

Uneasiness over the possibility of a return to a full-fledged draft means that



Emerald Photo

Registration draws heavy fire

By Katherine Merrill
Of the Emerald

The war over a future draft has escalated since Pres. Ronald Reagan extended draft registration in January.

Of those required to register, 90 percent did so in the first round, but Social Security officials said only 75 percent of those supposed to register last fall did. Christina Cowger, of the Coalition Opposed to Registration and the Draft, says officials blamed the drop on a lack of publicity, but CORD believes the reason is "a bigger part are opposed."

Reagan gave the unregistered men a grace period until February 28. Cowger says the president took a pool of 300 of those most publicly against registration and gave them 15 days to register. Of the near 100 who still refused to register, 4 or 5 are being indicted, probably shortly after February 28th.

(CORD is planning a demonstration at the Federal Building against the indictments. First Step, an anti-nuclear group, plans to hold a vigil and a fast at the time of the first arrest.)

Sen. Mark Hatfield, R-Ore., sees Reagan's extension of registration as an "open invitation" to those in Congress who want a draft either this year or next, says Jack Robertson, Hatfield's press secretary.

Hatfield says the president was "ill-advised" on registration extension — calling it an attempt to "coerce" — says Rick Rolf, an aide to Hatfield. Hatfield also thinks the country's image at the time played a major part in Reagan's decision, Rolf says. "Poland didn't help in terms of looking tough."

Hatfield confronted the forces in favor of draft registration last September over the Military Pay Bill, which provides pay increases for Army personnel.

He fought for an amendment because he thought the bill provided too great a pay increase to high-ranking officers and too little for the lowest enlisted soldiers. Hatfield's successful amendment takes some of the pay increase for senior-level career officers and directs it towards first term enlistees and corporals.

Rolf says they are "satisfied" with getting "the essence" of what they wanted. "We got what we wanted and more," he said. Strong public sentiment was the only reason Congress accepted Hatfield's amendment, he adds.

Lt. Col. Steve Wolfram, director of the University's ROTC office, says the current pay rate for the lowest entry private is \$551 a month, plus room and board and other allowances.

The Army's position is to support registration but not an actual draft, he says. "The current philosophy in the Army is that we have a volunteer Army." The volunteer army does work, but it takes time to get it established — they've only had it for about 10 years — he says.

Wolfram says the ROTC office has a tough time recruiting specialists. They are especially interested in "students who have a science inclination", but the "bulk of them are liberal arts" students. He attributes this in part to the liberal arts emphasis at the University, and part to the pay scale. And with specialists such as engineers, it's "very tough to compete" with civilian pay scales.

The Army has trouble recruiting medical personnel also. A June, 1981 General Accounting Office report shows that the number and types of medical personnel in the military are far below the total projected requirements for an upcoming conflict. Sophisticated weaponry would make for a short, intense conflict, says

Dave Isenberg, director of University Veterans. This kind of conflict would "overload" military and V.A. hospitals that served sufficiently in past wars, he says.

The Pentagon dealt with the problem by establishing the Civilian Military Contingency Hospital System. CMCHS arranged with civilian hospitals for the use of thousands of hospital beds to treat injured soldiers from overseas conflicts. Isenberg says the Pentagon is, however, still seeking voluntary agreements with civilian medical workers.

Lt. Gen. Charles Pixley, Surgeon General of the Army, advocates a return to drafting medical professionals in the fashion of the Berry Plan, the law that allowed the draft of medical people during the Vietnam war, adds Isenberg.

Legislation continues this month regarding the shortage of medically trained Army personnel and the impact of the CMCHS.

Agencies providing draft counseling say those interested in filing for conscientious objector status cannot officially apply until there is a draft. But they say it's a good idea to have a card on file with an agency. Cards can be obtained through CORD or the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors.

Joel Pomerantz, with the CCCO in San Francisco, says that since registration was reinstated in 1979, 30,000 people have contacted them and put cards on file. Pomerantz says this number does include a large number of women and people younger than draft age, but reflects the interest in a potential draft.

Congress turned down a proposal to draft women, and there's a "very, very low possibility" they will reverse that decision, Pomerantz adds. A student deferment does not exist, he says, but in the case of a

draft students would have a temporary stay until the end of the semester.

It's "hard to tell" how difficult it will be to get C.O. status in the event of a draft, Pomerantz says. The Selective Service is rewriting all forms to get rid of the "blatant unfairness" in forms previously used, he says.

On past forms, the poor and less articulate received worse treatment than better educated applicants. Pomerantz says the rewriting is nothing more than a "token" attempt to deal with prejudicial problems in the draft system because minorities are still under-represented on the draft boards.

Registration and rewriting forms are unusual actions, Pomerantz says, "unless they're willing to use draft as a tool." CCCO is expecting a return to the draft, although they don't know when; there have been estimates as short as two months and as long as 10 years, but CCCO doesn't expect a draft to be reinstated within a year, he says.

Should there be a draft, those called would have 10 days from the mailing of their induction notices to file for C.O. status with their claims boards, Pomerantz says, adding that they must prove "sincere, deeply held beliefs" against the war. Pomerantz says these beliefs can be moral as well as religious. The boards will try to find out when applicants first became C.O.'s, how it affects their everyday lives, and to what extent they are opposed, he adds.

There are two types of status: A "1-O" status means the person is totally opposed to war and cannot serve under any circumstances, and an "A-O" status means the person can serve but will not carry weapons or receive weaponry training.

Selective service plans 'fake' draft

DENVER (AP) — The Selective Service System is planning a simulated draft during March in which 1,000 Army reservists across the country will play the part of military inductees, a newspaper reports.

The mock draft, dubbed "Grand Payload," is scheduled for March 20 as a tuneup to an even larger exercise later this year, the Rocky Mountain Business Journal reported in this week's edition, dated Tuesday.

The draft will begin with a simulated lottery of men, who will be subject to mock examinations and then inductions into the armed forces, the newspaper reported.

Thomas K. Turnage, director of the Selective Service System, outlined plans for the mock draft in a Jan. 4 letter to local draft board members.

In that letter, the newspaper reported that Turnage

said, "This will be the first time that the Military Manpower Accession System, of which the Selective Service is a vital part, will actually take prospective inductees from their homes to various reception stations."

Mock induction orders will be mailed to Army reservists in early March. The 1,000 men selected will be transported to one of six armed forces entrance and examination stations for simulated induction. The location of the six sites was not reported.

Selective Service officials were not available Monday, a federal holiday, for comment on the report.

In his letter to local draft boards, Turnage said the simulated draft in March would be part of preparations for a "large-scale exercise expected in late 1982."

Californians lead non-registration

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — California has the worst record in the nation for draft registration, with barely half the state's draft-age young men signing up, according to the state's Selective Service director.

Forty-nine percent of those subject to the draft failed to register last year, Keith Lamb said Wednesday.

The second-worst record in the country was recorded in the District of Columbia, where 46 percent haven't signed up.

The West and East coasts were low," said Lamb. "South Dakota registered 100 percent. The midwest did very well, as did the South."