GENERAL SCIENCE

Plan for Brainpower

Six Scientific Advisory Committees to Selective Service offer recommendations for best utilization of scientific and technological skills and continuance of training.

➤ MANPOWER PLANS — and specific plans for scientific, technical and engineering manpower—are legion around Washington. The plans which many men have proposed, Congress and the President will dispose after Jan. 1.

Since scientific and technological skills are the most critical of all our skills, planning for them has come first. It is considered likely that whatever plans for the utilization of these skills are adopted, they will be adapted for all personnel whose skills take two years or more to acquire.

After Jan. 1, Congress proposes to amend the current draft law. The legislators then will decide whether to make deferments—either for training or for critical work—part of the new law—or leave the spelling out of these matters to the Executive.

One plan, based on two years of work, was presented recently in Washington. It was the work of the six Scientific Advisory Committees to Selective Service Director Lewis B. Hershey, Dr. M. H. Trytten, chairman.

This presentation was made at a meeting to which were invited more than 300 college presidents, scientists and government officials. Since Harvard President James B. Conant's plan for Universal Military Service for all 18-year-old men had just previously been launched with considerable publicity, the committees felt it advisable to explain to the public the facts on which they worked and the line of thought they followed. Science News Letter herewith presents condensations of the four presentations:

The Facts

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➤ THE COMMITTEE'S objective is the objective of every thinking citizen: let us move as rapidly as possible to make our nation strong in all ways and let us plan so as to maintain that strength through the many uncertain years ahead.

We wish to call your attention to a series of facts these Committees were forced to consider. Furthermore, they are facts which dare not be overlooked by anyone making recommendations or decisions with respect to manpower utilization.

Our total population is about 150 million. It is anything but large when compared with the population and manpower resources of our potential enemies. Something less than half is gainfully employed. The other half is composed of persons too young or too old to work or busy as housewives and mothers.

At the maximum during World War II, only about 11,000,000 men were in uniform. This figure could probably be exceeded somewhat but it does serve to remind us of a definite limitation on the maximal size of a military force.

The second fact concerns the supply of new manpower each year. This figure is largely determined by the number of male babies born 18 or 19 years before, currently, about one million males. Even with reasonably liberal physical standards, it seems unlikely that more than 800,000 of the one million might be acceptable for military service.

The actual number of men to be drafted and the length of time they will be required to serve is primarily a function of the size of the armed force to be maintained.

Assuming a defense force of three million and assuming a million newly available men each year, a continuing force of this size could be maintained only if each

BATTLING WAVES—Coast Guardsmen fight the elements for nearly half a day during refuelling operations at Cape Hinchinbrook Light Station, Alaska.

ENGINEERING

Alaskan Outposts Get "Northwind" Delivery

See Front Cover

➤ BRINGING SUPPLIES and fuel oil to lonely outposts in Alaska is a U. S. Coast Guard job that can be both wet and hazardous.

The Coast Guard's $10,000,000 icebreaker "Northwind" has just finished the annual delivery to the country's most remote military installations, tiny stations scattered along the rockbound Alaska shores from the Canadian border to the Bering Sea.

Oil for an entire year must be delivered to each installation. To do it, the icebreaker carries a 10,000-gallon barge on her deck where a helicopter would normally ride.

The barge is loaded with oil from the ship's tanks and towed ashore by a landing craft. Sometimes, where there is no beach, the barge must remain offshore and the oil is pumped through hundreds of feet of hose.