 1964, approximately 100,000 new I-Y men were being added to the manpower pool each year.¹³⁵

¹³² See, for example, Michael J. Hogan, *A Cross of Iron: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of the National Security State, 1945-1954* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Aaron L. Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State: America's Anti-Statism and its Cold War Grand Strategy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000); David A. Horowitz, *Beyond Left and Right: Insurgency and the Establishment* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1997), ch. 10; Michael Brenes, "For Right and Might: The Cold War and the Making of Big-Government Conservatism," (PhD Diss., City University of New York, 2013).

¹³³ Hershey, "Storekeeper of Manpower," *Selective Service* 6 (July 1956): 2.

¹³⁴ "IV-F Review Puts 41 Percent in 'Y' Category," *Selective Service* 11 (February 1961): 1; Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 268.

¹³⁵ Hershey, "Induction for Rehabilitation, Citizenship Training of Disqualified Personnel," *Selective Service* 14 (Feb. 1964): 1-2.

Early in 1964, in keeping with his desire to use the armed forces to improve American men, Hershey proposed inducting I-Y men into the military for two-year terms, during which time they could be offered basic literacy courses, receive corrective medical care, and be trained in “teamwork and responsible citizenship,” all “without overemphasis on military training.” After the initial term of enlistment ended, he proposed that they be transferred into the Reserves, a move that would have the added benefit of bolstering reserve programs with extra men each year.¹³⁶ Secretary of Labor Wirtz, and Dr. Stafford Warren, Kennedy’s Assistant to the President for Mental Retardation, had proposed a similar “para-military” program a few months earlier as they discussed rehabilitation options for military rejectees. Even the Commissioner of the Vocational Rehabilitation Administration, Mary Switzer, thought this a policy decision that “should be considered most carefully,” as the military had the camps, personnel, and “vast training experience,” necessary for such an endeavor.¹³⁷ By the second half of the 1964, Secretary of Defense McNamara had picked up on the proposal.

* * * * *

Aside from propagating the Vietnam War, former Ford executive McNamara was probably best known within the Department of Defense for bringing to the Pentagon modern management techniques, including computerized data collection and top-down leadership.¹³⁸ But he was also committed to using the resources of the Defense

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Memo: Secretary Wirtz’ Proposal to Work with the Selective Service System in Identifying and Training a Large Group of Young Men Rejected for Military Service because of ‘Mental Reasons,’ September 23, 1963, Selective Service Rejectees, box 2, entry UD-UP 3, RG 235, NARA.

¹³⁸ See Douglas Kinnard, “McNamara at the Pentagon,” *Parameters* 10, no. 3 (1980): 22-31.

Department to achieve social aims. Writing in 1968, as he left office, he explained, “the Department’s primary role of combat readiness is fully consistent with innovative programs designed to utilize...its potential for significantly contributing to the solution of the nation’s social problems.”¹³⁹ Within three years of his appointment, he had “actively committed the huge defense complex to the struggle against domestic social problems,” based on the conviction that the nation’s security lay “not solely or even primarily in military force, but equally in developing stable patterns of economic and political growth both at home and in the developing nations throughout the world.” In the end, he argued, “poverty and social injustice ...endanger[ed]... national security as much as any military threat.”¹⁴⁰

Based on this belief, McNamara initiated a new battle in the War on Poverty in August 1964. Borrowing from Wirtz and Hershey’s ideas, he proposed a new Special Training and Enlistment Program (STEP) to be run through the Army at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri. It would allow up to 10,000 volunteers per year who would otherwise be ineligible for military service to choose to have their period of basic training stretched from the usual eight weeks to 14 as a condition for acceptance into the armed forces. The extended training interval would include basic instruction in English, math, social studies and science. Soldiers who, after that time, still could not achieve a passing score on the

¹³⁹ Robert S. McNamara, *The Essence of Security: Reflections in Office* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), xi.

¹⁴⁰ Fred Richard Bahr, “The Expanding Role of the Department of Defense as an Instrument of Social Change” (D.B.A. Diss.: George Washington University, 1970), 12; McNamara identified three initiatives as those he was most proud of: a Defense boycott of segregated housing complexes that ultimately forced private owners and management companies around military installations to desegregate; Project 100,000, which will be discussed below; and Project TRANSITION, a program designed to help servicemen on the verge of discharge find jobs and otherwise integrate back into civilian life. See McNamara, *The Essence of Security*, ch. 8. Quotes, pp. xi, 123.

AFQT would also receive special classes during their advanced individual training. Those with medical defects, including men who were over or underweight would receive specialized medical attention. If, after their training, Army officials deemed individual STEP men acceptable for service, they would finish their enlistments as privates. If not, they would be discharged as veterans without penalty.¹⁴¹

Johnson supported the plan wholeheartedly as another way to solve the problem of youth unemployment, telling his Secretary of Defense that McNamara could “do it better than the social scientists.” McNamara, however, faced opposition from the Army, which regarded STEP as a plan to turn its training posts into “moron camps,” and from Congress.¹⁴² Georgia Democrat, Senator Richard B. Russell, the Chair of the Appropriations Subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee, was particularly opposed, as he feared the induction of large numbers of southern African Americans.¹⁴³ Russell worried about the harm that would ensue to the Southern economy if too many black agricultural workers were removed from farms through induction. He also believed that arming black men was dangerous. Although requests for supplemental appropriations for the program passed the House, they failed in the Senate, amidst worries that STEP would duplicate the purpose of the Selective Service referral program

¹⁴¹ Edward J. Drea, *McNamara, Clifford, and the Burdens of Vietnam, 1965-1969*, Secretaries of Defense Historical Series, vol. 6 (Washington, D.C.: Historical Office, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2011), 266; Senate Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, *Department of Defense Reprogramming, 1965: Hearings before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, United States Senate, on the Department of the Army Special Training Enlistment Program (STEP)*, 89th Cong., 1st sess., January 1965, 9, 23-25.

¹⁴² Michael Beschloss, ed., *Reaching for Glory: Lyndon Johnson's Secret White House Tapes, 1964-1965* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001), 141.

¹⁴³ Drea, *McNamara, Clifford, and the Burdens of Vietnam*, 266; Beschloss, *Reaching for Glory*, 141.

and skepticism that the military was the proper venue for social programs.¹⁴⁴ Ultimately, Congress banned the Department of Defense from using any of its fiscal 1966 or 1967 budgets to finance the program.¹⁴⁵

McNamara, however, continued to look for a way around congressional strictures. He firmly believed that military service could benefit the nation's disadvantaged. He argued that a stint in the armed forces could offer "the hapless and hopeless victims of poverty....a sense of personal achievement, a sense of succeeding at a task, a sense of their own intrinsic potential." Military service could free them from the "squalid ghettos of their external environment" and the "internal and more destructive ghetto of personal disillusionment and despair." Such liberation would return men to civilian life "equipped with new skills and attitudes" that would help them "break out of the self-perpetuating poverty cycle."¹⁴⁶ A program to rehabilitate men who had been rejected from military service could bolster national security by eliminating a source of social unrest and benefit American combat readiness by boosting the number of men in uniform.

First, he used the escalation of the conflict in Vietnam and its attendant rise in draft calls to reduce induction standards for both volunteers and inductees.¹⁴⁷ Prior to 1965, prospective recruits needed to pass the AFQT, defined as a score over 30 out of 100. All men who scored between 10 and 30 were rated by the Army as Category IV and declared ineligible for service except during a national emergency, a standing that came

¹⁴⁴ Senate Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, *Department of Defense Reprogramming, 1965*, 13, 17, 20

¹⁴⁵ U.S. House of Representatives, *Department of Defense Appropriation Bill, 1966: Conference Report*, H. Rpt. 1006, 89th Cong., 1st sess., September 15, 1965, 2, 6.

¹⁴⁶ McNamara, *The Essence of Security*, 128, 131.

¹⁴⁷ Inductions standards were reduced in two waves, one in September 1965 and the second in April 1966. See Laurence and Ramsberger, *Low-Aptitude Men in the Military*, 23-24.

with a I-Y Selective Service classification. Once the new standards were fully implemented in 1966, high Category IV men who scored between 16 and 30 and had graduated from high school were admitted to the military, while those without diplomas were administered the Army Qualification Battery (AQB), a second set of aptitude tests. If they passed two of seven subject areas with scores of 90 or above, they were deemed eligible for service. Men in the lower half of Category IV, those who scored between 10 and 15 on the AFQT, also could enlist or be drafted if they scored over 90 in two AQB areas and scored in at least the 80th percentile on the verbal and arithmetical portions of the AFQT combined.¹⁴⁸ Officials justified the reduction in standards by claiming that allowing more men to enlist would reduce the military's dependency on conscription, since it would allow more volunteers to enlist. This move had particularly political ramifications once Johnson revoked the protected status of childless married men in August 1965. If more previously ineligible men were able to volunteer, fewer married men would have to be conscripted.¹⁴⁹

When McNamara learned that the Marine Corps “recycled” recruits who failed basic training – that is, it sent them back to the beginning to start over, rather than discharging them – he decided to try this process on a grander scale.¹⁵⁰ In August 1966, in a speech before the Veterans of Foreign Wars annual convention, McNamara announced the Defense Department's intention to bring up to 100,000 previously

¹⁴⁸ Thomas G. Sticht, et al., *Cast-Off Youth: Policy and Training Methods from the Military Experience* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1987), 42; Drea, *McNamara, Clifford, and the Burdens of Vietnam*, 268.

¹⁴⁹ Lowering enlistment and induction standards meant the Selective Service was less likely to have to draft married men, even after their special status was eliminated. Drea, *McNamara, Clifford, and the Burdens of Vietnam*, 266-67; Laurence and Ramsberger, *Low-Aptitude Men in the Military*, 20.

¹⁵⁰ Thomas G. Sticht, et al., *Cast-Off Youth*, 190.

ineligible men into the military each year in order to “salvage” them, “first to productive military careers and later for productive roles in society.”¹⁵¹ Project 100,000, as it came to be known, would “rescue” poor, and especially minority men, from the “poverty-encrusted environments” in which they had been raised.¹⁵² This new program would focus on Category IV men and reduce the standards for admittance to the military even farther. “New Standards” men, as participants were named, were considered eligible for service if they had graduated high school and had AFQT scores over 10, roughly the equivalent of a fifth grade education. Men who had not graduated from high school only had to pass one AQB rather than two if they scored between a 16 and 30 on the AFQT or two AQBs if their AFQT score was between 10 and 15.¹⁵³ New Standards men were admitted into all branches of military service, both through enlistment and the draft, using a quota system. Overall, an average of 22.3 percent of all new accessions into the military – up to 26 percent in the Army – had to be Category IV men.¹⁵⁴

Project 100,000 differed from the STEP proposal in a number of ways. First, New Standards men were not concentrated at one particular training center. Instead, they were distributed throughout the military training infrastructure, receiving their basic training at 18 different posts around the country. They were assigned to advanced

¹⁵¹ Half of the 100,000 men per year were to be acquired through the draft. This meant that I-Y men who had previously believed themselves to be exempt from service, except in the event of a national emergency, would now be eligible to be drafted.

¹⁵² “Excerpts from Address by McNamara,” *New York Times*, Aug. 24, 1966; “McNamara Plans to ‘Salvage’ 40,000 Rejected in Draft,” *New York Times*, Aug. 24, 1966.

¹⁵³ Sticht, et al., *Cast-Off Youth*, 42.

¹⁵⁴ Drea, *McNamara, Clifford, and the Burdens of Vietnam*, 268-270; Sticht, et al., *Cast-Off Youth*, 41. Between 1967 and 1972, between 24 and 26 percent of the Army’s new accessions were expected to be from Category IV. The Navy and Air Force’s quotas ranged between 15 and 18 percent and the Marine Corps’ between 18 and 24 percent. See Laurence and Ramsberger, *Low-Aptitude Men in the Military*, 29.

training based on their basic training performance and interviews. Second, they were not told they were part of a special program. The Defense Department kept copious records on their performance and evaluated both the men and program constantly, but the men themselves were officially unaware of their difference from the rest of their colleagues.¹⁵⁵ Third, they did not receive dedicated literacy or numeracy training as STEP men would have. In fact, Defense officials specifically emphasized that “Project One Hundred Thousand [was] not a literacy project.”¹⁵⁶ These differences allowed the Department of Defense to circumvent the Congressional stipulations that forbade the use of defense budgets for special education programs. The branches of service had to integrate enhanced training into already existent programs.¹⁵⁷

Moreover, McNamara wanted the program to function as a pedagogical laboratory. “By pruning from existing courses all nonessential information,” he explained to the VFW, “we have found that we can not only substantially shorten the training period, but...we can dramatically boost the students’ success at learning.” Since traditional educational methods were “largely irrelevant to actual on-the-job performance requirements,” the Defense Department was experimenting with “carefully designed programmed instruction” to allow “the student to proceed at his own individual pace, rather than merely be herded along at an arbitrarily determined group pace.”¹⁵⁸ Literacy training, therefore, would be folded into skills training that all trainees received, and New

¹⁵⁵ The Department of Defense required monthly and weekly reports on every New Standards Man. See *Ibid.*, 40-41.

¹⁵⁶ Memo: From Mr. Greenberg to Mr. Moskowitz, Feb. 27, 1967, Project 100,000, box 2, entry 14, UD-04W, accession 72A1942, RG 330, Records of the Secretary of Defense [hereafter RG 330], NARA. [emphasis in original.]

¹⁵⁷ Project One Hundred Thousand, attached to *ibid.*

¹⁵⁸ “Excerpts from Address by McNamara,” *New York Times*, Aug. 24, 1966.

Standards Men would be evaluated using a “job-related curriculum, practical exercises, modern instructional media, and performance tests.”¹⁵⁹ Anyone who failed to perform adequately by the end of their period of basic training would be “recycled” back to the beginning to try again or sent to motivational platoons for men with disciplinary infractions. The Army Directorate of Personnel Studies and Research was made responsible for studying the “capabilities, training needs, and uses of soldiers with low aptitudes.”¹⁶⁰

In total, all branches of service added a combined total of 354,000 New Standards men to their active duty rosters between 1966 and 1971, when the program ended. Ninety-three percent of them were defined as low-aptitude. The rest had physical ailments that the program planned to remediate.¹⁶¹ Their demographic profile was striking. Approximately half volunteered and half were drafted.¹⁶² Seventy percent came from backgrounds of poverty and 60 percent from single-parent families. Less than 20 percent had graduated high school, and 40 percent read at a sixth grade level or less.¹⁶³ More than half came from the southern states, and of these, 65% were African American. Overall, more than 40 percent of New Standards Men were black, at a time when only 9.1

¹⁵⁹ Project One Hundred Thousand, RG 330, NARA.

¹⁶⁰ “Army Studies Capabilities of Soldiers,” *Selective Service* 16 (Dec. 1966): 1.

¹⁶¹ See Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee, *Readjustment of Project 100,000 Veterans: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, House of Representatives*, Serial 101-38, 101st Cong., 1st sess., February 28, 1990, 1.

¹⁶² Lisa Hsiao, “Project 100,000: The Great Society’s Answer to Military Manpower Needs in Vietnam,” *Vietnam Generation* 1, no. 2 (spring 1989): 16.

¹⁶³ Lawrence M. Baskir and William Strauss, *Chance and Circumstance: The Draft, The War, and the Vietnam Generation* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 129.

percent all new soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen each year were African American.¹⁶⁴

According to researchers Lawrence M. Baskir and William A. Strauss, military recruiters specifically targeted poor, black neighborhoods to find volunteers. For example, of the 125 men black recruiters in Oakland, California enlisted in one year, 120 were from poor neighborhoods, and of those, 90 percent had AFQT scores that classified them as Category IV. An advertisement in *Hot Rod* magazine, a publication aimed at an urban readership, read, “Vietnam: Hot, Wet and Muddy – Here’s the place to make a man.”¹⁶⁵ A high proportion of poor and black men were both expected and desired. One early memo referenced the hope that Project 100,000 would be close to 60 percent black.¹⁶⁶

Supporters of Project 100,000, most notably former Assistant Secretary of Labor Daniel Patrick Moynihan, saw the program as a savior for black men. In his infamous report, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*, Moynihan identified “the utterly masculine world” of the armed forces as a vital corrective to the “disorganized and matrifocal” family environment in which most young black men were raised. “A world away from women...run by strong men of unquestioned authority, where discipline” was “harsh...but orderly and predictable” and where rewards were “granted on the basis of performance,” could help offset the “tangle of pathology” that imposed a “crushing

¹⁶⁴ Drea, *McNamara, Clifford, and the Burdens of Vietnam*, 269.

¹⁶⁵ Baskir and Strauss, *Chance and Circumstance*, 128.

¹⁶⁶ Informal Memorandum for Mr. Moskowitz, Feb. 6, 1967, Project 100,000 box 2, entry 14, UD-O4W, accession 72A1942, RG 330, NARA.

burden on the Negro male.”¹⁶⁷ That 67.5 percent of black men were denied the opportunity to serve in the military because they could not pass entrance exams was a heinous situation, according to Moynihan. High standards denied these men access to the G.I. Bill, federally-backed mortgages, life insurance, civil service preference, veterans hospitals and pensions. Moreover, these men lost out on valuable skills training and employment. In a 1966 article in *New Republic*, Moynihan argued that if African Americans served in the military in proportion to their numbers in the population and if the unemployment rate for young black men was correspondingly reduced, then “the unemployment rate for non-white males in the relevant age group [in 1964] would have been *lower* than that for whites.” In light of this, he claimed, the use of the military as “a socializing experience for the poor” was America’s “best hope” for “turning out equal citizens.”¹⁶⁸

On the opposite end of the political spectrum, southern congressmen lifted their opposition against using the armed forces for social engineering projects. Senator Russell, who had prevented STEP from proceeding in 1964, now advocated the lowering of standards so that “damn dumb bunnies” couldn’t escape the draft.¹⁶⁹ To these politicians, it was safer to send a black man to Vietnam than to leave him to the civil rights movement, especially as cities across the nation erupted in violence in 1967. Local boards throughout the South were able to use the policy changes instituted by McNamara

¹⁶⁷ Office of Policy Planning and Research, United States Department of Labor, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*, March 1965, 29, 42.

¹⁶⁸ Daniel P. Moynihan, “Who Gets in the Army?” *New Republic*, Nov. 5, 1966, 21, 22 [emphasis in original].

¹⁶⁹ Quoted in Drea, *McNamara, Clifford, and the Burdens of Vietnam*, 266.

to draft African Americans well out of proportion to their representation in the population as a whole, just as more men were being sent into harm's way.¹⁷⁰

McNamara appears to have split the difference. He continued to advocate the program as a means to offer young men educational skills and economic reward. "If so massive a number of our young men were educationally unqualified for even the least complicated tasks of military service," he asked the crowd at the National Association of Educational Broadcasters 1967 convention, "how could they reasonably be expected to lead productive and rewarding lives in an increasingly technological and highly-skilled society?" Project 100,000 offered undereducated men "the Defense Department's experience in educational innovation and on-the-job training" in an "atmosphere of high motivation and morale." But he also claimed that these men would become a danger to society if a solution to poverty were not found. Without a "strong sense of their own worth and potential, they, their wives, and their children would almost inevitably be the unproductive recipients of some form of the dole 10 years from now." More importantly, he warned that "if unchecked and unreversed," the "inner ghetto of the poverty-scarred personality" would "fester into explosive frustrations of bitterness and violence," a meaningful reference after the wave of urban rioting that had taken place that summer.¹⁷¹

The results of the program were mixed. The Department of Defense touted its successes. Approximately 96 percent of New Standards men successfully completed their basic training requirements, compared to a 98 percent completion rate for all those

¹⁷⁰ By 1967, studies showed that 30 percent of qualified African Americans were being drafted, compared to only 18 percent of qualified white men. See Hsiao, "Project 100,000," 24-25.

¹⁷¹ McNamara, "Social Inequities: Urban's Racial Ills," Nov. 7, 1967, reprinted in *Vital Speeches of the Day* 34, no. 4 (December 1, 1967): 101.

who had entered the military under the earlier, higher aptitude standards. Eighty-eight percent of these men completed their basic course without remediation, and of those who did not, most only needed two additional weeks of training. Additionally, in the Army, 87 percent of New Standards men who were sent for special skills training qualified for their specialties, compared to 92 percent of the training population as a whole. Finally, after 12 to 15 months of military service, more than 90 percent received a rating of “excellent” in their conduct and efficiency evaluations.¹⁷² But interpreted differently, this meant that New Standards Men failed basic training at twice the rate of all soldiers and were three times more likely to need extra help. The failure rate was also “deceptively low,” since the Army, which demanded less of its recruits than the other services, received the plurality of New Standards men. Closer to ten percent of the first group Project 100,000 airmen couldn’t pass Air Force basic training.¹⁷³ New Standards men also failed advanced training in more complex subjects such as electrical repair, communications, and clerical specialist at significantly higher rates than higher aptitude men. The washout rate for some subjects ranged as high as 44.6 percent.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷² “Defense Reports ‘Project 100,000’ Proves Successful,” no publication, n.d., attached to Memo: New Mental Standards Effective December 1, 1966, December 2, 1966, box 126, Entry UD 20, Training and Conference Files, RG 147, NARA. See also Nancy Hicks, “Mentally ‘Unfit’ Helping Military,” *New York Times*, Feb. 17, 1969; “Lower Standards Satisfy Military,” *New York Times*, Jan. 27, 1970; George W. Ashworth, “‘Marginal’ Servicemen Rescued: Extra Training Applauded,” *Christian Science Monitor*, Oct. 7, 1967; Ralph H. Kennan, “New Program in Military Aids Rejects,” *Baltimore Sun*, Oct. 27, 1968; “One Rejects, They’re Now Good Soldiers,” *Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 10, 1968; Donald H. May, “U.S. Training its ‘Rejects’ for Military,” *Chicago Tribune*, Jan. 7, 1968.

¹⁷³ The comparable rate in the Army was only three percent. Drea, *McNamara, Clifford, and the Burdens of Vietnam*, 270.

¹⁷⁴ Hanson W. Baldwin, “Men Once Rejected for Low Aptitudes Adapt to Military,” *New York Times*, Nov. 19, 1967.

The Department of Defense expected this type of result. One report explained, “as anticipated, New Standards men perform significantly better in combat-type training courses and the simpler technical courses.” They excelled in specialties that stressed “practical work” and that did not require skill in mathematics or reading. Men who were dropped from particular specialties were not immediately discharged. Rather, they were “reassigned to other courses on on-the-job training more suited to their aptitudes.”¹⁷⁵ In other words, New Standards men were more likely than the military population as a whole to be assigned to combat roles.¹⁷⁶

Records on the number of Project 100,000 men who were killed or wounded in action do not appear to have been kept.¹⁷⁷ However, casualty rates for African Americans, who disproportionately constituted the enrollment of Project 100,000, were. Between 1965 and 1966, the proportion of the active duty military that was black rose from 9.1 percent to 9.9 percent, and African Americans constituted 12.1 percent of all

¹⁷⁵ Office of the Secretary of Defense, Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), “Project 100,000: Characteristics and Performance of ‘New Standards’ Men,” June 1968, attached to Memo: New Mental Standards Effective December 1, 1966, Dec. 2, 1966, box 126, Entry UD 20, Training and Conference Files, RG 147, NARA.

¹⁷⁶ For example, in 1970, 37 percent were placed in “infantry, gun crews or seamanship positions,” compared to 23 percent of all other soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen. Throughout the life of the program, 41.2 of Project 100,000 soldiers were assigned to combat roles as were a whopping 55.8 percent of marines in the program. See “Lower Standards Satisfy Military,” *New York Times*, Jan. 27, 1970 and Drea, *McNamara, Clifford, and the Burdens of Vietnam*, 269.

¹⁷⁷ The statistic was not discussed in either Drea, *McNamara, Clifford, and the Burdens of Vietnam*, the official history of the Department of Defense, or at congressional hearings reviewing the program that were convened in 1990. See House Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, *Readjustment of Project 100,000 Veterans*.

armed forces accessions by 1967.¹⁷⁸ Much of this increase can be attributed to the lowering of induction standards.¹⁷⁹ African American military personnel were more likely to have been drafted than to have enlisted and more likely to have been assigned to the infantry, both because volunteers were more likely to be able to choose their specialty and because low educational levels tended to limit their choices.¹⁸⁰ By 1967, the Army was close to 20 percent African American. Thirteen percent of Army personnel stationed in Vietnam were black, but 21 percent of soldiers killed-in-action that year were African American.¹⁸¹ Democratic New York Congressman Adam Clayton Powell characterized Project 100,000 as “genocide,” exclaiming that the “brutal” program was “nothing more than killing off human beings that [were] not elite.”¹⁸² Powell’s New York colleague, Shirley Chisholm, agreed. She scathingly told the House Armed Services Committee that the program’s only benefit was to ease “the draft among the middle class whites.”¹⁸³

On the whole, the military failed to meet McNamara’s stated goal of social betterment through military service.¹⁸⁴ Most New Standards men left the armed forces

¹⁷⁸ “13 Percent Draft Fiscal Year 1966 were Nonwhites,” *Selective Service* 17 (Sept. 1967): 1; “Data for 1967 Reveal 8.9% Negro,” *Selective Service* 18 (Oct. 1968): 2.

¹⁷⁹ The rate of African Americans passing the AFQT jumped from 29.2 to 42.5 between 1964 and 1966. In comparison, the rate only increased from 60.3 percent to 64.8 percent for white men over the same period of time. See “More Negroes passed Tests Report Shows,” *Selective Service* 17 (July 1967): 1.

¹⁸⁰ In fiscal 1966, for example, 8.0 percent of all volunteers were black, but 13 percent of all draftees were. See “13 Percent Draft Fiscal Year 1966 were Nonwhites,” *Selective Service* 17, (Sept. 1967): 1.

¹⁸¹ Drea, *McNamara, Clifford, and the Burdens of Vietnam*, 271.

¹⁸² “Rights Leaders Deplore Plan to ‘Salvage’ Military Rejects,” *New York Times*, Aug. 26, 1966.

¹⁸³ Dick Edwards, “US Army Draft Called Institutional Racism,” *New York Amsterdam News*, March 27, 1971.

¹⁸⁴ Longitudinal studies of Project 100,000 veterans indicate that the program had mixed results. An investigation conducted by educational researchers Thomas Sticht, William Armstrong, Daniel Hickey, and John Caylor, published in 1987, claimed that

without having received the promised training, as the skills needed for combat did not transfer to civilian life. Instructors, funding, and facilities could not be located to implement basic education classes, and only 17,000 of the men were able to take advantage of those that were available.¹⁸⁵ By 1968, the Continental Army Command had banned Project 100,000 personnel from 137 of 237 advanced training courses because it claimed the men learned too slowly to meet prerequisites. Only five of the remaining available courses were restructured to better meet their learning styles.¹⁸⁶ Additionally, New Standards men were court-martialed more than twice as often as their counterparts and were twice as likely to be discharged early, frequently on less-than-honorable grounds.¹⁸⁷ The Pentagon under McNamara's successor, Clark Clifford, continued to

earlier analyses, including Baskir and Strauss's, used Department of Defense data dating only from the years 1966 to 1969. Since the program lasted until 1971, however, they argued that they were the first to assemble a complete picture. They found that New Standards men "performed 87 to 95 percent as effectively as the controls who had much higher aptitudes." Moreover, although these men tended to advance through the paygrades more slowly than their higher aptitude counterparts, 85 percent of them "received a rating that classified their performance as good, highly effective or better." Only six percent of the men in Project 100,000 reenlisted after their initial tour or duty -- Two-thirds of the total were found ineligible to reenlist, even if they wanted to, because they could not score highly enough on aptitude retests -- but as of September 1983, 8,262 of the New Standards men were still on active duty. A 1974 study cited by Sticht, et al., indicated that 68 percent of New Standards Men used the benefits to which they were entitled under the G.I. Bill in 1974, including educational benefits. They also earned more and were employed more frequently than a control group of non-veterans with similar aptitude scores. Researchers Janice H. Laurence and Peter F. Ramsberger, in a survey of 311 veterans, found exactly the opposite to be true. Similarly mixed results were evident in the studies cited in Congressional hearings held in 1990. See Sticht, et al., *Cast-Off Youth*, 37-65. Quotes, p. 52; Statistics, pp. 56, 62; Laurence and Ramsberger, *Low-Aptitude Men in the Military*, 55-61, 94-100, 109-123; Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, *Readjustment of Project 100,000 Veterans*.

¹⁸⁵ Baskir and Strauss, *Chance and Circumstance*, 127.

¹⁸⁶ Hsiao, "Project 100,000," 17-19.

¹⁸⁷ Across the services, .7 percent of men faced court-martial, but among New Standards men, the number was 1.7 percent. Numbers were higher in the Army, where

defend the program, but Melvin Laird phased it out after he was appointed Secretary of Defense in 1969. Laird cited the general American draw-down from Vietnam and the Pentagon's imminent shift to an All-Volunteer Force as reasons.¹⁸⁸ Dissent from officials within the military also played a role in the program's demise.¹⁸⁹

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McNamara and his supporters in the Pentagon conceived of Project 100,00 as a way to use the military as a venue to teach American men how to participate fully in American society. Similarly, Hershey, Wirtz, and other warriors against poverty wanted to use the tools provided by the military procurement system to rehabilitate poor men's defects so that they could become breadwinners and full participants in the American polity. For the most part, these programs did not achieve their goals. In addition to sending many participants to the battlefields of Vietnam rather than training them for useful work in the civilian world, they, ironically, loosened the connections between military service and male citizenship obligations for many middle-class men.

Publicity surrounding the Project 100,000 and the rehabilitation programs explicitly linked the military with poverty and minority status. Publications from the

3.7 percent of New Standards men were court-martialed, a status considered a felony in the civilian world. The overall attrition rate for New Standards men was approximately 20 percent. While exact records do not appear to have been kept, these included men who were court-martialed, who received dishonorable or bad-conduct discharges as the result of judicial action, and, those who got general discharges for the inability to meet requirements. Although this last category was not considered punitive, it did prevent those in this category from taking full benefit of veteran's benefits. See "Lower Standards Satisfy Military," *New York Times*, Jan. 27, 1970; See Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, *Readjustment of Project 100,000 Veterans*, 9, 12.

¹⁸⁸ "Pentagon to Phase out Project 100,000," *Boston Globe*, March 26, 1971.

¹⁸⁹ See "Low-IQ Recruit Plan Stirs Complaints," *Washington Post*, June 29, 1969; Hsaio, "Project "100,000," 20; Baskir and Strauss, *Chance and Circumstance*, 127-128.

New Republic to the *New York Times* to the *Muscatine* [Iowa] *Journal* referred to participants as “rejects” in need of “salvation” and likened the military to a social service organization.¹⁹⁰ The *Chicago Tribune*, reported on Clifford’s continuing support of Project 100,000 by discussing the new Defense Secretary’s “plan...to improve American life” through judicious use of his department’s budget. “By applying its conscience,” the paper reported, “the Pentagon can provide ghetto employment...and education for thousands of young men ill-equipped for work.”¹⁹¹ Such coverage juxtaposed the military with the civilian options open to more well-to-do men. The Baltimore *Evening Sun*, for instance, opened an article on the NCCY’s rehabilitation program in Baltimore by highlighting a recent CBS news story about “a private classroom in which young men were being taught how to evade the draft by cunning and devious means.” Meanwhile, in an echo of Michael Harrington, men from “the other America,” who suffered in conditions of “unemployment, poor health, semi-literacy, and bleak subsistence,” struggled to volunteer. Those who utilized the NCCY services, however, “felt new self-respect” and became new taxpayers able to “share the load,” as “new [men] in uniform.”¹⁹² Private counselors taught middle-class boys how to stay out of the military, while federally-funded programs helped the poor learn how to enlist. The military might have been sold as a way to achieve “a stable job, status, and independence,” but what

¹⁹⁰ “McNamara’s Salvation Army,” *New Republic*, Sept. 10, 1966, 13-14; Bob Horton, “Long-Range Study to Decide the Effect of Now Accepting Some Service Rejectees,” *Muscatine Journal*, Dec. 13, 1967; see note 172, above, for examples from other publications, including the *New York Times*.

¹⁹¹ “Clifford Tells Ghetto Aid Plan,” *Chicago Tribune*, Sept. 27, 1968.

¹⁹² John E. Eslinger, “Rejected by the Services,” *Evening Sun*, Oct. 25, 1965, reprinted in National Committee for Children and Youth, *Experimental and Demonstration Manpower Project for Recruitment, Training, Placement, and Followup of Rejected Armed Forces Volunteers in Baltimore, Maryland and Washington, D.C.: Final Report*, 145.

about the men who already had these things?¹⁹³ Such publicity did not mention what the Army might offer to them other than an opportunity to work and live with members of American society with whom they were thought to have little in common.

More concretely, Project 100,000 and reduced entrance standards had an incontrovertible effect on who faced conscription during the years of the Vietnam War. As more men qualified to volunteer for military service, the various branches of service required fewer conscripts to meet their monthly accession quotas. Of the men who were drafted, approximately 50,000 per year were earmarked for Project 100,000, meaning they had to be from Category IV. As these generally poor and minority men filled open slots, the Selective Service needed fewer white, middle-class men. Concurrently, middle-class men had greater access to occupational and student deferments, which were rescued from the chopping block when Congress revised the draft law in 1967 and 1969.¹⁹⁴ Men with economic resources had far less to fear from conscription and, after Johnson asked all 18-year-olds to be examined as soon as practicable, rarely even had to submit to an early preinduction exam. Because it was assumed that all college students would receive a II-S deferment, young men who claimed they would soon start university training, even in the absence of written confirmation, were not subject to the early exams, and therefore not referred to remediation programs even if they could have benefitted from

¹⁹³ Isolde Weinberg, "He's in the Army Now – and Happy to Be There," *Washington Post*, Dec. 12, 1965.

¹⁹⁴ Graduate students, except those in specific science, engineering, and medical fields, lost their deferments in 1967, but Congress retained the deferment for college students despite increasing criticism. See conclusion for more detail.

rehabilitation.¹⁹⁵ This exacerbated the inequities based on social class that already existed within the Selective Service System.

Where publicity surrounding UMT a generation earlier had emphasized the democratic nature of military training and the common citizenship classes all men would take, the programs of the Great Society era focused specifically on the rehabilitation of poor men. The rhetoric of citizenship, patriotism, and duty almost completely vanished from the discourse over these programs. A few internal memos and *Selective Service* discussed rehabilitation as a way to spread the burden of military service into the poorer classes in a more equitable manner, but planning was accompanied by no such discussion about the wealthier classes.¹⁹⁶ Instead of using military service to teach a common form of masculinity based on duty, honor and strength, the programs of the 1960s focused on building economic and military strength by creating breadwinners and soldiers among those previously ill-equipped to fill those obligations of citizenship. Men equipped to support their families already had the ability to contribute to national security.

The development of these programs indicated the extent to which national security had, by the early 1960s, come to be defined as a function of economic and domestic strength as well as the ability to use force abroad. That the Selective Service

¹⁹⁵ “States Examine First Groups of 18-Year-Olds,” *Selective Service* 14 (July 1964): 4.

¹⁹⁶ See, for example, Office of the Secretary of Defense, Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), “Project 100,000: Characteristics and Performance of ‘New Standards’ Men,” June 1968, attached to memo: New Mental Standards Effected December 1, 1966, December 2, 1966, box 126, Entry UD 20, Training and Conference Files, RG 147, NARA; Project One Hundred Thousand, attached to memo: From Mr. Greenberg to Mr. Moskowitz, Feb. 27, 1967, Project 100,000, box 2, entry 14, UD-04W, accession 72A1942, RG 330, NARA; Lewis B. Hershey, “SS Personnel are Invited to Join Poverty War,” *Selective Service* 15 (Jan. 1965): 1-2.

and Department of Defense would, through various rehabilitation programs and Project 100,000, participate in the War on Poverty demonstrated just how intertwined economic and military security had become and how far the Selective Service had gone toward defining civilian pursuits as service to the nation. But as the situation in Vietnam demanded increasing numbers of soldiers after 1965, the rehabilitation aims of the programs got lost. The referral programs shrank, and Project 100,000 became a method to procure military manpower rather than to bolster poor men's possibilities in the civilian labor market. As the Vietnam War drew down in the early 1970s and Lyndon Johnson's successor, Richard Nixon, showed less interest in eradicating poverty, Project 100,000 became obsolete. In its explicit focus on preparing poor and minority men for economic citizenship, however, it had unintentionally thinned even further the relationship between military service and masculine citizenship.

Conclusion: Vietnam and Beyond

Military manpower policies between the end of World War II in 1945 and the shift to the All-Volunteer Force in 1973 separated military service from ideals of masculine citizenship in the United States, a connection, that, as this dissertation has shown, was never quite as strong as dominant cultural narratives of the citizen-soldier have implied. Manpower policies, especially those that governed deferments, widened the definition of service to the state and encouraged men to meet their responsibilities for national defense as civilians, even in times of emergency. They emphasized men's breadwinner role and responsible fatherhood over military service and defined economic independence as a contribution to national defense, ironically, weakening the citizen-soldier ideal in the process. These findings provide context for the anti-war and anti-draft protest of the late 1960s and early 1970s. The Vietnam War exacerbated points of friction that already existed. The war highlighted assumptions about masculinity and citizenship as well as inequities in the draft system that had existed for a generation. Thus, when draft calls rose in order to support a war that many Americans did not agree with, men used the channels that the Defense establishment had already created for them to avoid serving in the armed forces.

The separation was not universal. Most Americans, most likely, never realized the slow cultural shift that had been occurring for twenty years. For example, in September 1965, Harvey J. Fischer, a 55-year old man from Largo, Florida, in an act of

sheer disgust, mailed a clipping from his local newspaper to President Lyndon Johnson.¹ The article blasted the current generation of military-aged men. “Never have so many American boys tried so many ruses to get out of serving their country,” it claimed. Without citing any statistics or quoting any government officials, it accused young men of failing to register, refusing to report for physicals, destroying draft cards, marrying prematurely, taking jobs they did not want, and going back to school for subjects they cared nothing about, all in order to avoid military service. “Those who ask what they can do for their country often seek the answer outside of the armed forces,” worried the reporter, who concluded, “Men of draft age...simply don’t seem to understand the necessity for manning the frontiers of freedom half a world away.”²

This article deserves comment for a number of reasons. First, it was ordinary. The sentiments it – and by extension Mr. Largo – expressed were not unique to the people of Florida’s Gulf coast. Rather, the idea that men were shirking their citizenship responsibilities by refusing to serve in the military would become a common refrain in articles, on TV, and around kitchen tables across the nation over the next eight years.³ Those who characterized young men who took advantage of deferments as shirkers held tight to a civic-republican understanding of military service. But the article also stands out because it acknowledged an evolving definition of service in its oblique reference to President John F. Kennedy’s 1961 inaugural speech. Even as the reporter rejected the implications of the shift for participation in the military, by the time the article was

¹ Harvey J. Fischer to Mr. President, September 29, 1965, Frev-Frier, box 154, Central Files, 1948-69, RG 147, Records of the Selective Service, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland [hereafter RG 147, NARA].

² “A Need for Patriotic Young Men,” n.d. no publication title, attached to *ibid.*

³ See, for example, J.N. Drury to Mr. President, November 11, 1965, Dupr-Dwyer, J., box 154, Central Files, 1948-69, RG 147, NARA.

written, the Peace Corps, VISTA, and various other initiatives created as part of the War on Poverty provided civic-minded young people myriad ways to perform community service under the auspices of the federal government. Finally, the article was revelatory because of its timing. In the month it was published – September 1965 – American combat troops had been in Vietnam for less than six months. Draft calls had started to rise that January and were continuing to grow, but the machinery for inducting men had not yet reached its height. Antiwar protest, though a news staple, was still a fairly marginal phenomenon in 1965.

In fact, the article that angered Fischer so greatly was part of a larger wave of criticism of the draft that had been building for several years. Although a bill for the renewal of the Universal Military Training and Service Act had sailed through Congress in the spring of 1963 – it passed the House by a vote of 378 to three – its passage occurred amongst “general criticism that the law was unfair.”⁴ On the local and state level, seemingly capricious decisions made by draft boards made good copy and alerted the public to the potential for abuse within the system.⁵ Editorials and letters to the editor calling for draft reform appeared in newspapers with increasing regularity. They argued that the system placed an undue burden on men in their early twenties, who had to wait

⁴ “House Votes 378 to 3 to Keep Draft,” *Baltimore Sun*, March 12, 1963. For a description of the renewal process, including Congressional hearings, see Harry A. Marmion, *Selective Service: Conflict and Compromise* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1968), 1-2.

⁵ See, for example, George Garrigues, “Identity of Draft Board Kept Secret,” Nov. 26, 1962; James Howard, “5 Quit Draft Board in Row,” *Chicago Tribune*, Nov. 1, 1962; “A Congressman Can Be Too Obliging,” Editorial, *Chicago Tribune*, Nov. 2, 1962; Robert Howard, “Inject Spoils Politics into State Draft,” *Chicago Tribune*, May 17, 1962; Bill Gold, “You Don’t Look Like the Criminal Type,” *The District Line*, *Washington Post*, June 17, 1963; Martin Nolan, “He’s Married... And Drafted,” *Boston Globe*, Sept. 15, 1963; “City and U.S. Vary on Draft Rejects,” *New York Times*, Jan. 5, 1964

years before they knew for certain whether they would be drafted or not. Articles also pointed out the inequities of a system that did not draft all men and in which men with wives and children or with educational and monetary resources could easily gain deferments.⁶ It was the fact that men were taking advantage of these deferments that vexed Fischer so badly. This dissertation has shown how and why these mechanisms developed and argued that they unintentionally made it easier for American men to avoid military service, thus separating military service from ideals of masculine citizenship.

* * * * *

By 1964, conscription in America was already in trouble. In February, newly-belted, heavy-weight champion boxer Cassius Clay (soon-to-be Muhammed Ali), a man at the height of his physical prowess, was found unfit for military service for “mental” reasons, criticism escalated still further.⁷ The groundswell of discontent prompted

⁶ See, for example, John K. Arnot, “End the Draft,” *Chicago Tribune*, Jan. 1, 1963; Nicholas J. Budinger, “Would End Draft,” *Voice of the People, Chicago Tribune*, March 16, 1963; Hanson Baldwin, “New Attitude on Peacetime Draft,” *New York Times*, March 8, 1963; “Subject to Draft,” *Minneapolis Morning Tribune*, July 25, 1963; “Questions About the Draft,” *Hartford Courant*, July 31, 1963; John G. Esty, Jr., “The Draft: Many Threatened, Few Chosen,” *New York Times Magazine*, Oct. 20, 1963; “Start Draft Sooner, Public Tells Military,” *Boston Globe*, Dec. 4, 1963; “Draft Age Under 20 Favored by Majority,” *Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 4, 1963; B.D. Ayres, Jr., “Manpower Excess Seen Causing Stress in Nation’s Draft System,” *Washington Post*, Jan. 13, 1964; Jack Anderson, “Are We Becoming a Nation of Draft Dodgers,” *Boston Globe*, Jan. 19, 1964; Kathryn R. Strom, “End the Draft,” *Chicago Tribune*, Feb. 2, 1964.

⁷ Clay, who converted to Islam in February 1964 and changed his name to Muhammed Ali shortly thereafter, passed his physical exam in January, but failed a first round of aptitude tests in February. After winning the heavy-weight title and amidst public outcry that he had faked his original test scores, he was retested under the watchful eye of an Army senior psychologist in March. Once again, he did not meet the Army’s mental standards and was classified IV-F. When aptitude standards were lowered in 1966, Ali once again became eligible for induction. He applied for a deferment claiming to be a minister, but his application was denied. In April 1967, he refused induction and was subsequently found guilty of draft evasion. The Supreme Court reversed his conviction in 1971, but not before he was stripped of his titles and boxing license. See

Johnson to order Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara to initiate a full study of the draft with the purpose of determining whether the Army still required conscription to fill its ranks.⁸

In September, Arizona Senator and Republican presidential nominee Barry Goldwater launched his campaign for president by vowing to end conscription. He claimed that Johnson's approach to military manpower procurement infringed on

"Army Insists Clay Didn't Fake Tests," *Washington Post*, April 21, 1964; "Clay's Army Test Draws Criticism," *New York Times*, April 15, 1964; B. T. Harrison, "Muhammed Ali Draft Case and Public Debate on Vietnam," *Peace Research* 33, no. 2 (2001): 69-86; Herman Graham, III, *The Brothers' Vietnam War: Black Power, Manhood, and the Military Experience* (Gainesville, Fl.: University Press of Florida, 2003), ch. 5. For further examples of articles calling for draft reform, see Norman Elfstrom, "Draft Critic," *Los Angeles Times*, March 18, 1964; Uncle Dudley, "Overhaul the Draft," *Boston Globe*, April 20, 1964; "Overhauling the Draft," Editorial, *Washington Post*, April 23, 1964; "Views on Ending the Draft," Editorial, *Los Angeles Times*, April 27, 1964; "The Draft: Is it Necessary?," *Christian Science Monitor*, May 13, 1964; "Elimination of Draft is Urged by Senator," *Baltimore Sun*, June 30, 1964; "The Voluntary Way," Editorial, *Washington Post*, Aug. 22, 1964.

⁸ Johnson did not give a specific reason for ordering the study, other than the fact that the law was fifteen years old, but at least one newspaper connected the study to Muhammed Ali's case. According to Historian James M. Gerhardt, however, the Pentagon study was a holdover from the Kennedy administration. After Kennedy changed the order of call for married men without children, he ordered a more detailed review of the nation's manpower needs. This led to the creation of a study group in the Defense Department's manpower office, which Johnson called on for the report in April 1964. The Pentagon completed its Defense Manpower Study in July 1965, but did not release the document's findings to the public. Several portions had to be extensively rewritten to reflect the military's changing needs stemming from the Vietnam War. Its results, however, were discussed publicly at hearings before the House Armed Services Committee on Selective Service in 1966. The report was critical of manpower channeling as the most efficient means to fill both civilian and military manpower needs. See "Johnson Asks Study of Way to End Draft," *Chicago Tribune*, April 19, 1964; "Johnson Orders Study to Assess Need for Draft," *New York Times*, April 19, 1964; "Cassius Spurs Study of Draft," *Boston Globe*, May 10, 1964; James M. Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy: Issues in Military Manpower Procurement, 1945-1975* (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1971), 286-287, 362.

American liberty and weakened the United States.⁹ Moreover, in his first campaign speech, he claimed that the practice of using “military services for political and social schemes [was] to drift closer to war on an ebbing tide of military strength.”¹⁰ Social engineering through manpower policy, he felt, detracted from the military’s main purpose of national defense. Johnson swiftly dismissed the draft as a campaign issue, citing the Pentagon study then underway, but the fact that Goldwater raised the question when he did indicated a cultural shift.¹¹ When Democratic presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson had made the same promise to end the draft in 1956, he had been ridiculed. Goldwater did not receive the same level of criticism. Moreover, although conscription failed to become a major issue in the 1964 campaign, pundits and politicians did not disregard Goldwater’s proposal. Influential *New York Times* military affairs editor Hanson W. Baldwin, for example, called for broader discussion about conscription.¹² Members of Congress criticized the draft almost two dozen times from the floor during the 1964 congressional session.¹³

Indeed, debate over the purpose and necessity of the draft escalated over the next nine years, spurred by the military’s greater need for manpower during the Vietnam

⁹ For more, see Rick Perlstein, *Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001), 409-411.

¹⁰ “Text of Goldwater’s Speech Formally Opening Presidential Campaign,” *New York Times*, Sept. 4, 1964.

¹¹ “Johnson Rejects Draft as an Issue for His Campaign,” *New York Times*, Sept. 6, 1964.

¹² Hanson W. Baldwin, “Should We End the Draft?” *New York Times Magazine*, Sept. 27, 1964.

¹³ According to Gerhardt, congressmen brought up the need for draft reform approximately the same number of times during the 1964 session of Congress as they had in total during the previous ten years. See Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 286.

War.¹⁴ As conscription touched more lives, the system's inequities, which had already been a subject of public concern for at least two years, became more pronounced. Public discontent with the mechanisms of Selective Service became entangled with dissatisfaction over the war itself. Many anti-war protestors targeted the Selective Service, arguing that if the draft could be stopped, the military would not be able to fill its ranks or prosecute the war in Vietnam.¹⁵ But many politicians, educators, planners, and scholars – including those who supported America's war aims – also looked for ways to reform or end entirely America's system of conscription. Universities issued statements against student deferments.¹⁶ National conferences that attracted scholars, policy experts, and politicians were held in 1967 in Washington, D.C. and at Antioch College in Ohio and the University of Chicago.¹⁷ Scholarly studies critical of the Selective Service began to appear, as did similar books meant for a general audience.¹⁸ The federal government

¹⁴ The Selective Service set a monthly quota of 5,400 men for January 1965. By December, this number had jumped to 40,200. By 1968, approximately 340,000 men were being inducted each year. United States Selective Service System, *Annual Report of the Director of Selective Service for the Fiscal Year 1967 to the Congress of the United States pursuant to the Universal Military Training and Service Act as Amended* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1968), 86; Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy*, 274.

¹⁵ Michael S. Foley, *The War Machine: Draft Resistance during the Vietnam War* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 67, 72-75.

¹⁶ Cornell University, Wayne State University, San Francisco State University, New York University, and the Universities of Iowa, Michigan, and Buffalo were among those to criticize student deferments. See Marmion, *Selective Service*, 77.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 77. The conferences in Washington, D.C. and the University of Chicago published their proceedings. See June A. Willenz (ed.), *Dialogue on the Draft: Report of the National Conference on the Draft* (Washington, D.C.: American Veterans Committee, 1967) and Sol Tax (ed.), *The Draft: A Handbook of Facts and Alternatives* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967).

¹⁸ See, for example, Marmion, *Selective Service*; Tax, *The Draft*; Willenz, *Dialogue on the Draft*; Bruce Chapman, *The Wrong Man in Uniform: Our Unfair and Obsolete Draft – and How We Can Replace It* (New York: Trident Press, 1967); Jean Carper, *Bitter Greetings* (New York: Grossman, 1967); James W. Davis, Jr., and Kenneth M. Dolbeare, *Little Groups of Neighbors: The Selective Service System* (Chicago,

convened two independent panels to study the question of draft reform and held multiple sets of hearings.¹⁹ In 1967, Congress replaced the Universal Military Training and

Markham Publishing Company, 1968); Roger W. Little (ed.), *Selective Service and American Society* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1969); David F. Bradford, *Deferment Policy in Selective Service*, Research Report Series No. 113, Industrial Relations Section, Department of Economics (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton, 1969); James Finn (ed.), *A Conflict of Loyalties: The Case for Selective Conscientious Objection* (New York: Pegasus Press, 1968); Jerome H. Skolnick and Elliott Currie (eds.), *Crisis in American Institutions* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1970); Andrew O. Shapiro and John M. Striker, *Mastering the Draft: A Comprehensive Guide for Solving Draft Problems* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1970); George Walton, *Let's End This Draft Mess* (New York: David McKay, 1967); Peter Barnes, *Pawns: The Plight of the Citizen-Soldier* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971).

¹⁹ President Johnson convened the National Advisory Commission on Selective Service, under the chairmanship of Burke Marshall, the former Assistant Attorney General and head of the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department. The House Armed Services Committee, meanwhile, created the Civilian Advisory Panel on Military Manpower Procurement, chaired by Mark Clark, a retired Army General. Both published their findings in February 1967. Both recommended a continuation of the draft, but they differed in their recommendations for reform. The Marshall Commission recommended moving to a lottery, while the Clark commission did not. They also differed in their approaches to deferments and the constitution of local boards. See National Advisory Commission on Selective Service, *In Pursuit of Equity: Who Serves When Not All Serve?* February 1967; Civilian Advisory Panel on Military Manpower Procurement, *Report to the Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives*, 90th Cong., 1st sess., Feb. 28, 1967; George Q. Flynn, *The Draft, 1940-1973* (Lawrence, Kans.: University Press of Kansas, 1993), 198. For examples of hearings, see House Committee on Armed Services, *Review of the Administration and Operation of the Selective Service System: Hearings Before the House Committee on Armed Services*, 89th Cong., 2d sess., 1966; Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, *Manpower Implications of Selective Service: Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Employment, Manpower, and Poverty of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare*, 90th Cong., 1st sess., 1967; House Armed Services Committee, *Selective Service Extension 1967: Hearings Before the House Committee on Armed Services*, 90th Cong., 1st sess., 1967; Senate Armed Services Committee, *Amending and Extending the Draft and Related Authorities: Hearings Before the Armed Services Committee*, 90th Cong., 1st sess., 1967; Senate Judiciary Committee, *The Selective Service System: Its Operation, Practices, and Procedures: Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Administrative Practice and Procedure of the Committee on the Judiciary*, 91st Cong., 1st sess., 1969; House Armed Services Committee, *Special Subcommittee on the Draft: Hearings on H.R. 14001 and H.R. 14015, To Amend the Military Selective Service Act of 1967 to Authorize Modifications of the System of Selecting Persons for Induction into the Armed Forces Under this Act*, 91st Cong., 1st sess., 1969; Senate Armed Services Committee, *Random Selection System for Induction*

Service Act with the Military Selective Service Act of 1967, which eliminated some deferments and reversed the order of call so that the youngest rather than oldest available man would be called first.²⁰ Criticism continued, however, so in 1969, Congress amended the two-year-old Military Selective Service Act to allow selection to take place via lottery.²¹

These changes did not stem the tide of protest. By 1970, public opinion had turned against both the war in Vietnam and the draft. President Richard Nixon vowed to end conscription as the war wound down, and conservative economists, including Milton Friedman and Walter Oi of the University of Chicago and Martin Anderson of Columbia University, gained the president's ear. These men argued that the military should compete for personnel on the open market, just like any other employer. Paying fair wages and offering benefits to volunteers would create a more stable force structure, create less turnover, protect the nation better, and, ultimately, cost less than a military based on conscription. Moreover, they characterized conscription as an unfair "time tax," exacted inequitably from men who were drafted but not from those who remained civilians.²²

into Armed Forces: Hearings Before the Committee on Armed Services, 91st Cong, 1st sess., 1969.

²⁰ Johnson signed P.L. 90-40 on June 30, 1967. The law also extended student deferments to all college students but forbade students from using a dependency deferment after graduation. It also eliminated deferments for graduate students except those in fields defined as essential to national health and safety.

²¹ Nixon signed P.L. 91-124 on November 26, 1969. The lottery drawing was scheduled for December 1, 1969, with inductions based on its results to begin on January 1, 1970. Problems with the lottery drawing and implementation of its results led to further revisions in the regulations and a second drawing over the next two years. See Flynn, *The Draft*, 246-249.

²² See Bernard Rostker, *I Want You! The Evolution of the All-Volunteer Force* (Arlington, Va.: RAND Corporation, 2006), 32-36, 52-58,

The Department of Defense began to study the feasibility of moving to an All-Volunteer Force in January 1969, and in March, Nixon announced the creation of the President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force, under the chairmanship of former Secretary of Defense Thomas Gates, Jr. Its members also included Friedman and economist Alan Greenspan. Oi was one of its researchers. When the Commission released its report in February 1970, it unanimously recommended the move to an All-Volunteer Force.²³ Nixon, at the urging of Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird, simultaneously urged the renewal of the Military Selective Service Act when it was due to expire in 1971 and ordered the Department of Defense to begin making plans to shift to an All-Volunteer Force.²⁴ Through the policy of Vietnamization, which turned the war over to Vietnamese soldiers, American troops began to withdraw from Southeast Asia. This drawdown, combined with pay increases and other new incentives offered to volunteers, created a smaller need for draftees. In January 1972, draft calls were reduced to zero. In June, Nixon declared that conscripts would no longer be sent to Vietnam, and in July 1973, the law was allowed to expire. Conscriptation, at least for the foreseeable future, had ended in the United States.

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²³ For more on the Gates Commission, see Rostker, *I Want You!* 76-89; Thomas S. Gates, *Report of the President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force*, Washington, D.C., February 1970.

²⁴ U.S. House of Representatives, *Draft Deferments: Message from the President of the United States Relative to Reforming the Draft System*, H. Doc. 91-324, 91st Cong., 2d sess., April 23, 1970. Congress complied with Nixon's wish, extending the President's authority to order inductions for a further two years, rather than the usual four. The 1971 renewal also made changes to mechanism governing the lottery. Rather than assigning manpower quotas to each state and letting local boards work through the order of call independently as the 1969 amendments required, the 1971 extension created a centralized procurement system, so that all men across the country with the same lottery number would be called at the same time. See Flynn, *The Draft*, 256.

In his study of the draft, historian George Q. Flynn outlined various scholarly theories as to why the draft failed. Some scholars, most notably political scientist Samuel Huntington, explained Flynn, argued that technological advances had made mass citizen armies obsolete. Other theorists posited that the growth of global communication, trade, and transportation networks combined with the promise of international law caused nationalism to weaken. As the possibility of global citizenship arose, the notion of fighting to protect any particular state seemed anachronistic. Pacifists and anti-militarists, according to Flynn, argued that the threat of nuclear annihilation made the draft obsolete, as the existence of large armies led to war rather than prevented them. Meanwhile, the resurgence of conservatism, which counted the limitation of federal reach as one of its major tenets, made economic theories that the draft unfairly taxed those men who were conscripted particularly attractive. Still other scholars believed that poor management within the Selective Service caused American discontent. Flynn, himself, argued that the “political and cultural context” of the Vietnam era “favored volunteers over draftees” and ultimately killed the draft.²⁵ While these explanations all have merit, they fail to provide a complete picture. As I have shown, by the time of the Vietnam War, American men felt comfortable accepting deferments and “shirking” their military duty because two decades worth of military manpower policies had communicated the idea that men did not need to serve in the military in order to fulfill their obligations of masculine citizenship.

When plans for universal military training failed, it became clear that the armed forces would neither want nor need all American men. Even though the law held all

²⁵ Flynn, *The Draft*, 259-261. Quote, p. 261.

qualified men liable for military service, all men would not serve. While this was not a new phenomenon in American military history, the circumstances under which the draft existed during the Cold War were unprecedented. Policy makers justified continuing conscription as part of a militarized peace, rather than as a measure to meet an immediate emergency. There was no “for the duration,” since planners believed the Cold War would continue indefinitely. In this context, preserving a vital domestic economy and society remained as important as national defense. Manpower policies had to maintain – and advance – the civilian economy; stimulate the development of new technology; train the next generation of scientists, engineers, and educators; and encourage balanced childrearing in addition to providing personnel for the military. So long as there was a selective draft, the definition of “service” to the nation in the name of defense had to expand. This is why the addition of a student deferment and the expansion of occupational deferments in the midst of the manpower crisis of the Korean War occurred.

After the Korean War, as the population of draft-eligible men expanded and the size of the military contracted, it was especially incumbent upon military planners to define civilian occupations and domestic arrangements as in the national interest. The practice of manpower channeling made sense in a republic with an active draft. The contradictions inherent in a system that expected military service from all young male citizens but in fact required that sacrifice from only a few were great. Manpower channeling became a way of selling the continuing operation of Selective Service to the public and Congress – the constituencies that kept the system functioning – at a time of low draft calls.

As this dissertation has demonstrated, however, manpower channeling and the rehabilitation programs that developed as part of the Great Society were not simply cynical acts of self-preservation for an obsolete system. The men who developed them, including Lewis B. Hershey and Robert McNamara, appear to have genuinely believed that their policies would benefit the nation as a whole. Hershey's civic-republican convictions shaped the entire Selective Service System, from its decentralized organizational structure to his judgment that every man owed service of some kind to the United States. When it became clear that the military did not want all men, he opted to expand his definition of service rather than reject his most deeply-held beliefs. Similarly, historians and activists alike have alleged that McNamara created Project 100,000 as a way to more easily expand the armed forces during the Vietnam War with men he considered socially expendable. But McNamara's STEP proposal predated the Vietnam escalation, and he proposed both programs within the context of the War on Poverty. Other federal agencies, which were generally considered to have had the best of intentions, worked with the military establishment, including the Department of Defense and Selective Service, to try to better the lives of America's poor. In both cases, planners saw these social engineering programs as weapons in the Cold War against communism. Channeling, in theory, provided for civil defense, weapons research and development, educational advancement, and healthy families. Ideally, rehabilitation programs, including Project 100,000, rescued families from poverty, allowed men to earn full economic citizenship, and fulfill their obligations to the nation's defense by contributing meaningfully to its economic growth.

Ironically, these social engineering policies militarized the civilian sector but weakened the position of the armed forces in American society by undermining the citizen-soldier ideal. World War II had lent the symbol of the citizen-soldier new imagery. Men's mass participation in that conflict undergirded the myth that American men would readily bear arms in the name of national defense. After 1941, therefore, the American citizen-soldier could appear as either the Revolutionary-era Minuteman or the World War II G.I. Both versions implied honor, duty, courage, and the willingness of American men to sacrifice in order to defend their homes, families, and nation. In the years following World War II, however, the armed forces called progressively fewer men to serve. Military manpower policies encouraged men to remain civilians and defined their occupations or domestic arrangements as the equivalent of military service. Whether or not deferred men acknowledged their behaviors as benefitting the defense establishment, they did not don uniforms. Military service for many became simple to avoid, and avoidance easy to justify. Hershey's 1949 warning that if the Selective Service allowed a man to become too comfortable in his civilian job, it would take "three Selective Service Systems to bomb him loose" proved prescient.²⁶ When the United States went to war once again in 1965, most men neither rushed to the colors nor calmly waited to be drafted. Instead, they sought means to legally avoid military service through deferments. The rhetorical pull of the citizen-soldier seemed to affect many fewer men than it had a generation earlier.

Finally, this project demonstrates the intimate connection between military manpower policy in the years under study and ideals of masculinity and citizenship as

²⁶ Selective Service: Present and Future, January 5, 1949, 032-GEN, 1963-1948, box 26, Central Files, RG 147, NARA.

well as how this connection changed over time. Plans for universal military training in the late 1940s and early 1950s broke apart over public and political disagreements over whether UMT was the best method to protect and defend the United States. But debates were also riven by different perceptions of manhood and citizenship. Proponents believed military training would forge men out of boys and offer common training that would unite the nation's men in common citizenship. Opponents, on the other hand, thought that a year of training would corrupt impressionable boys. Further, they argued, UMT would regiment American manhood and rob it of the independence and liberty that formed the essence of American citizenship. By the mid-1960s, when Project 100,000 once again made the meaning of military service the subject of public debate, planners focused on the economic and educational benefits of that service for poor men, but virtually ignored the military as a venue for common citizenship education. Service could provide poor men with the means to earn financial independence and thereby meet their responsibilities as breadwinners to their families and fulfill their citizenship obligations to the nation. The language of a universal, civic-republican military obligation had all but vanished from the discourse. The narrowed focus on economic citizenship for poor men, combined with the growth of deferments that were more easily available to wealthier men, weakened the connection between military service and masculine citizenship obligations for all men.

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