

setts, or any of the other advocates of the random selection system, will introduce a bill that is reasonable and provides for a fair and workable random selection, we can get a law long before the first day of January 1969 . . . We had a firm agreement with the conferees of the other body that if the President would propose something definite that deals specifically with the subject of random selection, when and how it shall be applied, we would give it immediate consideration. I am not opposed to random selection. I have said that all the way through."

There is very little which can be added to that statement.

YOUNGEST FIRST

Today draft-eligible young men between 19 and 25 years of age are called in reverse order of age, the oldest man first. When draft calls are low, this policy has driven the average age of the involuntary inductee, at induction, to nearly 24 years. When draft calls are high, as they now are, the average age drops to about 19½ years, but when the draft calls are reduced the age will inevitably rise once more.

In 1966 the Defense Department reported to the Congress that a thorough study of the effects of this oldest-first procedure "clearly revealed that this policy was not desirable from any standpoint." Among the problems of oldest first pointed out in this Defense Department report were:

The uncertainty it generated in the personal lives of the draft-liable men, who lived "under the gun" of the draft for 2 or 3 years. In fact, 39 percent of draftees in the 22 to 25 age bracket were told at least once by a prospective employer that they could not be hired because of their draft liability. The comparable figure for those entering in the 19 to 21 age bracket was 27 percent, and for those entering in the 17 to 18 age bracket was 11 percent.

The incidence of deferment rises sharply with age. At age 19, only 3 percent of classified registrants had dependency deferments and only two-tenths of 1 percent had any form of occupational deferments. But at age 24, nearly 30 percent of all registrants were in just these two deferred categories. Consequently, a rising average age of induction multiplies the number of deferment decisions each local board must make, while compounding the uncertainty each registrant faces.

Combat commanders have consistently preferred 19- or 20-year-old recruits. These younger men are considerably more adaptable to combat training routines. Further, problems associated with dependents are less frequent, and the costs of dependents' care are lower, for the younger men.

This Defense Department recommendation has had unanimous support in the last 12 months, and the only matter of concern is why it has not been instituted. The Marshall Commission, the Clark Panel, the President's message, the Senate and House Armed Services Committees' reports—all these have urged adoption of a youngest first procedure.

My bill would require that the selection and induction be made from among the youngest qualified and available registrants, the 19-year-olds, and not leave this matter to Executive discretion.

STUDENT POSTPONEMENTS

The Marshall Commission was divided over the issue of deferments for undergraduate students. A majority recommended that no new student deferments be granted in the future, with certain exceptions. A minority felt strongly that student deferments be continued, but so administered to guarantee that the deferments in no case became exemptions. The Clark Panel recommended, in effect, that undergraduate deferments be continued.

The President's message contained no recommendation on undergraduate deferments, instead waiting for a public discussion of the issue. The Congress responded by guaranteeing undergraduate deferments for students in good standing, until their graduation or age 24, whichever came first.

One of the gravest inequities in our draft system—an inequity which was not corrected in last year's amendments, despite assurances to the contrary—is that what begins as a temporary deferment for college enrollment is easily extended into a de facto exemption. This happens through putting an occupational or some other deferment on top of a college deferment. Ultimately time and advancing age make the temporary deferments exemptions in fact.