

GENERAL SCIENCE

Squeezed Out of College

Colleges caught between reduction in aid to veterans and loss of draft deferment. Additional threat seen in proposed Universal Military Service plan.

► THE NATION'S colleges are being caught in a giant nutcracker which is squeezing thousands of students out of their new dormitories and classrooms. One arm of that nutcracker was revealed by figures from the U. S. Office of Education which shows a drop of 33% in the number of veterans attending college this year.

The figure has gone down from 856,000 veterans last year to 575,000 this year.

The other arm of the nutcracker will probably be brought to bear next June when this year's male freshman class members, numbering 319,000, face review of their draft deferment status.

Approximately 30%, or 95,000, will be exempted because of physical or other reasons. If a plan supported by Draft Director Lewis B. Hershey to take away deferment from the bottom half of the freshman class is adopted, the nation's colleges will lose upward of 100,000 men from next year's sophomore class.

The large majority of them will be 19—lower draft age limit—next year.

The gradual but sure disappearance of

G. I. Bill financial support as the veteran population uses up its rights contributed largely to this year's drop in total enrollment to 2,295,000 from 2,456,000 last year.

However this fall-off in the number of male students at the nation's colleges is a small threat to them compared to what will happen if Universal Military Service in its most drastic form is approved by the newly elected Congress.

Instead of approximately 300,000 male freshmen and 200,000 female freshmen expected next year, there would be only about 90,000 males—those who would be deferred from UMS for other reasons. This would occur if all physically qualified male 18-year-olds were required to enter military service for a period of one to two years as many officials are now suggesting.

All kinds of higher education institutions have smaller student bodies this year, except theological seminaries and Negro institutions. Negro colleges held their own in total student bodies and the entering freshman class was actually 3.1% larger than last year's.

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Forces. Also, the board would have the power to review requests from the Armed Forces to find out whether they were asking for the proper kind of people.

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NSRB Should Decide Deferment Policy

► THE National Security Resources Board, rather than the Defense Department or any other agency, should determine how many men should be deferred to go to college, Dr. Arthur S. Adams told Science Service.

Dr. Adams is president-elect of the American Council of Education, president of the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities and president of the University of New Hampshire.

"There must be maintained a trickle of young men into the colleges and universities whatever system of induction into the armed forces is set up," Dr. Adams maintained. "The NSRB is the logical agency to decide how large a trickle is necessary to provide trained men for the defense of the country."

Dr. Adams, in Washington for the 64th annual convention of the land-grant colleges organization, thus put himself in direct opposition to Harvard President James B. Conant's program of universal military service for everybody—including the physically handicapped—at age 18.

Dr. Adams believes that every young man should serve at some time. He refused to be specific as to how this would be accomplished, pointing out that there is much confusion both in Washington and among educators on the subject.

Dr. Conant's proposal for "universal" Universal Military Service, shortly to be announced in a national magazine, was the subject of much discussion at the convention. Most college presidents present tended to look upon it with considerable skepticism, primarily because it makes no provision for the continuous college training of young men of draft age.

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Registry of Scientists

Four leading scientific bodies agree on recommendations for compulsory registration and drafting if necessary. Would defer college students.

► FOUR of the nation's top scientific bodies, at the request of the National Security Resources Board, have agreed on recommendations which would provide for the compulsory registration and drafting, if needed, of up to 600,000 male scientists, technicians and engineers, Science Service has learned.

The scientific societies, which were asked last September to draw up recommendations on how to handle scarce scientific manpower, are the American Institute of Physics, the American Chemical Society, the Engineers Joint Council and the National Research Council.

The four societies, in their joint statement, strongly advocate deferring some men from service to go to college. They support the principles of a plan advocated by Selective Service Director Lewis B. Hershey which would have all high school seniors taking a college aptitude test. Only the 15% or 20% who achieved high marks

on this test would receive deferments to go to college.

This puts the scientific groups in opposition to the principles of all-out Universal Military Service as advocated by President James B. Conant of Harvard and some officials of the Defense Department. However, the scientific groups recommend that those who do receive deferment for college training be among the first to be called into the Armed Forces when they have finished college, regardless of whether they have passed the draft age.

Under the plan, all male scientists, technicians and engineers would be required to register with a new agency—perhaps to be called the National Scientific Personnel Board. The board would have the power to fill the needs of the Armed Forces for scientific manpower from this registration list. Men would be called up on an individual basis to fill individual jobs in the Armed

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Military Service Urged For All 18-Year-Olds

► DR. James B. Conant, president of Harvard University, will shortly advocate two years of Universal Military Service for every young man when he reaches 18—whether or not he is physically handicapped, Science Service has learned.

He further will recommend that the nation's young manhood perform this service "at a low rate of pay." Physically handicapped young men, he will say, should be enrolled to perform those services for the nation which it is possible for them to perform.