

Draft registration: right or wrong?

Registration serves as deterrent — not instigator — to war

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Registration for the draft is also necessary in light of the state of our armed forces. Study after study finds our conventional military powers lacking. The lower ranks are incompetent operators of the machines of war; many privates are functionally illiterate. The higher and more expert ranks are too poorly paid to stay in the services long enough for the military to benefit from their expertise.

The military's problems with retention of expertise and recruitment from the middle class are indicative of a national disenchantment with the armed services. Though some may blame the unpopularity of the military on post-Vietnam disillusionment, it is also true that as a people, Americans have historically enjoyed freedom from a national service obligation — military or otherwise.

In a highly socialized state like the United States, such selfishness can only be dangerous to the well-being of the nation. As a tool for facilitating national service (not just military service) registration at the age of 18 could be very useful. Such an operation would, of course, require modification of the existing registration machinery. But opponents of registration fail to note this possible virtue of introducing a service ethic and registration machinery into our society.

The wisdom of maintaining a standing army has been questioned by many who oppose registration. It is true that conventional war requires an army. Absence of an army, however, no longer precludes the possibility of war. The development of weapons technology now makes it possible to carry on limited nuclear and all-out nuclear war without recourse to conventional warfare and without recourse to armies of citizens.

Most western democracies maintain standing armies in peacetime. Their reason for doing so is the same as that behind our own registration for the draft: to prevent — not to cause — the horror of war.

Registration and a draft are the only available means of distributing the defense responsibility among all social classes.

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Country's priorities do not lie with draft registration

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Amongst cries of protest, this summer the Selective Service System fulfilled the wishes of President Carter and, in theory, registered nearly all of this country's 19- and 20-year-old young men for the military draft.

Most arguments over draft registration tend to center upon the issues of compliance and legality — debates which remain unresolved.

Instead, a far more pressing issue must be examined: the underlying reasons for registration. Proponents often justify registration by claiming that the U.S. military is no longer adequate to meet any challenge to peace, such as Soviet aggression in the Middle East.

However, registration will not solve what critics call the military's greatest manpower problem: the fact that a significant number of technically trained officers and enlisted personnel are not re-enlisting, leaving the services with an inadequate number of experienced leaders.

Moreover, draft registration will have no appreciable effect on overall military preparedness. According to Newsweek, White House officials said they expect registration to shave only two or three weeks off an induction process that lasts about five months.

spelled out by Carter in his Jan. 23 State of the Union Address.

The implications of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan could pose the most serious threat to peace since the Second World War," Carter said. "An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America. . . and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force."

The foolishly notion of protecting limited oil supplies with military force displays the United States' arrogance and selfishness in the face of the worldwide energy shortage. It is a stance more suited to a colonial than a democratic power.

It is a sign to other nations in an increasingly interdependent world that the U.S., comprising approximately 6 percent of the world's population, prefers to continue consuming 33 percent of the nonrenewable energy and minerals used in the world each year.

Registration is no substitute for substantive programs which encourage conservation and the development of alternative energy sources, along with a fairer distribution of resources worldwide.

Nor is it an appropriate response to Soviet aggression, especially when the U.S. could develop more just economic and political relationships with smaller countries. These kinds of relationships can help developing countries grow strong internally, and become less susceptible to Soviet influence.

Instead, registration elevates military bantering to the level of appropriate diplomatic and domestic solutions to international and national problems. Ultimately, registration does not demonstrate this nation's strength and unity of purpose. Instead, it demonstrates this nation's ambivalence and inability to decide where its best interests really lie.

Cases wait for Fall review Options hinge on Court's decision

By YATES MAST
Legal advisor

During the two weeks starting July 21 most of the four million 19- and 20-year-old males, who were citizens or permanent residents of the United States, registered under the Military Selective Service Act (see 50 USC App. Sect 461 et seq).

Despite the fact that the statute provided very severe penalties (a maximum of up to a \$100,000 fine and/or a five-year prison sentence) for failure to register; and no draft.

Of the many reasons motivating the non-registration, by far the principal one was the contention that the act violated several of the constitutional rights of potential registrants, including the right to equal protection under the Fifth Amendment of the Constitution.

The main equal protection argument was based on gender discrimination, since the act only required males to register and females not to.

A court case had been filed in June 1971 (during the Vietnam War) in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia arguing that the Selective Service Act was unconstitutional on the basis of gender discrimination.

The case has gone through several steps between 1971 and 1974, but with the end of the Vietnam War no further proceedings were taken until June 1978. Since this case was legally still alive it became the test case to decide this momentous constitutional question.

The case, now called Goldberg vs. Rosker, (1 had another name earlier) was certified as a class action of potential registrants on July 1 and on July 18 a three-judge court handed down a 43-page opinion written by Judge Rosenbaum that the exclusion of females from the registration provisions constituted gender-based discrimination and that the government had failed to

demonstrate that the exclusion was substantially related to an important government interest.

Accordingly, it found the provisions did violate the equal protection part of the Fifth Amendment.

The court then enjoined the government from enforcing the Selective Service Act. It certainly seemed to be a victory for the non-registrants.

The government immediately filed an appeal to the U. S. Supreme Court, which was in recess and would not ordinarily meet again until October, when the 1980-81 term of Supreme Court begins.

The government argued to Justice Brennan that the district court had applied too strict a standard of review into the discrimination in light of the national defense interest at stake, and that even under the standard which the court applied the decision not to include females could be justified.

No government lawyer contended that it would suffer irreparable injury if it is not permitted to go forward with implementation of the president's July 21 through Aug. 2 call for draft registration, while the class of registrants would suffer only minor and remediable harm should the suit be granted until a final decision by the full court. This was not an actual draft but only registration.

A registration program will cut off the following question: "If the House of Representatives contended that it would suffer irreparable injury if it is not permitted to go forward with implementation of the president's July 21 through Aug. 2 call for draft registration, while the class of registrants would suffer only minor and remediable harm should the suit be granted until a final decision by the full court. This was not an actual draft but only registration.

the entire Supreme Court will conclude that the decision by the district court was erroneous. Another of the tests was whether or not the government would suffer irreparable harm by a denial of the stay of registration.

Justice Brennan found that in light of the many Supreme Court decisions on sex discrimination cases where there has been considerable debate on the standards to be used, the prospects of reversal could be characterized as "fair."

He ruled that since the full court might decide that the present Military Selective Service Act was constitutional even if females were not required to register, he would stay the restraining order since the government might suffer.

The government then proceeded with the registration as originally planned. On Thursday, July 31, Bernard D. Rosker, the director of Selective Service, announced that his agency was serious about enforcing the law against young men who failed to register.

The National Resistance Committee, a group opposed to registration, in its handbook stated that once alleged violators have been identified the Selective Service Agency would probably recommend to the Justice Department that some of them be prosecuted. The end question of course is what is going to happen. There are several possibilities:

1. The Supreme Court will make its decision one way or the other.
2. Different constitutional attacks may be made later.
3. Congress may amend the statute to include women.
4. The Equal Rights Amendment may pass - only a few more states are needed for ratification.

Op-ed



Reasons to reinstitute registration process include poor volunteers, Soviet movements

Editor's Note: The following statement is a release from the office of 23rd-district United States Congressman William Clinger, whose constituency includes Centre County and the University community. The release has been edited for length and clarity.

By WILLIAM CLINGER
Congressman, 23rd district

By 1960s standards, the new law that required all 19- and 20-year old males to register for the draft this year, and 19-year-olds to register in the future, was calmly accepted. In fact, so mild was the reaction to the registration that it appeared to those involved as a small-scale caricature of 1960s anti-draft sentiment.

There are several reasons for this. First and foremost, there is a clear distinction between registering for a possible draft and actually requiring young men to report for military service. The latest lineup at the local post office, unlike the Vietnam War era, is not the first step leading irrevocably down the path to military service.

If it were, one would expect all the trappings, replete with medical examinations and draft classification numbers. But the trapping are conspicuously absent, as is the 60s lore about conscientious objectors and creative attempts to flunk the physical exam prior to induction (has anyone heard of cellophane ulcers lately?).

But with the sudden invasion of Soviet troops into Afghanistan, the intensity of concern reached a feverish pitch in Congress. Most proposals to ensure a strong U.S. response to a possible Soviet threat included a resumption of draft registration. One plan required women (as well as men) in selected age groups to register, even in the absence of the Equal Rights Amendment. Another plan, unusual for its broad dimensions in peacetime, would have required registration of all males, ages 18-26.

As a realistic security precaution, I supported the proposal that is now law. To be concerned about the implications of an expanding Soviet presence in Afghanistan, one does not have to be an old guard supporter of the dominant Cold War era military establishment. And whether or not the ill-fated rescue mission in Iran was due to military incompetence, the frustration it caused certainly did not win supporters for the all-volunteer concept.

After a careful evaluation of evidence stating that it would take the Selective Service System 45 days to deliver draftees after mobilization, I was convinced that we needed a more efficient handle on our manpower reserve. A registration program will cut off the minimum of two months if we would ever have to mobilize in a national emergency. Mobilizing troops is vastly easier than mobilizing a citizenry. When Paul Revere gathered the Minute Men in little more than the name suggests.

During the House consideration of the registration bill, I joined with a colleague in polling other members of Congress about the possible inclusion of registration and an actual draft. Out of the 219 members of Congress favoring registration, 136 responded to the following question: "If the House of Representatives were to vote today on renewing a peacetime draft, would you vote in favor of it?" The results: 75 nays, 39 yeas and 20 abstentions.

Another major reason adding to the lack of public fervor is the big question mark of military readiness hanging over our heads. Statistics on the all-volunteer force do little to inspire confidence. Behind the thinning ranks of the regular force, the Individual Ready Reserve stands as "the next line of defense, which at 140,000 strong falls well below the 340,000 to 600,000 troops that the Pentagon estimates "we would need in a conventional war in Europe."

The widespread concern about the quality and shrinking numbers of the all-volunteer force and the Individual Ready Reserve has led to frequent debates in recent years on practical solutions to what had become a chronic problem.

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In today's world, however, our military still must be able to meet an emergency on a moment's notice. While I have a son who falls under the new registration law, I support registration of 18-year-olds (or years a traditional military service member would be in other countries) as a back-up to the regular military.

Eighteen-year-olds rarely have the family obligations and career involvements of someone several years older, but are mature enough to be a service to their country before returning to a more settled existence in civilian life.

I was somewhat dismayed, however, by the last-minute constitutional challenges to draft registration. As I mentioned in an interview at State College, the issue of whether or not it is constitutional to require registration to occur with or without women should

have been dealt with thoroughly by the judicial branch before Congress took action on the issue.

As it turned out, Congress was in the undesirable position of setting legal precedent — a matter rightfully the domain of the courts.

In the meantime, improvements must be made in our military so that it can attract and retain quality personnel. The military is becoming more and more technologically oriented. This means a shift from the short-term draftee to the long-term career soldier who can operate sophisticated equipment in what amounts to a new era of defense, with different requirements than the ground troop-style of warfare of World War II.

A few statistics on the current state of the military indicate that the effort has not been made to deal with critical military shortages:

- The Air Force figures that it must maintain 100,000 aircraft and 24 of every 100 navigators after 12 years of service. Only 27 pilots and 40 navigators per 100 trained are still in the service.
- Army guidelines call for retaining about 30 of every 100 soldiers with four years service or for at least six more years out of the 100 now stay in uniform that long.
- The Navy is short 20,000 experienced petty officers.

To facilitate a shift in the military's personnel philosophy and overcome the penny-wise but pound-foolish approach to manpower shortages, I am supporting legislation that would increase pay for several categories of personnel. The situation in which some enlistees have a base salary below the minimum handling and maintaining the complex military machine.

In March, while covering a foreign policy press conference in Washington, I questioned Robert Komer, a Defense Department official, on the likelihood of registration leading to a draft.

Komer said: "We have a lot of people problems that worry us a great deal more (than drafting youth). We're losing all of our middle man power management people who were involved over half a million dollars in education for."

And why are the armed forces losing their middle man power? Because the billions of dollars spent annually on defense are woefully misdirected. Instead of offering salaries comfortably in line with today's unruly cost of living,

the military chooses to spend money on ridiculously expensive and sophisticated weaponry in an attempt to keep pace with the Soviet Union.

In the meantime, highly trained personnel, capable of operating the new weapons, are leaving the military for better paying civilian jobs. Pay is also barely adequate upon entering the service. It's not wonder the armed forces can't attract enough college graduates.

Somewhat, it doesn't seem registration will do anything to ease this tremendous problem facing all branches of the military right now.

My idealism comes into play when I think of past wars. Certainly we have advanced far enough to realize that there must be more effective ways of dealing with international crises than by sending young men off to battle.

The debacle of Vietnam is not that far removed from the nation's memory. To quote musician/activist Arlo Guthrie, "Mothers still are weeping for their boys who went to war. And others still are asking what the whole damn thing was for."

Religion and Court: different decisions

By NED WELLES
United Ministry at Penn State

There are some who take seriously the teaching of the Bible, especially the Beatitudes in which Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God" — the inheritors of the Kingdom as well as the attributes of the heavenly Father.

We were not left to wonder what it meant to be a child of God, for He patiently enquired of the military (or a more flagrant violation of civil and human rights — the registration and a possible draft), young consciences are repulsed with the notion of killing fellow human beings.

Or to destroy a people in order that their possessions may be considered ours. Or to believe lies that talk of preservation of democracy while millions are tortured, imprisoned or their property confiscated because they will not be subjected to American domination (under political puppets).

There may not be many, but those who do have these feelings are supported locally by a coalition of persons in higher education, ethical groups and churches. We recognize the Supreme Court's observation that morals and ethics are for some the controlling influence in their lifestyle as religion may be for others.

Op-ed Letters/Draft Registration

Vital need

After being on campus for only a short time I am dismayed at the opposition to draft registration that I have encountered and I was appalled to find that registration advising young men on how to escape prosecution for failing to register for the draft.

Draft registration, in conjunction with increased outlays for military research, is vital in America's struggle to maintain her position of leadership in the world.

Many espouse the theory that a strong military posture will increase the possibility of war. Will a well-equipped, fully-staffed fire department increase the chance of a fire?

"The rights we enjoy as Americans are the envy of all men of the world. We must realize that with these rights come responsibilities; including the responsibility to protect those rights for ourselves, our posterity and those in the world who need our assistance in securing and maintaining their rights.

Registering for the draft will go a long way toward fulfilling that responsibility.

Anthony Christine, III, 1st-foreign service Sept. 5

president contended, has recently referred to our illegal and immoral war in Vietnam as a "noble cause," and explicitly entertained the possibility of similar actions in aiding repressive governments in Central America.

The incumbent aspirant to the office has made it clear that he would support the interests of American oil companies in the Mid-East through military means. Draft registration is an effort by the government to prepare for such actions; the enhanced role of the draft, while seemingly innocuous, is an act of acquiescence in the government's plans.

There are three ways for a government to raise an army. First, by convincing its citizens that a threat to their well-being truly exists and that the government is deserving of defense.

Second, by providing salary and benefits which attract enlistees.

Third, through press gangs of various forms — through the draft. Our government is clearly unable to do the first, unwilling to do the second and about to resort to the third.

As one who has seen the results of compliance with the draft at first hand, I urge potential draftees, and all Americans, to decide for themselves which way, if any, are just and worth fighting. Deny the government the right to make decisions for you. Resist the draft.

John K. Mallory III, graduate-anthropology Sept. 8

number of fulltime personnel and costs the least.

Second, the draft that will follow will not improve the current military personnel situation, according to a top Pentagon official. Robert Pirie, assistant secretary of defense for manpower, said in a speech in April, "We don't think peacetime conscription is the right way to solve our manpower problems."

Third, registration threatens rather than enhances national security. Obviously, the Red Army is not going to land on the beaches of Florida. Any U.S.-USSR confrontation will be nuclear, and draftees will be destroyed along with the rest of the world.

In the words of the Washington Post's William Greider, registration is a symbolic gesture: America is determined. Registration is the first strategy of the New Cold War; the draft will be the second.

Together the two strategies will make it easy for the U.S. to intervene militarily abroad, most notably in the Middle East. "We don't think 'right' to use a vastly excessive share of the world's oil. Our youth are in danger of dying for Texaco.

Miriam Smith Honsaker, class of 1980 Aug. 15



to allowing \$13 million and 4 million young men to be used for improving Jimmy Carter's image at the taxpayer's expense.

Could co-ed living improve dorm life? Proponents argue that it could increase security and cut down on vandalism.

Opponents cite lack of privacy and sexual promiscuity as some negative aspects.

What are the obstacles facing the future of co-housing at the University? Is a change of attitude all that is needed?

If the choice would most students choose co-ed housing? For what reasons? Even though co-ed housing may not be right for everyone, should Penn State students be given this option?

On Tuesday, Sept. 16, The Daily Collegian op-ed page will focus on the pros and cons of co-ed housing and the reasons for its absence at University Park. Students, faculty and other members of the community are encouraged to submit letters to the editorial editor, 128 Carnegie. All letters must be typed, double spaced and no longer than 20 lines. Deadline Friday, Sept. 12, 5 p.m.

As a result, he was caught by surprise and what followed was a substantially excessive defense requirements, employs the fewest

Press gangs

Over 100 years ago, the British Navy obtained recruits through the use of the press gang; groups of armed sailors who forcibly abducted British citizens and compelled them to fight for the crown.

Much more recently, in the United States, involuntary military servitude has operated in a more refined manner but its essentials are the same: citizens are compelled to kill and be killed for reasons defined, not by themselves, but by the American government.

As an ex-Army officer, having served in Central America and Vietnam, I feel both qualified and obliged to comment on registration for the draft. I have seen many young American men who allowed the government to make for them the decision of who to fight and when, and aimed and killed in an effort to keep a corrupt dictatorship in power.

There is no guarantee that tomorrow's draftees will not be compelled to do the same. One

Fighting for oil

Young men dutifully lined up at their post offices in July to tell Uncle Sam where to find them when he wants them. There are lots of reasons why this Carter re-election tactic is wrong and unnecessary — just a few.

First, the Selective Service System itself has said that peacetime registration is costly and unnecessary. One week before Carter announced his registration proposal, an SSS study that was issued and then suppressed recommended that registration begin only after declaration of a war or national emergency.

In the report, dated Jan. 16, 1980, SSS Director Rosker said that his agency prefers this standby plan, which "would substantially exceed current defense requirements, employs the fewest

Suggestions

Lately there has been much debate about the current draft situation. Two opinions seem to be prevalent; those who would rather "fight than switch" and those who would rather "switch than fight."

The United States should work together with the rest of the world, though not by supporting inhumane governments, nor by enlisting soldiers; for, those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword."

I suggest those who want a greater nation will give a little of themselves. Maybe be serving in the Peace Corps. The United States should humbly try to help less advanced countries catch up.

Who would win a war with the Soviet Union? What would it cost? I pray we won't ever have to find out.

Alex Mann, 5th-geology Aug. 1

Living together

Why is Penn State so far behind other modern universities in giving students the option of co-ed living?

Could co-ed living improve dorm life? Proponents argue that it could increase security and cut down on vandalism.

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the Collegian

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ABOUT THE COLLEGIAN: The Daily Collegian and The Weekly Collegian are published by Collegian Inc., a non-profit corporation with a board of directors composed of students, faculty and professional staff members of The Pennsylvania State University write and edit both papers and solicit advertising material for them. The Daily Collegian is published Monday through Friday and distributed at the University Park campus. The Weekly Collegian is mailed to Commonwealth campus students, parents of students, alumni and other subscribers who wish to keep abreast of University news.

Students' letters should include the author's name.



Sign-up: step in wrong direction

Tipping the scales with registration

During the last two weeks of July, nearly four million young men across the country were forced to come to grips with their consciences, their moral obligations and their social responsibilities.

On a direct order from the President of the United States, those men born in 1960 and 1961 were beckoned to take part in the nation's fourth massive draft registration campaign.

According to the White House statistics, 93 percent of those eligible complied with registration. For many, registering came as easy as filling out a check. But for the 7 percent who shunned the post offices, many possibly recognized the lethal potential of the relatively harmless Selective Service forms.

The issue has worried and frustrated me since President Carter revived the idea of registration last January.

In a sense, I am torn between realism and idealism. Realistically, there is no arguing the fact that this country needs a strong defense to maintain its respect and authority around the world. But at the same time, I am not willing to see the billions of dollars spent annually on defense are woefully misdirected. Instead of offering salaries comfortably in line with today's unruly cost of living,

the military chooses to spend money on ridiculously expensive and sophisticated weaponry in an attempt to keep pace with the Soviet Union.

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