

# MSU Prof Attacks The Draft

ANN ARBOR--Any system that forces people to serve in the military and learn how to wage war is unjust if not shameful, historian Albert A. Blum declares in a new book published at The University of Michigan.

Since Selective Service is unlikely to disappear as long as war is an instrument of national policy, attempts should be made to remove inequities in the draft, he suggests.

Blum, professor of labor and industrial relations and social science at Michigan State University, says that the recently announced scrapping of two types of longstanding, almost automatic draft deferments is not the most appropriate reform for the Selective Service system.

ELIMINATING occupational deferments for men with certain skills and courtship deferments for most first-year and prospective graduate students is not enough, the military draft authority insists.

"A college graduate playing professional football can still be deferred because of what is popularly called a 'trick knee,'" he said.

Blum, who is in Denmark as a Fulbright professor doing research on white-collar unionization and a comparative study of the draft, would remedy some of the Selective Service inequities with two proposals:

1. The number of persons eligible for military service should be expanded to include nearly all those deferred now for physical and intellectual reasons (excluding, of course, severely retarded and hospitalized persons).

2. Certain activities, determined by a new presidential commission on Selective Service as being "socially useful or in short supply," should make a man deferable as long as he is working at them. These activities, the author suggests, might include service in the Peace Corps or enrollment in certain types of job-training programs.

Blum, who has served in the Office of the Chief of Military History, points out that since World War II a basic standard for drafting men has been fitness for combat duty.

"THERE are scores of positions in the military in which the chances of being involved in combat are quite low," he observes.

"If these currently high physical and intellectual standards were removed or drastically lowered, this policy change would permit a group of men who could serve wither in the armed services to do so; it would increase the number eligible to be drafted, reduce the pressure to induct those who remain available, and force the military to take the steps necessary to insure the proper utilization of all inductees."

"If we must have a draft, we ought to integrate it into the rest of our lives--keeping its impact at a minimum and ensuring that its goals are consistent with those of society," Blum concludes.

The proposed president a commission, the author says, should determine the criteria for deferment. It should include representatives from the military and the Selective Service system, and also from business, labor, education, medicine, and similar fields, he adds.

"Local draft boards throughout the year, on the basis of guidelines set by the national commission, would judge and classify those persons within their jurisdiction," Blum explains.

"Those deferred (by local boards) would be placed into various classifications. Those classified as eligible for induction would include the following: all those who have come of age, those who have lost their appeals for deferment, those who have completed their training, those who no longer work at essential jobs, and those no longer responsible for the dependents for whom they had been deferred."

THE NAMES of those eligible for induction would be sent to national Selective Service headquarters where a periodic lottery would determine who would be drafted and in what order. After being subject to draft from a lottery pool for a period of six months to a year, a man's name would be removed from the pool. This device, Blum indicates, would enable young men to plan their futures.

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