New Plan Replaces Training

By BRIAN MUSTAIN

A radical change in college ROTC programs is included in a bill which is presently before Congressional subcommittees.

The bill, supported officially by the Defense Department, calls in part for a two-year program to replace the present four years of training. Being only an alternative for the four-year program, the two-year schedule would be adopted at the discretion of each university.

THE PURPOSE of the bill is two-fold. It would increase the number of new officers having a college degree, and would do so at a considerable savings to the government.

Of the students who now enter R.O.T.C. as freshmen, only a relatively small number complete the training and receive a commission. The dropout percentage at Rice is about 50 per cent.

BY SUBSTITUTING a four-week summer camp prior to the junior year in place of the first two years of R.O.T.C., the Army feels assured of graduating most of those who choose to begin the program. Thus, there would be eliminated the wasted expense of instruction to those who drop out of the program.

Students wishing to take advantage of the R.O.T.C. would be closely screened during the sophomore year. Those accepted would attend the four-week camp the following summer, and receive training in the next two years similar to that of the present advanced military program.

Unlike the two years active service required by the present program, the proposed two-year program would require four years of active duty.

ALTHOUGH THE bill is not yet beyond the House Armed Services Subcommittee, the chairman of the subcommittee has spoken highly of the bill, and there is considerable pressure from the Defense Dept. and from many colleges. Should the bill be passed, Rice would be affected only if the university administration chooses to adopt the new plan. Both of these uncertainties suggest that students need not anticipate any definite action in the near future.

The R.O.T.C. was involved in other governmental recommendations this month, as the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights recommended that the President order the Secretary of Defense to discontinue R.O.T.C. programs at any College or University which does not accept all students without regard to race or color.