A solution to the draft problems

By ROBERT SANDERS

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That agency whose duty it is to remind American manhood of the extent of our commitment to defend the American Way of Life in such localities as Viet Nam, the Selective Service system under the direction of that great freedom-loving citizen General Lewis Hershey, has recently announced the necessity of expanding the draft to college students.

Now while we dare not disagree with this pronouncement or the policy which made it necessary (remembering those unfortunate at Ann Arbor), we must, in the national interests of course, take issue with the manner in which the draftable college men are to be separated from those who could best serve their country—in this time of dire emergency and immediate threat to our Homeland and all that we hold to be sacred (like our white, Protestant, anthropomorphic, loving, merciful, pro-American God)—by remaining in college.

The methods which General Hershey and his patriotic cohorts propose to employ initially seem to be quite adequate. There is the old tried and trusted method of rank in class,—i.e., those young healthy, warm-blooded men in the lower quartile of their class are apt to find themselves reclassified I-A.

Of course it is no secret that there exists a certain disparity in academic standards among universities and colleges throughout the country—I mean, how could one possibly compare Harvard with South-west Texas State Teachers. So in order to account for this troublesome fact, that paragon of justice, General Hershey, has magnanimously offered to make use of a nation-wide standardized test—like the College Boards or G.R.E.'s, I suppose. (No doubt this test will also be processed by computer for faster and more efficient distribution of manpower.)

The methods to be applied to graduate students are still somewhat ambiguous, but apparently one is safe from the clutches of the local board; or perhaps I should say one need not worry about the possibility of being inducted before he can volunteer, provided that his specialty does not lie in one of the several humanities—which makes very good sense indeed, as those of us in the sciences are certainly a much more valuable national resource.

While these methods of determining who is draftable in the academic community are commendable and represent for courageous General Hershey a major victory on the brutal battlefield of administration, they still fall short of achieving the exact purpose of this extended draft: that is, to induct men with fervor, men who really believe in the cause for which we are fighting in Viet Nam, men who ardently support the policy of our President of All the People in protecting this colony of Democracy and the Western Tradition in Asia against those filthy, atheistic, Communist, outside agitators from the North. Simply because a college student happens to be in the lower quartile of his class or is so stupid that he is unable to pass an objective, standardized test, it doesn't necessarily imply that he vigorously supports the President's policy (although it might be possible to establish a casual relationship here).

Just because a student happens to be a humanities major doesn't necessarily mean that he would be willing to risk having himself smeared across a rice paddy protecting the President's Image of Strength. Matter of fact, these liberal arts students most often tend to be of the dirty, unshaven, pinko, yellow, cowardly, unruly, traitor Vietnik types who do such rash things as think for themselves, dissent, and who are obviously maladjusted to contemporary American society because they hate bigotry, ignorance, poverty, discrimination, injustice, and hypocrisy.

Therefore, the question is: how should the honorable General Hershey go about getting students who really do support the American military action in the Asian affair? The answer is very simple. The President undoubtedly by now has on his desk petitions with the signatures of thousands of college students all eager to express their support for his policies. Why, even at this university some—what was it?—900 students rushed to demonstrate their concern for protecting the vital American interests in Viet Nam.

It is my proposal that these students themselves have done General Hershey the service of providing a means of selection. It would be a very simple matter for General Hershey and his staff to go through these petitions, pick out those students with masculine sounding names, contact the local draft boards, and—kazam!—before you can say the pledge of allegiance you've got yourself a vast, virgin, untapped source of loyal, ready-to-fight college students.

Of course this method also has its drawbacks. These students, being conscientious men are certainly so prepared to give meaning to their opinions and beliefs through the actions of their lives that without doubt many of them have already volunteered for duty in Viet Nam. But of course, there is one very probable and very hopeful solution to this problem for General Hershey and his Service: if the Viet Nam conflict does become a general Asian land war or perhaps even a world war, then this whole touchy question of who is to be drafted before whom can be avoided.