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CONSCRIPTION, CONSCIENCE, & WAR: CONSCRIPTION OR CONSCIENCE – YOU HAVE A CHOICE

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“Our schoolbooks glorify war and hide its horrors. They inculcate nationalism and war in the veins of our children. I would teach peace rather than war. I would inculcate love rather than hate.”
– Albert Einstein.

PROLOGUE

The draft, also known as conscription, is a compulsory system to recruit citizens for service in the armed forces. Such obligatory military service has existed since ancient times and cultures. Japan’s samurai, Aztec warriors, and the citizen militiamen of ancient Rome and Greece are examples. Europe’s feudal landlords with their peasants and yeomen is another example, as is Anglo Saxon England during the 9th century. In the early 1500s, the political philosopher of the Renaissance, Nicolo Machiavelli, reasoned that “every able-bodied man in a nation was a potential soldier and could by means of conscription be required to serve in the armed forces.”¹

Conscription as recognized today began during the French Revolution when in 1793 an army of 300,000 was recruited from the provinces. Shortly after that, Napoleon I used conscription to build his massive fighting machine. Likewise, Muhammad Ali of Egypt did the same. Britain used the draft in both World Wars, and other countries today, such as Israel have mandatory military service for all youth – with some allowance for alternative service and exemption because of conscientious objection.

Probably the earliest conscientious objection to military service was during the first three centuries of the Christian era. Christians during that time did not participate in the military, and in Rome and Italy they were persecuted. Then in the 313th year of the Christian era, Emperors Constantine and Licinius issued the joint edict of tolerance, toward Christians, in Milan. Constantine changed many laws to favor the Christian religion, such as immunity for its leaders, the right of the Church to inherit property, freedom from taxation, and exemption from military service. Between 312 and 325 Constantine army, with the cross of Christ emblazoned on their shields, conquered neighboring emperors who persecuted Christians and became the sole ruler of the Roman empire. He made Christianity the state religion and was baptized when he felt the approach of death. From Constantine’s time until today, Christians have served in the military. However, conscientious objection to war has prevailed.

¹Fact Monster.

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THE DRAFT IN US HISTORY

The first US draft as such was imposed during the Civil War when there were not enough volunteers. The Confederacy used it first in 1862 and the Union followed with the Conscription Act of 1863. That Act was unfair, allowing those of wealth and influence to avoid military service if they hired substitutes. At first it even allowed a man to buy his way out for \$300,² but that privilege was, after 1864, limited to conscientious objectors. The draft riots, which were the worst in New York City, were in opposition to that Act.

During World War I, conscription became known officially as Selective Service, but the term “draft” remained as a less formal term. It was “selective” because every qualified man was not called. Names were chosen by some form of lottery to meet military needs. At first, men 21-30 years old had to register. That age range was later expanded to 18 - 45 years. The Selective Service Act of 1917 provided about 2.8 million men for the US Army (there were about 1 million volunteers). After the Armistice signing on 11 November 1918, the draft was discontinued and an all-volunteer force was maintained until 1940.

The first peacetime draft in the US was instituted with the Selective Service and Training Act of 1940. It required men between ages 21 and 35 to register. Not more than 900,000 could be in training at one time and the time limit was 1 year, later extended to 18 months. The Selective Service System (SSS) was created as a US agency to administer the draft.

After Pearl Harbor, a new wartime selective service act was passed to make men between the ages of 18 and 45 liable for military service, but all those up to age 65 had to register. The term of service was “for the duration plus six months.” Those of us in the military at that time interpreted that to mean we would be discharged six months after the war ended. But after the surrender papers were signed we found out that “duration” meant duration of the national emergency. That was determined at the discretion of the government. Over 10 million men were drafted during World War II. After the war, the term of service for new draftees was changed to 18 months.

The wartime selective service act was allowed to expire on 31 March 1947 and there was no draft for a year. But decreasing numbers in the armed forces prompted Congress to pass the Selective Service Act of 1948. It required men 18 to 26 years of age to register and made single men who were non-veterans liable to serve 21 months in the military followed by five years in the reserves. That Act, too, would have expired at the end of June 1950 but North Korea invaded South Korea that month.

When the Korean War started, Congress extended the Act to July 1951 and then replaced it with Universal Military Training and Service Act of 1951. This extended the time of service to 24 months and lowered the age for induction to 18½ years. During the Korean War (1950-1953) some 2 million men were drafted.

After the Korean War, the Reserve Forces Act of 1955 was passed to strengthen the national guard. It required men 18-26 years old to serve 6 years in the military. That service could be either in the reserve or on active duty, or a combination of both.

²Equivalent to approximately \$4,300 today.

As the US became involved in Vietnam, the Military Selective Service Act of 1967 was passed and all men between the ages of 18 and 26 had to register. Regular exemptions were still allowed plus educational deferments if a student could show he was making progress toward a degree. This introduced loopholes which benefitted the upper social classes.³ That inequity combined with the growing unpopularity of the Vietnam War caused the draft to become a major social issue. Demonstrations and opposition became so intense that the draft law was allowed to expire in 1973 and the Pentagon turned to an all-volunteer force. Registration for the draft was suspended in 1975. During the hottest part of the Vietnam War (1965-1973) about 1.7 million men were drafted.

In 1980, in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, President Jimmy Carter requested, and Congress passed, legislation requiring all men between the ages of 18 and 26 to register with their selective service board, but did not authorize induction. Carter wanted to include women but Congress said no. This is the current law which provides a pool of men ready for induction should the government deem it necessary. It would require additional legislation by Congress to actually induct those registered because only registration is now authorized. This arbitrary selection of physically-fit youth to provide the required number of troops is called a “Conventional Draft” or a “Combat Draft.”

In 1988, language was inserted in the Defense Authorization Act to address military medical shortages. It charged the Selective Service System (SSS) “to develop a ‘structure’ which would allow the registration and induction of health care personnel in an emergency. DoD identifies more than 60 health care specialties to include in the SSS Health Care Personnel Delivery System (HCPDS).”⁴ This affects men between the ages of 20 and 45 but most doctors and nurses are not aware of preparation for a “Medical Draft.”

The Defense Department issued new “post Cold War” guidance to the SSS in 1994, establishing that women would also be included in a Medical Draft: “DoD reaffirms that it is not necessary to register or draft women (for a conventional draft of untrained manpower) because they are prohibited by policy from serving in ground combat assignments. SSS recognizes women may have to be included in a health care draft.”⁵ A February 2004 fact sheet issued by the SSS confirms that women will be included in a Medical Draft.⁶

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION TO WAR AND MILITARISM

A Conscientious Objector (CO), as defined by Webster, is “a person who refuses to take part in warfare because his conscience prohibits his participation in killing.”⁷ Some COs object to

³An educational deferment allowed a person, when called up to be drafted, to defer his induction into until he finishes his education. Some students continued their education indefinitely, thus avoiding the draft.

⁴SSS Internal Memo.

⁵SSS Internal Memo.

⁶SSS Fast Facts.

⁷Webster’s New World Dictionary.

combat and killing but are willing to perform other activities in the military, such as serving as a medic or clerk. Others will not serve in the military at all because any work they would do in that capacity would support war and killing. Conscientious Objector status is historically based on the First Amendment to the US Constitution, which reads:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people to peaceably assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

Those first two highlighted phrases are usually referred to as the “establishment clause” and the “free exercise clause,” pertaining to religion.

Religion and Conscience.

The task is now presented to the conscientious objector to apply the *religion* clauses of the First Amendment to the *conscience* aspect of his or her objection to war and killing. Some people may contend that there is a fine dividing line between the two, that conscience pertains to the secular aspect of knowing right from wrong whereas religion has mystical ramifications involving faith in a supreme being, or creator. These same people may further say that a good conscience can be developed by several means – religious teaching, humane feelings, experiences, etc. – but that the ultimate and perfect manner of developing a right conscience is through active practice of religious teachings.

A sincere conscientious objector, who seriously examines why he or she objects to war, would take that analysis one step further. They would agree that religion does, as its primary goal, strive to develop a proper conscience to guide an individual through life. But they might add that God, by whatever name that supreme being is recognized, may work in many ways to guide people through life. Religion is one way but morals and ethics, however secular they may seem, can also be used by God to create a good conscience. Those COs, even though not going through a conscious process of following religious ritual, are still influenced and guided by a sense of righteousness. A person’s conscience can be influenced through personal experiences, contacts with and examples of others, and many other so-called secular encounters. Some claim this is how God works.

Albert Einstein is an example of a conscience formed by increasing awareness of the universe. Although an outstanding genius of the 20th century, he has been variously accused of being an atheist or an agnostic. That may have been true in his younger days as he did make derogative remarks about meaningless ritual and institutionalized spirituality. But through his work and studies he observed many miracles of “nature,” and developed a healthy respect for a supernatural aspect to science. He explained: “My religion consists of a humble admiration of the illimitable superior spirit who reveals himself in the slightest details we are able to perceive with our frail and feeble minds.”⁸

In his later life, Einstein regretted his participation in building the atomic bomb, and his letter to Roosevelt encouraging the Manhattan Project. His conscience matured and he regarded it as his supreme guide,

⁸Quoted in Des MacHale, *Wisdom* (London, 2002)

advising people to “never do anything against conscience, even if the state demands it ...”⁹

The point of this discussion is to illustrate that conscience, rather than being a practice of religion only when exercised in connection with a traditional church, is always a practice of religion in the context of guiding a person along the right path. In that light, conscience followed in connection with traditional church teachings is only a part of the bigger picture when considering free practice of religion.

As long as the nation has an all-volunteer military, the CO simply chooses not to volunteer. But conscription is often necessary to satisfy military needs. In that case the CO has to show that his conscience is a genuine exercise of religion. If the CO is an active member of a church, that may not be too difficult. However, if the CO has no formal religious affiliation but has a sincere feeling that war and killing are wrong, the task is more difficult. Nevertheless, the evolutionary construction of law through court interpretations of the constitution has gradually gravitated in favor of the CO. That will be discussed later, but first let me explain more about conscientious objection.

What is a Conscientious Objector?

Many people have a misunderstanding of what a conscientious objector is and may not be sure they qualify. Not all COs object to war and killing in the same fashion. The Center on Conscience and War in Washington, D.C. has published material describing the wide scope of conscientious objection. Here I will indicate those that pertain to being inducted into the military service and fighting in a war:

- Many men and women accept war as sometimes necessary but object to certain wars as unjust and are opposed to participating in them. They are conscientious objectors.
- Many men and women are willing to serve in the military but only as a noncombatant – will not carry a gun or kill another person – although they may be exposed to very hazardous situations. They are conscientious objectors.
- Many men and women are opposed to participating in any war because they believe all wars are unjust. They are conscientious objectors.
- Many men and women feel deeply that they cannot even cooperate with the selective service system by registering. They would rather forego college financial aid from the government and risk other serious penalties than violate their beliefs. Some states refuse driver’s licences to people who are not registered. These people are conscientious objectors.
- Many men and women refuse to perform alternative service even if they do qualify for CO status. They would rather go to prison than do what they consider cooperating with the draft and war. They are conscientious objectors.

So, it is obvious that there are varying degrees of conscientious objection. If a person has qualms about war, the first thing to determine is how deep those qualms reach – to what extent does their objection to war and the draft extend. Then a course of action can be planned.

⁹Quoted in Mattern, Douglas; “Albert Einstein: Scientist, Philosopher, World Citizen,” *New Realities*, July/August 1984.

Evolution of Conscientious Objection in America.

According to the Academy of Leadership, the first recorded case of conscientious objection occurred during colonial times, in 1658. This happened “when one Richard Keene was fined and ‘abused by the sheriff’ for ‘refusing to be trained as a soldier.’” The account continues that “from the earliest times, the American colonies allowed certain exemptions to militia obligations for members of pacifist religious groups, the so-called peace churches, Mennonites and Church of the Brethren ... and Quakers ...”¹⁰ It seems that no colony forced COs into the militia if they could pay for the exemption. This practice carried through the Revolutionary War.

After independence, James Madison, influenced by Thomas Jefferson, first proposed the wording for the First Amendment to read: “The civil rights of none shall be abridged on account of religious belief or worship, nor shall the full and equal rights of conscience be in any manner, or on any pretense, infringed.”¹¹ When the Bill of Rights, consisting of the first 10 amendments to the US Constitution, went to Congress, each house modified the wording to their taste. The House of Representatives kept a clause in the First Amendment prohibiting infringement on conscience, but the Senate eliminated the word “conscience” and used only terms relating to faith, worship, and religion. The joint conference committee came up with the final language as it appears today, with no reference to “conscience.”

During the Civil War, CO status received some legal recognition. Besides the traditional peace churches mentioned above, the Seventh Day Adventists added an urban working class in objecting to war. The situation was more difficult for COs in the Confederate South because of lack of manpower and the general public attitude toward those who would not fight. The first conscription act passed on 16 April 1862 provided no provision for COs but a later Confederate Exemption Act of October 1862 recognized members of certain peace churches if they, “furnished substitutes or paid a \$500 exemption tax.” Severe manpower shortages and inability to collect the tax caused repeal of the exemption. Many objectors and their families had to flee and were hunted by home guards. “By war’s end Kentucky Shakers at Pleasant Hill reported having fed at least 50,000 soldiers from both armies ...”¹²

The Union Army of the North enjoyed a better manpower supply and the public attitude was more tolerant. COs did work in hospitals, took care of sick soldiers at home, and performed other such duties. Later in the war COs were inducted but given non-combat jobs. They had the option of buying out for \$300.

Up until World War I, conscientious objection was not a critical matter. But the greater manpower requirements of World War I made conscientious objection more acute. COs were exempted from combat service but not military service if they belonged to a traditional peace church. Those who refused were sent to prison. Later there were some military-type camps that allowed performing non-military alternative service that supported the war effort. There were between 3,500 and 4,000 COs during World War I. Some 450-500 would not support the war in any form and were court marshaled. Seventeen received death sentences, which were not carried out, and 150 received life sentences.

¹⁰Academy of Leadership, University of Maryland.

¹¹Cited in FindLaw.

¹²Quotations in this paragraph from “Conscientious Objectors In The Civil War.”

World War II expanded the definition of a conscientious objector to include members of any church, not just the peace churches. The objection still had to be based strictly on religious teachings. COs had a choice of three alternatives: (1) serve as a noncombatant in the military, (2) perform nonmilitary work related to the war effort, or (3) perform work considered socially valuable. COs who refused military service but did not have the church background were sent to prison. The number imprisoned is reported variously from 5,000 to more than 6,000. About 25,000 COs served in the military in non-killing roles. Most of these served as unarmed medics and performed very hazardous jobs – one even won the Congressional Medal of Honor.¹³ Another 12,000-20,000 men performed alternative service. In addition, about 27,000 men who had applied for CO status failed the physical and were exempt for that reason.

COs who performed alternative service did many notorious things. From 200 volunteers, 36 were chosen for a starvation experiment at the University of Michigan. The results of this study were used to rehabilitate millions of starving refugees in Europe and Asia. All together, some 500 COs volunteered as guinea pigs in medical experiments.¹⁴ Approximately 2,000 COs worked in mental asylums and subsequently motivated a humane reform movement in the treatment of mentally ill, and developing community-based alternatives to asylums. About 12,000 COs worked in Civilian Public Service camps performing conservation work and fighting forest fires. Over 150 of these camps were set up during World War II.

Conscription laws during the Korean War were changed to recognize CO status not only for those who object on religious beliefs, but also to include belief in a “Supreme Being.” There were about 4,300 COs during the Korean War.

Court decisions defined CO requirements more finely during the Vietnam War – objection must be to all war, not just a specific one. There were over 200,000 COs during the Vietnam War and between 50,000 and 100,000 men fled to Canada to avoid serving in the military.

After the Vietnam War, when the Pentagon relied on an all-volunteer army, there were still conscientious objectors. Soldiers found that they really did object to war and killing after they had enlisted. During the First Persian Gulf War there were 111 COs until the military stopped the practice. Then 2,500 soldiers went to prison rather than fight in the war. It is theoretically possible to obtain a discharge on the basis of conscientious objection after one has enlisted voluntarily, but it is more difficult.

Judicial Interpretations of the First Amendment Since 1970.

The Selective Service Act of 1948, and the Universal Military Training and Service Act of 1951 which succeeded it, clarified the meaning of religious training and belief to include belief in a supreme being. The US Supreme Court ruled in 1965 that “Congress, in using the expression ‘Supreme Being’ rather than the designation God, was merely clarifying the meaning of religious training and belief so as to embrace all religions and to exclude essentially political, sociological, or philosophical views.”¹⁵ This decision, while still embracing all religions, still restricted conscientious objection to those who held theistic beliefs.

¹³For the saga of Corporal Desmond T. Doss see http://www.homeofheroes.com/profiles/profiles_doss.html

¹⁴One of these “guinea pigs” was Max M. Kampelman who later became the Reagan administration’s chief arms negotiator.

¹⁵*United States v. Seeger*, 380 U.S. 163 (1965).

But a 1970 US Supreme Court decision modified that. The opinion of the Court was that the Universal Military Training and Service Act “exempts from military service all those whose consciences, spurred by deeply held moral, ethical, or religious beliefs, would give them no rest or peace if they allowed themselves to become part of an instrument of war.” Justice Harlan in a separate concurring opinion said that the constitutionality of the Act cannot be avoided because it “contravenes the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment by exempting those whose conscientious objection claims are founded on a theistic belief while not exempting those whose claims are based on a secular belief. To comport with that clause an exemption must be ‘neutral’ and exempt those whose belief emanates from a purely moral, ethical, or philosophical source.”¹⁶ This decision has broadened considerably the legal definition of a conscientious objector.

The Military Selective Service Act of 1967 required that to be exempt from military service a person must be “conscientiously opposed to participation in war in any form.”¹⁷ This was challenged as contrary to the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment. The Supreme Court held that: “Congress intended to exempt persons who oppose participation in all war – ‘participation in war in any form’ – and that persons who object solely to participation in a particular war are not within the purview of the exempting section, even though the latter exemption may have such roots in a claimant’s conscience and personality that it is ‘religious’ in character.”¹⁸ This affected thousands of men during the Vietnam War. It appears to be a double standard that the laws and the courts will recognize the deep and sincere feelings of a person’s conscience in one instance, and then disregard those same feelings in another.

Legislation in effect today for a Combat Draft only requires men (not women) to register (not be inducted). There is no provision or definition regarding conscientious objection in current law. If induction is decreed, Congress must pass new legislation. In that, among other things, will presumably be the requisites and prerequisites for conscientious objection.

IS A COMBAT DRAFT LIKELY?

The Conventional Draft that has taken place in the past, also called a Combat Draft, has been used chiefly to obtain or replace troops for ground warfare. Although some with special training are filtered out along the way, the majority fill the ranks and maintain the head count, carry the rifles and wield the bayonets.

It has been over 30 years since an American has been drafted. Although men between the ages of 18 and 26 still have to register, and draft boards are still maintained to handle that registration, there have been no call-ups. However, with today’s overextended military there are concerns that a draft will again be activated. In late November 2003, there appeared on the Pentagon’s anti-terrorism website a plea for volunteers to staff draft boards and appeals boards. Many were signed up but when the media learned of

¹⁶Quotations in the paragraph from *Welsh v. United States*, 398 U.S. 333 (1970).

¹⁷Cited in *Gillette v. United States*, 401 U.S. 437 (1971).

¹⁸*Gillette v. United States*, 401 U.S. 437 (1971).

the website, realized its implications, and published some revealing stories, the Pentagon promptly removed the ad.¹⁹

Nevertheless, the White House and Pentagon still hotly deny any plans to revive the draft. At the same time the Pentagon is drawing manpower from all sources available – the National Guard, the Reserves, the Individual Ready Reserves, and other units such as the National Training Center, the Army’s Delayed Entry Program, and even a company from the honor guard at Arlington National Cemetery. Over 40% of the troops currently being rotated into Iraq are from the National Guard and Reserves. Thousands of troops have also been re-deployed from South Korea and Europe to meet critical manpower shortages.



In less official pronouncements, US officials paint a gloomier but more realistic picture. Pentagon official, General Richard Cody, testified to Congress in mid-2004 that troop deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan have greatly reduced America’s ability to deploy anywhere else, should a new war erupt. He said: “Are we stretched thin with our active and reserve component forces right now? Absolutely.” He added that military officials “are concerned about it.”²⁰

Meanwhile, recruiters are falling short of their goals. In September 2004, for the first time in ten years, the National Guard fell short of its recruitment goal. The Marines, also for the first time in a decade, missed their January 2005 recruitment goal.²¹ Tours of duty are being extended beyond contracted enlistment dates. Huge bonuses are being offered to attract new recruits. Mercenaries are being paid ridiculous sums – in some cases \$1000 per day – to fill certain positions. The number of recruiters has been increased and their tactics have become more energetic and resourceful. At the same time, hope for relief from European countries and the Iraqi security forces has not been successful.

Reducing troops in Iraq appears not to be an option. The Army’s top operations officer, Lieutenant General James J. Lovelace, Jr., said in January 2005 that the “Army expects to keep its troop strength in Iraq at the current level of about 120,000 for at least two more years.”²² Other officials estimate figures ranging from 135,000 to 150,000.

¹⁹A Selective Service website apparently gave more details of the draft board preparations at http://www.sss.gov/perfplan_fy2004.html, but that web page has been removed also. However, websites from that time which are still available report that a budget of \$28 million was approved to get the nations draft boards ready for business by 15 June 2005. Some of the exercises and strategies identified were to test a prototype Medical Draft (to be discussed later), test a prototype activation process for the selective service lottery system, and fill 10,350 draft board positions as well as 11,070 appeals board posts as soon as possible. The administration continues to deny plans for a military draft.

²⁰ABC News Online, 8 July 2004.

²¹Only the Army and Marine Corps. seem to be having recruiting problems. The Navy and Air Force have plenty of recruits. It seems that potential military people are choosing the military service branches that do not experience ground combat.

²²Graham, 25 January 2005.

I will now address some of these aspects in greater detail.

Back-to-Back Deployments and “Stop-Loss.”

Currently there are some 1.4 million troops on active duty in the total military and another 865,000 in the National Guard and Reserves. But the active Army and Marine share of that total – those that handle the ground combat – is only 655,000 and that includes all the non-combat jobs such as support units, training commands, headquarters personnel and others. When we subtract the 120,000-150,000 in Iraq, 20,000 in Afghanistan, a smaller contingent in the Balkans, those required in Europe and the Asian-Pacific theater plus the troops needed in the US, there is not much left for future contingencies.

The National Guard is a military reserve unit, or militia, controlled by each state and equipped by the federal government. It is subject to the call of either the federal or the state government. The Army National Guard becomes part of the US Army when called for federal service.²³ Domestically, National Guard units are used to meet natural disasters. But in Idaho, for instance, where 62% of the National Guard has been nationalized and sent to Iraq, their ability to fight forest fires has been seriously hindered. The typical enlistment is three or six years. The National Guard also has a Try One enlistment, where a new recruit can enlist for one year without taking basic training before making a commitment to a full 3-year or 6-year “hitch.” They spend one weekend a month plus two weeks a year training. College tuition is also provided. The Army National Guard has 350,000 troops, with 42,000 at any one time in Iraq and Kuwait, on a rotating basis. Another 8,200 at a time are taking rotating deployments in Afghanistan. The head of the National Guard Bureau, Lieutenant General H. Steven Blum, said about 100,000 Army National Guard troops are activated at any given time for duty at home or abroad.

The Reserves are essentially an inactive element of one of the military services. Until activated, members of the Reserve, as with the National Guard, spend one weekend a month training and attend a two-week training exercise every year. Reservists sign up for three or six years, depending on what their military job is. The Army Reserve has about 200,000 troops.

With this hodge podge of military elements – National Guard, Reserves, Regular Army, and Marines combined with a wide assortment of enlistment dates – it became difficult to keep a military unit together during a tour of duty in Iraq or Afghanistan. The Pentagon resorted to a policy dubbed “stop-loss.”

The National Guard and Reserves were originally intended to be mobilized for an emergency and then sent home quickly. This worked well during the 1990 Gulf War and the conquest of Iraq was planned to be another quick military victory. When reality set in, the length of deployment for a military unit in Iraq extended to one year. Lieutenant General Ricardo Sanchez, commander of US forces in Iraq said that “at the end of the year we’ll be working to send them home.”²⁴ Then as “mission creep” set in more firmly, units would be sent back for another one-year tour of duty after they had been home a while. About half of the 32,000 Marines now in Iraq are on their second tour. Lieutenant General James R. Helmly, head

²³Likewise, the Air National Guard becomes part of the Air Force when nationalized.

²⁴Quoted in Associate Press, 12 August 2003.

of the Army Reserves, criticized these back-to-back deployments, saying that “they have served and returned to civilian life. Such policies have strained the Army Reserve to the point where the 200,000-strong force could be unable to carry out future missions.”²⁵

The new one-year tour of duty in Iraq introduced another manpower problem. With all the various and staggered dates for completing enlistment contracts, many would qualify for discharge while in a combat zone. To hold onto personnel, the Pentagon invoked a “stop-loss” policy.

What are now known as “stop-loss” orders was approved by Congress shortly after the Vietnam war when the Pentagon was struggling to refill its combat units. Then it was used once, just prior to deployment for the 1990 Persian Gulf war, and not again until 9-11. On 14 September 2001, President George W. Bush signed Executive Order 13223 which resulted in a flurry of “stop-loss” orders. With similar authority, the length of time National Guard and Reserve troops could be mobilized was extended to two years.

With the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, the Army was straining to meet its global commitments. “Stop-loss” orders were issued to various units on a one-for-one basis as necessary. This caused confusion and resentment, and has lowered morale among the troops. What applied to one unit may not apply to another because the orders were issued selectively, mainly to preserve critical skills needed in Iraq such as military police, civil affairs specialists, and ordnance specialists. Also, it frequently happened that Regular Army troops were allowed to be discharged and retire, but not those from the National Guard and Reserves.

“Stop-loss orders extend from 90 days before deployment overseas to 90 days after return. Up to and through May 2004, some 45,000 soldiers whose time would have been up during that window were held until 90 days after returning to the US. A few hundred Air Force, Navy, and Marine personnel were also affected during 2003.

On 2 June 2004 the Army standardized its policy and issued a blanket “stop-loss” order for all its military units rotating into Iraq or Afghanistan. This did not, of course, affect the Navy, Air Force, or Marines. Many have dubbed these “stop-loss” orders a “Back-Door Draft.” Others who stop short of that accusation do say it violates the spirit of an all-volunteer army.

Whatever it may be called, it certainly illustrates a manpower shortage and a dire need for the military to hold on to its soldiers. And with new recruits being dissuaded from enlisting, the death knell for an all volunteer army may be near. Nevertheless, some In Congress, like Senator Jack Reed of Rhode Island, are pushing for legislation to increase the size of the Regular Army. In view of current recruiting problems, it is difficult to see how that would be accomplished without a draft. Let me now turn to those recruiting problems.

Join the Army and Be All You Can Be! – No Thanks!

One very critical requirement for maintaining an all-volunteer army is a continuous flow of new recruits down the pipeline. They don’t just walk into recruiting offices to sign up – at least enough of them don’t. Recruiters have to go out and find them in order to meet quotas. Meeting quotas has not been happening lately.

²⁵*Mercury News*, 6 January 2005.

Recruiting is a very special skill that the military cultivates. Since the patriotic high of 9-11 has worn thin, and particularly since the invasion and occupation of Iraq has drawn out to an unpredictable length of time, recruiters are meeting a growing challenge. The Army National Guard is in the process of increasing their recruiters from 2,700 to 4,100 by mid-March 2005. That is the first large increase since 1989.

For the federal fiscal year 2004, which ended 30 September 2004,²⁶ the National Guard for the first time in a decade failed to meet its yearly requirement. It was 12% short (6,790 enlistees short) of its goal of 56,000.²⁷ But it got worse in the first two months of the new fiscal year. During October and November of 2004, with a goal of 7,600 new recruits, Guard recruiters only signed up 5,448 – almost 30% short. In January 2005 the shortfall was 46%.

Guard commander Lt. Gen Blum attributes most of the recruiting shortfall to “a sharp reduction in the number of recruits joining the Guard and Reserve when they leave active duty.”²⁸ He said that for the last 30 years these former soldiers made up half of the recruits. But now, with the “stop-loss” policy and uncertain overseas deployment coupled with actually experiencing the carnage and senselessness of war, they have no inclination to re-enlist.

The Army Reserves are experiencing the same recruiting difficulties. Also in October and November of 2004, the Army Reserve missed its goal, falling 10% short. It lacked 315 enlistees of the 3,170 goal. Army Reserve commander, Lt. Gen. Helmly, told the media that Army Reserve recruiting was in a “precipitous decline” that if unchecked could inspire renewed debate over a draft.²⁹

The Army’s National Guard and Reserves have substantially increased enlistment bonuses recently. Former soldiers who re-enlist in the Army National Guard for six years will now get triple the enlistment bonus – \$15,000. If the soldier signs up overseas, that bonus will be tax-free. Bonuses for new recruits has increased from \$6,000 to \$10,000. The Army Reserve has the same plus a \$7,500 bonus for former soldiers who sign up for another three years.

Enticing soldiers with these lavish bonuses has made some senior officers edgy. Lt. Gen Helmly wrote to senior Army leaders in December 2004: “We must consider the point at which we confuse ‘volunteer to become an American soldier’ with ‘mercenary’.”³⁰

The Regular Army and the Marine Corps., the other two service branches which perform the ground combat function, fulfilled their recruiting goals for fiscal year 2004 (ending 30 September 2004). Now it looks like sign-ups are falling off for them too. During October 2004 the Regular Army started off the new fiscal year with 26.4% fewer recruits in its pipeline than what it planned. It was less than half of what it had

²⁶Federal fiscal years run from October 1st through September 30th.

²⁷Cited in Romero, 19 February 2005.

²⁸Schmitt, 17 December 2004.

²⁹Quoted in Schmitt, 17 December 2004.

³⁰Dickinson, 27 January 2005.

a year ago.³¹ The Regular Army is now rushing recruits to induction in half the time, has lowered its standards to take 25% more high school dropouts, and has added another 800 recruiters to its existing 5,201. Adding to the crunch is the Army's goal to add 10-15 combat brigades by 2009 for rotation into Iraq and other duty assignments.³² Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Richard B. Myers said 'I anticipate that fiscal year '05 will be very challenging for both active and reserve component recruiting.'³³

In January 2005, for the first since 1995, the Marines fell almost 3% short of their monthly goal – they lacked 84 of making the 3,270 quota. It is only a small amount but the trend conforms to that of the Regular Army and its National Guard and Reserves.

And, like the Guard and Reserves, to stimulate recruiting, these active duty branches are also increasing enlistment bonuses. Marine recruiters are now offering up to \$30,000 re-enlistment bonuses (tax-free if re-enlisting is done overseas) for certain "combat arms" specialties (riflemen, machine gunners, and mortar men). That is more than triple the maximum bonus a year ago, and the first time in history that the "Grunts" who do the dirty work receive the highest bonuses. It indicates where the need is. The Regular Army is offering bonuses of \$17,000 for 3-year enlistments and \$20,000 for four or more years in certain high-priority job categories.

All aspects of the Navy and Air Force – Regular, Reserve, and Air National Guard – seem to have no trouble fulfilling their recruiting quotas. It is just those branches of the service that perform ground combat that are experiencing sign-up difficulties.

Filling the ranks with bodies isn't the only problem facing military branches. Equipment for National Guard units is also critical. Units returning from Iraq or Afghanistan frequently lack much of their equipment. It has been wrecked overseas or left for other units to use. That has caused a severe shortage of radios, trucks, helicopters, engineering equipment and other material here at home. Lt. Gen. Blum says the Army National Guard needs \$20 billion over the next three years to replace critical equipment. "Otherwise," he warns, "the Guard will be broken and not ready for the next time it's needed, either here at home or for war."³⁴

These are all things that, as Lt. Gen. Helmly warned, if left unchecked could revive debate on the draft. Checking them is getting very expensive. When the expense of checking them exceeds the cost of volunteer draft boards, or the checking techniques prove unfruitful, then that debate will gain crescendo.

³¹The Regular Army began fiscal year 2004 with 49.5% of its annual recruiting goal filled by its Delayed Entry Program (where a recruit signs a contract that delays his or her entry for up to a year). But because the Delayed Entry Program numbers fell from 33,249 to 14,739 at the start of fiscal year 2005, which is 1 October 2004, the Army missed its quota for that month. This situation is expected to be worse for fiscal year 2006.

³²A combat brigade normally consists of 3,500 soldiers. There are currently 33 active duty brigades.

³³Quoted in Tyson, 21 February 2005.

³⁴Quoted in Schmitt, 17 December 2004.

Exploiting the Individual Ready Reserves.

In the scramble to find more people to fill key positions, the Pentagon started digging into a rarely-used resource – the Individual Ready Reserves (IRR). There are about 111,000 former soldiers and officers in the IRR who had been discharged for one reason or another before their contracted “hitch” was completed. If they don’t sign up in the Reserves or the Guard to finish their time, they remain in the IRR until their contractual obligation is complete. Officers remain in the IRR indefinitely if they don’t formally resign their commission at the end of their obligation. Not many know of this technicality and, thus, some people in their 80s who served in World War II are still in the IRR.³⁵

The IRR provides a pool from which, in the case of a national emergency, the military can select people with certain needed skills. After sifting through the roster, the Army on 29 June 2004 announced plans to call up 5,600 Individual Ready Reservists, with the skills needed, for a year of active duty. From that number the Army hopes to fill 4,400 jobs vacancies in Afghanistan and Iraq. At least 2,000 are appealing or suing for exemption and hundreds have not shown up on the date ordered to appear.

The Army plans to call up another 5,600 IRR soldiers in mid-2005 to replace those from the first batch when their year of active duty is completed. “Critics have cited the Army’s reliance on the IRR as evidence that it has too few soldiers to sustain force levels in Iraq and Afghanistan.”³⁶ Members of Congress cited this IRR call-up “as more evidence that the deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan and, more broadly, for the global campaign against terrorism, have left the Army unable to fulfill all its missions.”³⁷

Private Security Contractors – Helping To Fill The Ranks.

“The end of the Cold War and Pentagon efforts to increase efficiency, speed and delivery of services, and free troops for purely military missions have triggered a boom in the outsourcing of work to private contractors. ... [Defense giants] have been buying up these companies like mad,” in order to corner a bigger slice of the financial pie.³⁸ Brookings Institution fellow, P.W. Singer, “estimates it as a \$100 billion industry with several hundred companies operating in more than 100 countries.”³⁹

Narrowing the discussion down to Iraq, there are many types of contractors involved. In this paper I will only discuss private security companies and civilian security guards. I put them both under the heading of private security contractors. Many of them experience heavy combat conditions and are hired to free the regular soldiers for primary combat duty. As of mid-2004, the Pentagon had records of 60 private security

³⁵As an example, an 84-year-old semi-retired Philadelphia dentist, who served during World War II as an Army captain, was recently offered a \$30,000 bonus if he would sign up again, plus a \$58,646 loan-repayment option and a generous retirement plan.

³⁶Reuters, 1 October 2004.

³⁷Shanker, 30 June 2004.

³⁸*Business Week*, 31 May 2004.

³⁹*Business Week*, 31 May 2004.

companies operating in Iraq which, in turn, employ approximately 20,000 civilian security guards.⁴⁰ This list is not complete as company names not appearing on the list continually crop up. These civilian security guards perform duties from guarding senior civilian officials and non-military facilities to protecting military convoys and other duties.⁴¹ Two, hired by CACI International Inc. and Titan Corp. to provide interrogative services, were involved in the Abu Ghraib prison scandal.⁴² Some observers have called these private security companies a privatized military industry and the civilian security guards – dubbed corporate warriors – are today’s hired mercenaries.⁴³ And “revelations that civilians are performing sensitive tasks such as interrogation have jolted Congress and the public.”⁴⁴

Private security personnel are recruited from many countries, mainly from the country’s military elite. They come especially from special forces and military police from the US, Britain, France, Israel, and South Africa. New Zealand special-ops soldiers are also involved. Many Iraqis have been signed up along with “hired guns trained by repressive regimes.”⁴⁵ “There are serious doubts even within the occupying power about America’s choice to send Chilean mercenaries, many trained during General Pinochet’s vicious dictatorship, to guard Baghdad Airport.”⁴⁶ Former Marine Corps. judge advocate and now Georgetown University law professor, Gary D. Solis, said: “This outsourcing thing has gone crazy. You have a lot of people with heavy weapons answerable to no one.”⁴⁷ Pay for the civilian security guards “ranges from \$250 a month for Kurdish [Iraqi] fighters to \$1,000 a day for former Green Berets.”⁴⁸ (emphasis added.) In many ways this privatized military competes with Pentagon recruiting goals by luring away the best trained troops with outlandish salaries. Nevertheless, the money still comes from the US taxpayers pocket whether it be directly from a government agency or channeled through military prime contractors to subcontracting private security companies.

⁴⁰Rumsfeld, 4 May 2004.

⁴¹To illustrate how private security companies have assumed a major role in US military activities, there was one private security guard for every 50 troops in the 1991 Persian Gulf war. In Iraq today there is one for every 10 soldiers. (See Isenberg, September 2004.)

⁴²Neither CACI International nor Titan Corp, the two private security companies implicated in the Abu Ghraib prison scandal, appear on the list of 60 furnished by Rumsfeld. (See Rumsfeld, 4 May 2004.) According to the *Washington Post*, these contracts are administered by the Interior Department, not the Pentagon. (See *Business Week*, 31 May 2004.)

⁴³These terms come from the title of P.W. Singer’s book. *Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*.

⁴⁴*Business Week*, 31 May 2004.

⁴⁵*Business Week*, 31 May 2004.

⁴⁶Fisk and Carrell, 28 March 2004.

⁴⁷Quoted in *Business Week*, 31 May 2004

⁴⁸Quirk, 1 September 2004.

These private security personnel, although they frequently get into the thick of the fighting, are not counted on the military casualty list and, in fact, these casualties are not even made known to the public unless they reach public attention by other means. An organization known as Iraq Coalition Casualties has been compiling a running tabulation of all casualties (both fatalities and wounded) suffered by all nationalities, civilian and military, in Iraq by the “coalition of the willing.” It has posted on its website a partial listing of contractor casualties which itemizes 270 fatalities through 8 February 2005.⁴⁹ Although some may not be security guards, most undoubtedly are, as they are the ones who face the danger. Again, this is only a partial listing.

Of the 20,000 civilian security guards identified, between 14,000 and 14,500 are employed by the British firm, Erinys International, to guard Iraq’s oil fields and oil pipelines.⁵⁰ The largest private security companies operating in Iraq are Erinys International (14,000 - 14,500), Global Risk Strategies (1,000 - 1,200), Control Risks Group (750), Blackwater USA (about 600)⁵¹, Triple Canopy (350), SOC-SMG (300), Olive (265), and DynCorp (175).⁵² Referring to civilian security guards, John D. Hutson, a retired rear admiral and former Navy judge advocate general, summed up his worry: “I have a problem with people carrying weapons in an offensive way. And I have a serious problem with people in sensitive positions, like interrogators.”⁵³

I have gone into a fairly detailed discussion of the nuances of private military contracting to illustrate another effort – an extremely expensive and exhaustive effort – the Bush administration has gone to in order to maintain adequate military personnel on active duty. It is yet another indication that a Combat Draft may be required soon.

Playing Musical Chairs With America’s Troops.

The Pentagon has been struggling to reduce US forces in Iraq since Bush’s “Mission Accomplished” speech aboard the *USS Abraham Lincoln*. That has not been possible. Insurgency has grown in numbers and intensity. US troops are now being re-deployed from other theaters to cover all the bases.

In 2003 the Pentagon ran an “Operational Availability Study,” which is still classified. Jason Sherman writes in *Defense News*: “The services are being challenged to structure themselves to deploy to a distant theater in ten days, defeat an enemy within 30 days, and be ready to fight again within another 30. ... Each of the services is developing capabilities to make its forces easier to quickly deploy.”⁵⁴ This capability fits well into the Bush doctrine of Preemptive Force. But through a shuffle match of re-deployment this capability is also freeing more troops for rotation into Iraq.

⁴⁹Iraq Coalition Casualties: Contractors – A Partial.

⁵⁰Cited in Quirk, 1 September 2004. Also see Isenberg, September 2004.

⁵¹The four security guards mutilated and murdered in Fallujah in March 2004 worked for Blackwater.

⁵²Cited in Isenberg, September 2004.

⁵³Quoted in *Business Week*, 31 May 2004

⁵⁴Sherman, 31 May 2004.

In June 2004 there were over 100,000 troops in Europe, some 53,000 in Japan and Okinawa, and approximately 37,000 in South Korea. In early summer of 2004 the 2nd Brigade Combat Team of 3,500 troops was transferred from South Korea to Iraq. It is not likely to return to South Korea.

Bush announced on 19 August 2004 that 70,000 - 100,000 troops would be re-deployed from Asia and Europe. Most of them would come home to the US but some would go to new bases in new NATO countries for easy deployment to the Middle East and Central Asia. Those returning to the US would be available for rapid deployment in crisis situations and also, presumable, for rotation into Iraq. Bush said “we’ll deploy a more agile force and a more flexible force, which means that more of our troops will be stationed and deployed from here at home.”⁵⁵ This concept for deploying military forces is called “global military force management.”

About 12,000 of the 37,000 US troops in South Korea will be withdrawn – 5,000 of them by the end of 2004.⁵⁶ Possibly 20,000 marines will be moved from Okinawa. Most of the remainder will come from Europe, mainly in the form of two army divisions in Germany. Although Bush claims this realignment has nothing to do with the crunch in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is easy to see how this will make more troops available for rotation into those combat zones. In any event, this new American footprint, as it has been called, will put a military force that has been stretched thin around the globe in a position where it can jump to the right, or to the left, as deemed necessary by Washington.

Building up Iraq’s Security Forces .

The Bush administration shunned its allies and defied the United Nations when it decided to “go it alone” with Iraq. Since then the US has been trying to entice European nations to help shoulder the burden and expense of occupation, all to no avail. Except for Britain’s much smaller contingent and a handful of troops from others in the “coalition of the willing,” America has shouldered the full load. Even at that, some allies are deserting the cause as the insurgency in Iraq heightens – such as Spain, Honduras, and the Dominican Republic which withdrew troops in 2004.

Adding to that was the Pentagon blunder of disbanding the Iraqi army after conquest. Since then it has been struggling to rebuild the country’s security forces. Now the training and equipping of Iraqi forces is a paramount goal of the US. There are now about 130,000 Iraqi security forces recruited, towards a goal of 270,000. But according to General George Casey, the top US multi-national commander in Iraq, they are “still not ready to take over the counterinsurgency and there [is] no guarantee they will ever be able to defeat it on their own.”⁵⁷ Casey pointed out that “they still lack leaders to direct them ... and local police forces who have deserted in the thousands in the face of intimidation and withering assaults by guerrillas

⁵⁵Quoted in Isenberg, 20 August 2004.

⁵⁶It is unclear if this number includes the 3,500 troops transferred to Iraq during early summer on 2004.

⁵⁷Associated Press,26 January 2005.

remain a key weak point.”⁵⁸ Also, just in the two weeks following the January 2005 Iraqi election, 60 police Iraqi police, soldiers, and recruits have been killed. This has had a disruptive and demoralizing effect on recruitment. Casey summed it up: “Can I sit here and look you in the eye and say that the Iraqi security forces guaranteed 100 percent are going to be able to defeat this insurgency by themselves? Of course not.”⁵⁹

Those 130,000 Iraqi recruits in uniform includes new recruits who have had as little as three weeks of training. Many don’t have weapons or body armor. A good share of the police do not even carry identification as such. “The reality, according to experts, is that there may be as few as 5,000 troops who could be considered combat ready.”⁶⁰

One Iraqi police colonel told the media: “I keep on hearing that we have been trained and we have been given the arms necessary by the Americans. But I seem to have missed all that. We have had people sent here who I would not trust at all. I have discovered that the Americans have made no checks on these men. Do you wonder why police stations and army barracks get blown up?”⁶¹

The director of operations for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Lieutenant General Norton Schwartz, testified to Congress in mid-2004 “that it will likely be years before the 35,000-strong Iraqi army currently being trained by US forces will be ready to take up the slack.”⁶²

This illustrates the failure in recruiting an Iraqi security force to relieve US occupation troops. Yet this recruiting, probably above all else, is the keystone to eventually withdrawing American and British troops. Failing that, the current occupation presence of 120,000 - 150,000 troops will have to be maintained indefinitely.

Summary Regarding Revival of a Combat Draft.

All military experts seem to agree that if war breaks out in another theater there will be a critical shortage of troops. If things heat up with Iran, some analysts say the shortfall in US troops could exceed 70,000. War on the Korean Peninsula would also find the US lacking. Rhode Island Senator Jack Reed, a former instructor and graduate of West Point, says: “We have put ourselves in the position where we don’t have the capability to handle another major contingency.”⁶³ His stand in Congress to increase the Regular Army size was energized by a recent letter from the Project For The New American Century which petitioned the majority leaders in Congress to increase US ground combat troops.

⁵⁸Associated Press,26 January 2005. A police force of 5,000 in Iraq’s northern city of Mosul abandoned their posts in November 2004 when heavy fighting reached the city.

⁵⁹Quoted by Associated Press,26 January 2005.

⁶⁰Buncombe, Sengupta, and Whitaker, 13 February 2005.

⁶¹Quoted in Buncombe, Sengupta, and Whitaker, 13 February 2005.

⁶²ABC News Online, 8 July 2004.

⁶³Dao, 3 October 2004.

That letter was dated 28 January 2005 and signed by 34 luminaries of the neoconservative fold. It started out: “The United States military is too small for the responsibilities we are asking it to assume.” And it continued that “it is our judgment that we should aim to increase the active duty Army and Marine Corps. together, of at least 25,000 troops each year over the next several years. There is abundant evidence that the demands of the ongoing missions in the greater Middle East, along with our continuing defense and alliance commitments elsewhere in the world, are close to exhausting current US ground forces.”

After more discussion on the current administration being “reluctant to adapt to this new reality,” and showing that we as a nation “can afford the military we need,” and praising how the “men and women in our military have performed magnificently,” and that “Reserves were meant to be reserves, not regulars,” the letter concludes: “Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution places the power and the duty to raise and support the military force of the United States in the hands of Congress. ... You will be serving your country well if you insist on providing the military manpower we need to meet America’s obligations, and to help ensure success in carrying out our foreign policy objectives in a dangerous, but also hopeful, world.”⁶⁴

Such a letter to Congress would not seem too disturbing until we realize the influence that the Project for the New American Century has had on the Bush administration. Besides having many of its members in influential cabinet and advisory positions, it was their September 2000 report – *Rebuilding America’s Defenses: Strategy, Forces and Resources For a New Century* – that provided the guidelines for the Bush administration’s *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* released two years later. This was the document that introduced Preemptive Force which was played out in Iraq a few months later, and could very well be used again in Iran.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice was asked repeatedly during her early February 2005 tour of Europe, Israel, and Palestine if President Bush would invade Iraq. After assuring several times that such an option was not on the agenda **at this time**, she pointed out that “no one ever asks the America President to take all his options ... any option off the table...”⁶⁵ Observing the lack of progress being made in diplomatic negotiations with Iran, it appears that Preemptive Force may soon be the only option left on the table. That being the case, combined with the above-discussed problems in obtaining and retaining manpower to do the fighting, a Combat Draft may soon be unavoidable.

WHAT WOULD A NEW DRAFT BE LIKE?

WI have reviewed above all the situations and events that indicate a draft might soon be considered. Strategic Objective 1.2 in the Selective Service System’s (SSS’s) performance plan for fiscal year 2004 was: “Ensure a mobilization infrastructure of 56 State Headquarters, 442 Area Offices, and 1,980 Local Boards are operational within 75 days of an authorized return to conscription.”⁶⁶ So much for the Bush administration’s claim that there are no plans for a draft.

⁶⁴PNAC Letter, 28 January 2005.

⁶⁵Rice, 4 February 2005.

⁶⁶SSS Annual Performance Plan 2004.

Now comes the question of what a new draft will be like. One thing seems certain – a new draft will include both men and women. It may still follow that women won't be put into ground combat, but their talents will be exploited in other areas. One of those areas in the medical field.

The Medical Draft – A Sleeper since 1988.

As pointed out above, provisions for a Medical Draft were legislated in 1988 as part of the Defense Authorization Act of that year. It charged the SSS to develop a structure which would facilitate the registration and induction of healthcare personnel in an emergency. That structure is called the Health Care Personnel Delivery System (HCPDS), a.k.a. the Medical Draft. The Department of Defense identified over 60 health care specialties that would be included.⁶⁷ In new post-Cold war guidance issued to SSS by the Pentagon in 1994, it was recognized that women may have to be inducted in a Medical Draft.⁶⁸

Another SSS document confirmed all this. If a Medical Draft were implemented, according to a one-page fact sheet propagated in February 2004, it would: "Begin a mass registration of male and female health care workers between the ages of 20 and 45. They would register at local post offices."⁶⁹ The SSS is also to "Prepare, conduct, and evaluate an Area Office Prototype Exercise in FY 2005."⁷⁰ Fiscal Year 2005 began on 1 October 2004. There would be no exemptions for medical reasons in a Medical Draft – if a person is able to perform a medical skill as a civilian, that person should also be able to do it in the military.⁷¹

In late 2003, the SSS announced that the Medical Draft "is now nearly complete. It is patterned after the Agency's existing plan for a conventional draft of untrained men, but would differ in that it would require a mass registration of health care practitioners, ages 20 through 44, followed by selection of individuals for induction to fulfill the numbers and skill requirements the military would need."⁷² The SSS said 36,000 doctors and nurses would be called in the first batch of draftees.⁷³

The Skills Draft – A Comprehensive National Database.

All draftees in past history have been more of a grab-bag affair to get troops on the front lines. Those with special skills were filtered out after being inducted. But in today's high-tech military it would be much more

⁶⁷Some sources put the number at 62. (See Dougherty, 25 July 2003.).

⁶⁸SSS Internal Memo.

⁶⁹SSS Fast Facts.

⁷⁰SSS Annual Performance Plan 2004.

⁷¹The Blatant Truth, 22 October 2004.

⁷²*The Register*, November/December 2003.

⁷³Cited in The Blatant Truth, 22 October 2004.

efficient to screen for the skills needed and then just induct the people who meet the requirements. This was started to a limited extent by preparing for a Medical Draft. Pentagon desires now, such as was indicated by calling up certain people with specific capabilities from the Independent Ready Reserve, point to a Skills Draft. But there are also more direct indicators that a Skills Draft may come soon, possibly in 2005.

That February 2003 internal SSS memo made public through a Freedom of Information Act request was called “Topical Agenda: The Department of Defense (Personnel & Readiness) and the Selective Service System.” It was the agenda for a meeting on February 11th between top SSS executives and cognizant

MEDICAL DRAFT and SKILLS DRAFT ALERT!
New Kinds of Draft Being Rescinded by Bush and the Republicans



New Documents reveal secret Draft Plans for 2005.
NOT THE RANGEL BILL – THIS IS NEW AND CONFIRMED
Selective Service is RIGHT NOW “Designing Procedures” to implement a Skills Draft and Medical Draft for “Virtually Every Young American”, male and female (age 18-34 for Skills and 20-44 for Medical Personnel). This new draft would be for the Pentagon AND the Dept. of Homeland Security. Go to <http://blatanttruth.org/draft.php> to read about the secret plans for yourself.

These documents are real, having been acknowledged by both the Pentagon and the Selective Service, as reported in the Seattle Post Intelligencer and the New York Times.

WHAT'S IN YOUR RESUMÉ?

expanded and revised program would require all registrants to indicate whether they have been trained in, possess, and professionally practice, one or more skills critical to national security or community health and safety. This could take the form of an initial ‘self-declaration’ as part of the registration process. Men and women would enter on the SSS registration form a multiple-digit number representing their critical skill ... taken from a lengthy list of skills – from doctors to truck drivers, from engineers to file clerks – to be compiled and published ...⁷⁶

Pentagon officials.⁷⁴ In that meeting the SSS observed: “Defense manpower officials concede there are critical shortages of military personnel with certain special skills, such as medical personnel, linguists, computer network engineers, etc. The cost of attracting and retaining such personnel for military service could be prohibitive, leading some officials to conclude that while a conventional draft may never be needed, a draft of men and women possessing these critical skills may be warranted in a future crisis, if too few volunteer.”⁷⁵

After that discussion, the SSS proposed that “with today’s needs, the SSS’s structure, programs, and activities should be re-engineered toward maintaining a national inventory of American men and (for the first time) women, ages 18 through 34, with an added focus on identifying individuals with critical skills.” Then the SSS suggests how such a registration might be accomplished: “In addition to the basic identifying information collected in the current program, the

⁷⁴See SSS Internal Memo. The SSS executives present at this meeting were Lewis C. Brodsky (Acting Director of SSS) and Richard S. Flahavan (Director of Public and Congressional Affairs). Pentagon officials present were Charles S. Abell (Principle Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness), William Carr (Acting Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Military Personnel Policy), and Colonel David Kopanski (Deputy Director, Accession Policy).

⁷⁵SSS Internal Memo.

⁷⁶SSS Internal Memo.

After discussing how a person would choose a multi-digit number representing their special skill during initial registration, the SSS memo pointed out that they “would also be required to update reported information as necessary until they reach age 35. This unique database would provide the military (and national, state, and municipal government agencies) with immediate available links to vital human resources – in effect, a single, most accurate and complete, national inventory of young Americans with special skills.”⁷⁷

So much for proposals and plans. What is actually happening? In December 2003, Acting SSS Director Brodsky identified the Skills Draft as top priority. An SSS document published in that month shows that a Skills Draft is gaining momentum. The document stated that a principle objective for 2003 is “to shift the Agency’s focus away from maintaining a high state of readiness to execute a large draft of untrained manpower and toward preparing for a much smaller draft of trained personnel possessing critical skills needed for military service in a national crisis. Examining all factors, the smaller ‘special skills’ draft is the conscription program more likely to be needed by today’s armed forces.”⁷⁸

Investigating these “changes in Defense manpower requirements” is an “in-depth review, which is dubbed, ‘Process Information Project.’ or ‘PIP-2003’.” Brodsky said “PIP-2003 is providing us with the blueprint to become more effective and efficient while remaining ready for tomorrow’s potential mobilization issues.” He added: “We will consolidate many functions, reorganize along process lines at National Headquarters and in the field, move forward with the modernization of our information technology systems, ... and train our Board Members and Reserve Officers for their mobilization duties.”⁷⁹

In early 2004, Richard Flahavan, the SSS’s Director of Public and Congressional Affairs, said that planning for a possible draft of linguists and computer experts was started in the fall of 2003. He was referring to PIP-2003. Although he claimed it was only in the planning stage, he said that the SSS wants “to gear up and make sure we are capable of providing (those types of draftees) since that’s the more likely need.” Then he added that it could take about two years “to have all the kinks worked out.”⁸⁰ In those two years the SSS will be designing the database fields required and the format of the registration card. Logistics, procedures, skills needed, and skill coding will also be worked out. That two years will end in the fall of 2005. **That means that by the fall of 2005 the Selective Service System will be geared up for a Skills Draft.**

Let us look a little deeper into a Skills Draft. It is more than just a small draft. The Skills Draft is the opening for a bigger and more comprehensive draft which will include all skills, including medical, and combat. The 60+ medical specialties will also be identified by a multi-digit number on the skills roster. And what about the “unskilled?” That also, it must be presumed, will have a very prominent multi-digit number – a number that will be called up when the Army needs more soldiers in a Combat Draft.

⁷⁷SSS Internal Memo.

⁷⁸*The Register*, November/December 2003.

⁷⁹Quoted in *The Register*, November/December 2003.

⁸⁰Rosenberg, 13 March 2004.

It would not be wise to lull ourselves into thinking that a Combat Draft is not likely. Look at the declining trend in enlistment and re-enlistment in the services that perform the ground combat. Look at how the Marines are giving large bonuses – the largest bonuses – to those soldiers who will do the actual fighting. Look at “stop-loss” and the calling up of Individual Ready Reserves. Retired General Merrill McPeak (Air Force Chief of Staff under George H.W. Bush) warned: “The Army’s maxed out here. The Defense Department and the President seem to be still operating off the rosy scenario that this will be over soon, that this pain is temporary and therefore we’ll just grit our teeth, hunker down and get out on the other side of this. That’s a bad assumption. What you’ve got now is a real shortage of grunts – guys who can actually carry bayonets” He then said that a Combat Draft may be necessary “to deal with the situation we’ve got ourselves into. We’ve got to have a bigger Army.”⁸¹

There is more to the picture.

The February 2003 internal SSS memo, discussed above, observed in its synopsis: “With known shortages of military personnel with certain critical skills, and with the need for the nation to be capable of responding to domestic emergencies as part of the Homeland Security planning, changes should be made in the Selective Service System’s registration program and primary mission.”⁸² That is a frightening statement. Past SSS functions have been to provide men to fill the military ranks. These changes in the “Selective Service System’s registration program and primary mission” are more than just adding a Skills Draft, even more than just the military.

In the end, the SSS hopes to have this comprehensive database so that “Big Brother,” to borrow George Orwell’s term, will have his finger on every youth in the nation. This comprehensive national database – this single-point, all inclusive assemblage of information – will be set up to facilitate any type of draft desired, for any agency – federal, state, or local – which may have a need for certain types of personnel. It will not be just a “much smaller draft” to bring in a few engineers and linguists. PIP-2003 is not just the “planning stage” to have things ready, just in case. All of this activity will be the ultimate tracking device, of every person up to age 35, for any skill needed, at any level. Let us not be misled into believing otherwise.

HELP FOR THE CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

The discussion so far in this paper has addressed current situations which are leading toward a draft, and how that draft is shaping up. Of course it is incumbent on all of us to do our best to correct those situations so that a draft will not be considered. But we should also be prepared in case a draft does rear its ugly head. In this section I will provide two resources available for people vulnerable to a draft who conscientiously oppose war and militarism. There are two excellent organizations which provide about all the guidance a CO, or prospective CO, might need. They are the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors and the Center on Conscience & War. Surfing their websites will yield a wealth of information. I will briefly describe each organization.

⁸¹Dickinson, 27 January 2005.

⁸²SSS Internal Memo.

Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors (CCCO).

During the Vietnam war, CCCO was very active on draft counseling and supporting conscientious objectors (COs). Today they publish material on various aspects of objecting to war and the military, including their periodical, *The Objector*. They have also set up a GI Rights Hotline – 1-800-394-9544 – to assist those in the military who have become conscientious objectors and feel trapped. CCCO's other current counseling activities include:

- Furnishing information a person should have before enlisting in the military.
- Getting military programs and recruiters out of our schools.
- Getting out of the military's Delayed Entry Program.
- How to file a CO claim after entering the military.
- How to compile a CO claim in case there is a draft.
- Questions and Answers on draft registration.

All of this information and more can be found on the CCCO website at <http://www.objector.org>

Or e-mail CCCO at info@objector.org

CCCO also has two offices, one on each coast:

CCCO		CCCO
405 14 th Street, #205		1515 Cherry Street
Oakland, CA 94612	and	Philadelphia, PA 19102
Phone: (510) 465-1617		Phone: (215) 563-8787
Fax: (510) 465-2459		Fax: (215) 567-2096

CCCO states on its website:

While most of us are teaching our kids to avoid violence, the US military is extolling the virtues of war. Junior ROTC programs are sprouting like weeds around the country — they're now in over 2800 high schools.

The draft ended and the military had to get sneakier — along with JROTC we now have the poverty draft. The Pentagon spends \$2 billion on recruiting. They entice youth into the military with promises of college and job training; sounds like a great way out. Eventually, young people learn the truth — instead of being caught in drive-bys, they're doing fly-bys.

In 1968 we joined together to protest killing and war. We mobilized successfully against the Vietnam War, but haven't been able to free our government from its militaristic ways. The Gulf War, the poverty draft, Junior ROTC, hazing, racism, sexual harassment and abuse are all dangers of an unchallenged military. It's time again to act.

The Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors has been there continuously since 1948, helping people who get caught in the military's web. ...

Center on Conscience & War (CCW).

CCW has also compiled much information on the draft and conscientious objection. Two self-analysis documents -- "Conscientious Objectors" (1 page) and "Who is a Conscientious Objector?" (6 pages) – are very helpful in helping a person understand his or her feelings about war. A 12-page document titled

“Basic Draft and Registration Information” guides a CO through the procedure when becoming 18 years of age. A longer 18-page publication called “Conscientious Objectors and the Draft” provides concise direction on how to register as a CO and keeping the records – both selective service and your own file – current and persuasive after registration.

All of these and more are available on the CCW website at <http://www.nisbco.org>

Or e-mail at nisbco@nisbco.org

CCW’s office is at:

Center on Conscience & War (NISBCO)
1830 Connecticut Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20009

Phone: (202) 483-2220
(800) 379-2679

Fax: (202) 483-1246

CCW’s mission statement is:

The Center on Conscience & War (CCW), formerly the National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors (NISBCO), was formed in 1940 by an association of religious bodies. CCW works to defend and extend the rights of conscientious objectors. The Center is committed to supporting all those who question participation in war, whether they are U.S. citizens, permanent residents, documented or undocumented immigrants--or citizens in other countries.

* * * * *

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⁸³If hyperlinks don’t work, type them into the address line on your internet browser.

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GLOSSARY

CCCO Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors.
CCW Center on Conscience & War.
CO Conscientious Objector.
DoD Department of Defense.
FY Fiscal Year.
HCPDS Health Care Personnel Delivery System.
IRR Individual Ready Reserves.
JROTC Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps.
NISBCO National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors.
PIP Process Information Project.
PNAC Project for the New American Century.
ROTC Reserve Officer Training Corps.
SSS Selective Service System.