

# New Ruling on Draft

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1970

Draft boards are bracing themselves for a deluge of requests for conscientious objector to war status as a result of a recent Supreme Court decision which said you don't have to be religious to qualify.

Col. Arthur Holmes, Michigan selective service director, said 632 men are presently awaiting processing on conscientious objector claims. He admitted they represent only part "of the large number who get turned down" under procedures the court questioned.

So far, Holmes said he has no specific directives from selective service officials in Washington on new objector guidelines. Until they come down he said draft boards will continue as they have.

But it appears that simply claiming a personal conviction against war will not be enough.

The former guideline was that the draftee be opposed to war in any form, based on religious training or belief. The 'court ruling in a case involving a California man, said exemptions should be granted also for men deeply motivated by moral and ethical as well as religious beliefs.

Curtis W. Tarr, federal selective service director, interpreted this as meaning the objector's belief must be sincere, that he is opposed to war in all forms (thus preventing objection to the Vietnam war alone), and that he holds the tenets of some system of belief in which he has been trained.

Two types of objectors have been recognized in the past, one of them conscientious objectors to combatant roles. Members of the Seventh Day Adventist faith are one such group who accept induction but do not carry arms.

The other group has been composed of objectors to any military service, in the past solely on religious grounds.

They are not inducted, but assigned to jobs deemed in the national interest. Some join charitable organizations, others become hospital orderlies. Although usually they receive menial jobs, they are paid wages in most cases by their employer. If the objector refuses the assignment, he can be sent to prison.

Their "tour of duty" is two years, the same as a draftee. Unless their employer finds fault, they are left to fulfill their obligation in this fashion, said Holmes, many of them within commuting distance of their homes.

Presently, 418 Michigan men are in such work programs, and within recent months 427 men have completed their obligations. Holmes said another 359 are awaiting work assignments.

The men awaiting assignment, plus the 632 who have requested nonmilitary designation, indicates the increasingly large number of men who seek ways of serving their country without wearing a uniform.

As many as one out of every 25 men facing draft in the state are applying to conscientious objector designation, classed as I O.

Reaction of young men affected by the ruling was favorable, but others such as Rep. Albert Watson, a South Carolina Republican, had a different view. "The Supreme Court has already given license to atheists, sex perverts, dope pushers and communists," he said, "So it was only a matter of time before it would get around to the cowards."

In other draft news, Draft Director Tarr announced a new round of Russian roulette. A new national draft lottery will be held July 1 to decide who will be inducted first in 1971 among youth who reach age 19 this year.

A lottery was held Dec. 1, 1969, under the new random selection method for determining the order of call for youths who became 19 but not more than 25.

It created controversy because those called were selected on the basis of state and local draft quotas. In some areas, boards had to dip deeper than others in order to make their quota.

The new lottery rule will eliminate state quotas, meaning that whether a draftee lives in Michigan or some other state, his chances of being drafted will be identical.

There will be no new alphabetical lottery after the July 1 drawing of birthdates for the new crop of 19-year-olds. The alphabetical draw of last Dec. 1, Tarr said, will also apply to those youths involved in the July 1 lottery.

Persons needing information on the new draft regulations or with draft problems should contact Open City at 831-2770 for a list of draft counselors near you.

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Fifth Estate #108, June 25-July 8, 1970

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