

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

11 MAR 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Future of the Draft

This memorandum presents DoD comments and recommendations on matters concerning the future of the draft, including the Report of the President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force.

The Department of Defense endorses the basic conclusion of the Report of the President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force that the draft should be phased out. This should occur when assured of the capability to attract and retain an Armed Force of the required size and quality through voluntary means.

It is our view that as we proceed toward this goal, the main emphasis should be on reducing draft calls to zero rather than achieving the All-Volunteer Force, even though the objective of each is identical. There are many Americans, including some in Congress, who reject the idea of an All-Volunteer Armed Force but support reduced reliance on the draft. It will be easier to reach your objective by focusing public attention on eliminating the draft rather than stirring those who object to the concept of an All-Volunteer Force.

My recommendations on draft reform, which we previously discussed, went to the National Security Council on January 10, 1970. For the purposes of this memorandum, it is sufficient to recommend the following actions on draft reform to be taken coincident with your forthcoming message to Congress:

1. You should proceed with an Executive Order that would phase out occupational and paternity deferments, and with proposed legislation that would phase out undergraduate student deferments.
2. You should advocate legislation to place the draft on a national call in order of sequence numbers. A method which uses sequence numbers for calls of pre-induction examinations was introduced by the Selective Service System just a week ago,

and it shows early promise of accomplishing a result which is more consistent with the draft lottery. Even so, a change in the law is the only way of assuring that local Draft Boards will use sequence numbers uniformly.

3. You should request a two-year extension of the Induction Authority beyond June 30, 1971, with the provision that you will end the draft by proclamation if it becomes clear during the two-year period that the draft can be shifted to Standby Status without jeopardizing national security. An alternative would be to request an extension with a ceiling on the number that could be inducted in each of the extension years. The final result from Congress might be a one-year extension, or a ceiling, but I believe the initial request should be for two years without a ceiling.

Department of Defense studies confirm that, as currently-planned force level reductions occur, it will become increasingly feasible and less expensive to meet military manpower needs without reliance on the draft. Even if current relationships between military and civilian pay were to be maintained (and assuming that Vietnamization and other factors proceed favorably), it is reasonable to estimate that monthly draft calls will fall to the level of 5000-6000 by the beginning of FY 1973. With special pay increases and other actions to improve upon the attractiveness and satisfactions of military service, it may be possible to further reduce these draft call levels.

In a memorandum I sent to you on December 18, 1969, and in my statement before the Joint Session of the Senate Armed Services and Appropriations Committees regarding the FY 1971 Defense Program and Budget, I recommended a 20% pay increase to be effective early in 1971 for enlisted personnel with less than two years of service. This was to be in addition to the civilian-military general increase. Provision has been made in the FY 1971 Budget for both of these increases effective January 1, 1971.

We would like to be able to advance the effective date of this special increase to July 1, 1970, and to change the increase amount from 20% to 25%. To do so would demonstrate to the nation and to Congress the high priority you assign to getting on with eliminating the draft, and relieving the draftee and enlistee of a portion of the tax burden he carries in the form of inadequately low pay. Further, it would accelerate the timetable for reducing draft calls to zero, and thus increase the possibility that this objective might be achieved by the end of FY 1972.

The problem, however, is one of cost. The earlier effective date and the higher increase would involve an additional budget cost of \$375 million over the \$250 million already earmarked for FY 1971. Also, this action would invite nearly-certain action by Congress to make the civilian-military general increase effective July 1, 1970 instead of January 1, 1971, with a further additional cost to the Department of Defense of \$800 million. It is simply not possible for this Department to absorb additional costs by cuts elsewhere in its FY 1971 budget. Reluctantly, therefore, we must decline to recommend either the earlier effective date or the higher amount. This leaves us with the civilian-military general increase and the 20% pay increase for enlisted personnel with less than two years of service, both to be effective January 1, 1971.

In the course of considering the special 20% increase for enlisted personnel with less than two years of service, consideration was given to skewing the pay line by assigning the recruit a different percent than the second year man. The rationale of the President's Commission would assign the higher percent to the recruit, on the grounds that his pay is lowest compared with his civilian counterpart. Others argue, however, for giving the lower percent of increase to the recruit and holding back the higher amount, possibly to be paid as a lump sum bonus when he completes an honorable enlistment. While its power to attract new recruits may be questioned, this latter approach could encourage thrift when most military recruits, even though low paid, are able to assign a portion of their disposable income to savings. Further, by keeping entry pay at a low level, it would at least reduce the initial tax burden that would occur in the event of later mobilization.

Notwithstanding these considerations, we believe the 20% increase is the minimum that should be given to any enlisted personnel with less than two years of service. Equity demands no less, and a lower percent of increase would provide no basis for measuring the impact of a pay increase upon voluntary enlistments.

Three comments on the Report of the President's Commission are appropriate for this memorandum. The first is that the Department of Defense has considerably less confidence than is reflected in the President's Commission Report that draft calls could be reduced to zero by July 1, 1971. This is because of factors of uncertainty beyond our current reach or control and they include the following:

- The changing attitude of young people toward military service, and its effect upon enlistments and reenlistments. Many of the manpower supply estimates for an All-Volunteer Force rely on pre-Vietnam data, and upon after-the-fact surveys of what induced "voluntary" enlistments. It is not known how youngsters of high school age have been affected by widespread anti-war propaganda, nor is it known how those already engaged in ground combat in Vietnam will respond to reenlistment.
- The uncertainty of the effect of increased pay. It is assumed that more pay will buy additional enlistments, but there simply is no way to know at this time the extent of its drawing power.
- The availability of jobs in the labor market. Our ability to attract young men to the Armed Forces will be influenced by the range of occupations and number of jobs they have to choose from, in addition to the military option.

My second comment is to point out that the Commission Report is in serious error in suggesting that little or no problem exists with respect to compensation of career military personnel. The report compares pay of military personnel with "average" civilian earnings on the basis of the number of years out of high school or college. This basis of comparison fails to take into account the degree of knowledge and responsibility required at various position levels and other factors which should be considered in determining pay relationships and levels of pay within the military services. It would be wrong to assume that military pay can be equated with civilian pay on the simple basis of age and basic education. Such standards are not used as the sole basis for testing the adequacy of pay levels in either private or public civilian jobs, and neither can they be so used to measure the adequacy of military pay.

My third and final comment about the Commission Report relates to the Guard/Reserve Forces. The report relies primarily upon pay raises and increases in lower ranks as the means of assuring Reserve strength and readiness. Other factors besides these are vital as we increase reliance upon Guard/Reserve components. It is essential, for example, to retain more experienced officer and enlisted personnel to compensate for the losses of World War II and Korean veterans through retirement. This means attention to a broad range of Guard/



Reserve interests, including the combat readiness of equipment on which they train, and the arrangements to compensate for the disruption of family and vocational pursuits while in training. The attitude of the civilian soldier toward military life, including his opinion of its performance quality, is a key factor in our national security.

In moving toward the goal of zero draft calls, the Department of Defense intends to take positive steps through leadership provided by this office, the Service Secretaries and Chiefs, and its Project Volunteer Committee. In addition to what may be done with respect to pay, we plan the following initiatives to implement this essential goal:

1. Expand the recruiting effort by each of the Services for Active and Guard/Reserve Forces.
2. Restore the sense of "duty-honor-country" which should symbolize the uniform and the man in it. The spending of money for pay will not by itself restore this precious sense to our national life. In today's climate, with the military widely blamed for an unpopular war, and with the severe cutbacks in Department of Defense budgets, it is increasingly difficult to maintain morale. One of our major human goals is to enable the military serviceman to feel the highest pride in himself, his uniform and the military profession. This is paramount to the realization of a high-quality military organization, and it will receive our continuing attention.
3. Improve on-base military housing and increase housing allowances, particularly in high-cost metropolitan areas. The FY 1971 Budget already provides for substantial increases in military housing, and the recommendations to Congress in support of increased housing allowances and further increases in military housing will be made later this year.
4. Improve conditions of service and increase military career satisfaction through such actions as expansion of in-service educational opportunities, expansion of ROTC scholarships, extension of family moving expenses to short-service enlisted personnel, reduction of KP and other extra duty assignments, and a broader program to assist those leaving military service in their adjustment to civilian life.

I believe action on the foregoing recommendations will take us firmly and safely on our course of reducing draft calls to zero while at the same time supporting your determination to end inflation, preserve our defense strength, and keep the Administration in a strong and flexible position. The Administration cannot be placed in the position of having to reduce forces below National Security Council recommendations because it has acted too soon in taking irreversible steps to eliminate the draft.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Daniel R. Ford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "D" and a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.