

CHOICE OF CONSCIENCE



Vietnam Era
Military and
Draft Resisters
in Canada

DAVID S. SURREY

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CHAPTER 1

Selective Servitude: Colonial Times Through Korea

Benjamin Franklin:

The question then will amount to this: whether it be just in a community, that the richer part should compel the poor to fight for them and their properties for such wages as they think fit to allow, and punish them if they refuse?

(Cited in Gates, 1970: 24)

September 1, 1863, Newspaper Advertisement:

The New York Draft Assurance Association will this week, for \$10, guarantee any undrafted party exemption from the draft. For \$25 we will furnish an acceptable substitute.

(Cited in Milton, 1942: 138)

Selective Service "Channeling Memo" (1965):

The process of channeling by not taking men from certain activities who are otherwise liable for service, or by giving deferment to qualified men in certain occupations, is actual procurement by inducement of manpower for civilian activities which are manifestly in the national interest. While the best known purpose of Selective Service is to procure manpower for the armed forces, a variety of related processes take place outside delivery of manpower to the active armed forces.

(Cited in Reeves and Hess, 1970: 194)

COLONIAL TIMES THROUGH THE REVOLUTION: THE TRADITION BEGINS

Conscription in the colonies began with the first settlement at Jamestown where legal incentives were needed to fill the ranks of the defense militia. Plymouth Colony in 1663 saw the first "universal" manpower law: all able-bodied men had to undergo military training. From this time forward, conscription grew, but only at local levels. By the American Revolution, over 650 different statutes for raising and maintaining armies existed. The thirteen colonies never central-

ized conscription and centralization was usually avoided even within colonies (Gates, 1970: 156; Useem, 1973: 72–73).

Despite the large number and diversity of local ordinances, twin themes emerge. First, the rich could get out: by paying cash (commutation), buying munitions, and/or providing a paid substitute (substitution). Second, the poor had little choice; they could not afford the options available to the rich, and their financial conditions often forced them to accept cash bounties for service (Gates, 1970: 156–157; Murdock, 1967: 16–17; O'Sullivan and Meckler, 1974: 5–10).

By the time of the Revolution, the question of how to create a large army rose to levels of intense debate. The Continental Congress rebuked General George Washington several times when he requested centralized compulsory service. Eventually, each colony adopted some form of conscription (based on the pre-Revolutionary models). The colonies were to deliver a quota to the Continental Army; however, meeting these quotas usually received secondary priority to local defense (O'Sullivan and Meckler, 1974: 7–8).

Both the individual colonies and the Continental Congress resorted heavily to cash bounties to induce voluntary enlistment. This led to more problems, as the colonies often outbid the Continental Army's fee of \$200 for the duration. New Jersey, in 1779, offered \$250, and Virginia \$750; each also issued land and clothing. By 1780 New Jersey has raised its offer to \$1000 (O'Sullivan and Meckler, 1974: 7, 15–16; Murdock 1967: 17). General Washington became so frustrated by being outbid that he threatened the governor of Rhode Island: if this problem continued, the Continental Army would not "bestow any extraordinary attention to the defense" of Rhode Island (O'Sullivan and Meckler, 1974: 7).

The conscription which existed in each colony throughout the war perpetuated the pre-Revolutionary theme: if you had money you would not have to serve; substitution and commutation were built into the laws. As an extreme example, one town — Epping, New Hampshire — hired enough substitutes from other towns to keep all of its own citizens home (O'Sullivan and Meckler, 1974: 8–9).

Parallel to the efforts made to raise any army, varied methods of resistance sprouted. Beyond the general opposition to a centralized draft, local resistance to any conscription began to foment. In Virginia, draft records were destroyed in two counties and potential draftees staged a protest sit-in in a third. There were also anti-draft demonstrations throughout that state, resulting in several deaths (O'Sullivan and Meckler, 1974: 5–15).

Inside the military, resistance also was in evidence. Desertion rates during the Revolution were very high, with perhaps 50 percent

of the militia deserting. The problem grew so severe that in Virginia the fee for turning in a deserter was raised from two pounds to 60. Informers were tempted by promise of a draft exemption (Higginbotham, 1971: 400; O'Sullivan and Meckler, 1974: 9).

Canada played a most significant role for the dissenters at this time. *Per capita*, more chose exile to Canada during and immediately after the Revolution than during the Vietnam Era. At least 60,000, out of a population of 2,780,000, fled to Canada either to avoid the war or to remain loyal to the crown (this number includes entire families rather than individuals, which would be the case 200 years later) (B. Mitchell, 1974: 33–34; Siebert, 1966: 256).

In addition to desertion, overt draft opposition, and flight to Canada, legal forms of avoidance were established prior to and during the Revolution. Married men, teachers, deacons, or fathers could receive draft exemptions in many localities. Avoidance on principle also existed in Massachusetts from 1661, Rhode Island from 1673, and Pennsylvania from 1757, when Conscientious Objectors (CO's) were recognized as an exemption. At this time CO's were exclusively from the traditional Peace Churches — Quakers and Mennonites. CO's usually hired substitutes to take their places. These legal forms of avoidance were firmly embedded in our manpower procurement system from its beginning (O'Sullivan and Meckler, 1974: 4–5; Schlissel (ed), 1968: 28).

Raising an army throughout the Revolution thus involved limited local drafts which the well-to-do could escape, cash bounties to induce men to join, and substitution fees for the same purpose. Anti-draft activities, desertions, the option of Canada, and exemptions further filtered those who served, and those who didn't. To the extent that the higher classes served, they chose to do so.

Immediately after the Revolution the standing army dropped to 80 men; leaving a beleaguered federal government's defense to local militia in conflicts against Indians and Daniel Shays' rebels. Because of a provision in the 1787 Constitution, these militia could be placed under federal control to "execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrection and repel invasions." A much stronger 1790 proposal by Secretary of War Knox for a federal draft and universal militia was soundly defeated by Congress (Gates, 1970: 157).

WAR OF 1812: ALMOST A NATIONAL DRAFT

With the War of 1812, the question of how to raise an army re-emerged. The bounty system was reintroduced, with a bonus of \$16

for five years of enlistment. When this failed to draw the desired troops, the sum was raised several times until it reached \$124 for five years in 1814. The federal government issued \$2,012,439 in bonuses during the first ten months of 1814 (Murdock, 1967:17).

In 1812 Congress approved President Madison's request for an army of 166,000 men. Each state had to provide a proportionate number of men by whatever means were deemed appropriate. In most cases, the states employed the "traditional" methods of raising militias — limited local drafts with substitution and commutation for the rich, and bounties for the poor. Three New England states which were opposed to this war simply refused to cooperate. Fearing those states might secede, Madison did not persist (Gates, 1970: 157).

After the capital was burned in 1814, Madison called for a federal draft to raise 40,000 men. Both the House and Senate approved his request; however, the war ended before the implementation of the draft. (Gates, 1970: 158; Useem, 1973:72).

The 1814 draft law, although not enacted, signifies two historical shifts in manpower procurement. First, the law amounted to the first federal military procurement law. Second, it established quotas: the population of each state was divided by socioeconomic class. Each group had to provide recruits or means for recruitment. Each could send "volunteers" (often given cash bonuses) or simply provide monies (commutation). Had this "representative" method of raising an army gone into effect, the military would have remained a poor man's army, consisting of men without financial options other than accepting cash bonuses for enlistment (Gates, 1970: 158).

CIVIL WAR: NEAR BREAKDOWN

Initially during the Civil War the federal government relied on the traditional means of raising an army — an offer of money. Federal bounties for joining the Union Army in May 1861 were \$100 for three years' service for whites and \$10 for blacks. As the war intensified, manpower needs soared, and bounties went higher — \$300 for whites for three years, or for re-enlistment. Local bounties, too, provided for militia service, and after the draft riots of 1863, these bounties soared. By 1863 the bounty system, which had worked reasonably well in the past, was failing (Murdock, 1971: 218ff.).

One problem with the bounty system was "shopping around". Bounty jumpers would enlist in one area, collect their bonuses, and then desert to another region where they would again collect bounties for enlistment. Many Canadians obtained large sums on bounty-

jumping tours, returning home with substantial profits. Confederate agents in Canada would use the bounty system as a profitable method of returning home: they would enter the United States, enlist, and once in the South, desert with their bounty to the Confederate Army, where they received a second bonus as Union deserters.

The bounty system proved to be an expensive method of recruitment. During the war, in addition to the \$300,000,000 paid in federal bounties, local and state governments paid another \$400,000,000 for militia bounties. The state and local bounties, unlike the federal ones, were paid in advance, encouraging further bounty jumping. Furthermore, the quality of enlistees who stayed was poor. General Grant complained that eight bounties paid for only one good soldier (Lonn, 1928: 49; Murdock, 1971: 218ff.).

Federal Enrollment Act: A Limited Draft

To call the draft controversial was to be rather too mealy-mouthed.
(McCague, 1968: 4)

When one considers the controversy and bloodshed surrounding the 1863 Enrollment Act, this statement on the Civil War draft belies reality. This Act departed from, and at the same time reinforced, historical traditions of procurement. As a departure, for the first time a national draft was established. As reinforcement, with national conscription to determine who should serve, the historical class discrimination was strengthened.

By 1863 it was clear that the bounty system had failed to rally enough able-bodied men around the flag. As a result, draft debates were again heard in Congress. In February 1863, the Federal Enrollment Act was passed. On March 3, it was signed into law by President Lincoln.*

The Act worked as follows: each local district was assigned a quota of men to fill per draft call (there were four calls in all). This quota was to be met by volunteers, paid substitutes (often induced to service by local or state-raised bounties), or draftees. The bounty-induced volunteers served as the major means of recruitment. Available manpower was divided into two categories: the first consisted of all single men from 20 to 45 years of age, and all married men aged 20 to 35; the second was all married men from 35 to 45.

As in the earlier conscription ordinances, a series of exemptions

*The description of the Act which follows is derived from the following sources: A. Cook, 1974: 50ff.; Gates, 1970: 159-160; Milton, 1942: 129ff.; Murdock, 1969: 6ff. and 1971: 62ff.; Schlissel (ed), 1968: 89; Useem, 1973: 73).

allowed certain men to be excluded. Exclusions were granted for the following: the mentally disabled; sole supporters of aged or widowed parents; 51 different physical disabilities, including having no teeth; and after February 24, 1864, Conscientious Objectors, i.e., Peace Church members. The CO's were permitted to perform alternative service or, as in the Revolution, to hire a substitute. These exemptions excluded many persons from the draft pool. Local districts also freely exercised discretion in permitting exemptions for men already drafted: in effect, cancelling the draft. Avoidance through exemptions was extensive, with over 70 percent of the men in the first draft call escaping through this means.

Combined with these exemptions, the retention of commutation and substitution reinforced the "selective" nature of the draft. Under commutation, any man drafted could simply pay a fee of \$300 to the Collector of Internal Revenue to fulfill his military obligation. However, in the summer of 1864, commutation was terminated for two reasons. First, the draft was supposed to supply men, not money. Of the initial 133,000 men drafted, almost 87,000 took advantage of commutation. Second, as governmental responses to the draft riots will illustrate, it was feared that if the system remained so blatantly unjust, the poor would explode again.

Substitution was conceived of as a more productive method of buying one's way out of the service. During the war, 116,000 men served as paid substitutes. Until commutation ceased, the going fee for substitution was also \$300, since few chose to pay a substitute more than they would have to pay for their own commutation. Once commutation was suspended, the substitution fee rose as high as \$1000. Those acceptable for substitution could not be eligible for the draft and included men between 18 and 20 years of age, veterans, aliens, and men from the South.

Advertisement

How to avoid the draft! On receipt of \$1.00 will send instructions how to avoid the draft, or get exempt, if drafted, at the cost of just 37½ cents. Lawyer, 129 Spring Street, Station A, New York City.

(Cited in Werstein, 1971: 17)

Undoubtedly the fees of \$1.00 and 37½ cents were a salespitch, to draw in potential clients. However, this ad reflects the variety of ways, beyond substitution, commutation, and legitimate exemption, to avoid the draft. Skilled workers, as well as the very rich, were able to stay out. Many trade associations formed Draft Insurance Societies, where members were assessed from \$1.00 to \$100. Any member who was drafted had his commutation paid by his society. This protection

of the skilled workers placed further burdens on the poor — a burden they would not tolerate.

Seeds of Discontent

Resistance to the draft fomented across the union. Draft riots occurred in Boston, Massachusetts; Wooster, Ohio; Portsmouth, New Hampshire; and Rutland, Vermont; as well as Albany, Syracuse, Auburn, Buffalo, Utica, Troy, Tarrytown, and Yonkers, New York. Troops and artillery quelled disturbances in Ohio; military enrollment officers were killed in Rush and Sullivan counties, Indiana. Areas in Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Missouri, Illinois, Maryland, Delaware, and Kentucky experienced active resistance to the draft (A. Cook, 1974: 52 and Marmion, 1969: 37). Joel Headley (1970 (1873): 136), a journalist who witnessed the New York City riots, made the following observation:

The ostensible cause of the riots of 1863 was hostility to the draft, because it was a tyrannical, despotic, unjust measure — an act which has distinguished tyrants the world over and should never be tolerated by a free people.

Resentment to the draft is viewed more broadly by many commentators. It is seen as one aspect of general discontent, deriving from political, social, and military upheaval converging at this point in history. President Lincoln's suspension of *habeas corpus*, allowing the practice of arrest without trial, was widely resented (A. Cook, 1974: 49–50; Milton, 1942: 112). Many of the New York City rioters, recently-arrived Irish immigrants, saw the draft as another form of the English tyranny they had long resented (Headley, 1970 (1873): 149). At a July 4, 1863, rally in New York City, the crowd remained silent during a reading of the Declaration of Independence until the clause condemning the abusiveness of the King, at which point the crowd reacted wildly. The comparison to Lincoln was the source of the cheers (McCague, 1968: 6–8).

Many other factors underlay the unpopular reception of a national draft. Foremost was that in the 1860's, conscription required involvement in an increasingly unpopular war. New York's Governor Seymour was elected on a conciliation platform, winning by a large margin in New York City (McCague, 1968: 8–9). By 1863, faltering support for the war, not confined to New York City or State, characterized sentiment throughout the Union. The war's fading popularity derived from resistance to the draft, the failure to win the

expected quick victory, heavy losses, opposition to the Emancipation Proclamation and blacks in general, and rising inflation (A. Cook, 1974: 49–50; Milton, 1942: 127).

False claims of imminent victory were pervasive. The Battle of Gettysburg, fought only days before the New York City riots, was initially proclaimed as a major Union victory. This “victory” became increasingly tainted. The casualty figures rose with each newspaper edition until it was clear the North had actually lost more men than the South — 23,049 to 20,000 (A. Cook, 1974: 49–50; Headley, 1970 (1873): 140; McCague, 1968: 44).

Lincoln’s perceived attitudes towards blacks, topped by the Emancipation Proclamation, added fuel to the fires of discontent. During the war, increasing numbers of blacks had been hired and exploited as laborers on docks in Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, Buffalo, Albany, New York City, and Boston — many as strike breakers. After the Emancipation Proclamation, fear spread that large numbers of blacks would come North, further threatening job security (Fite, 1963 (1930): 189ff.; Man, 1951: 375ff.; Werstein, 1971: 49). This fear was incipient before the war, as illustrated by this quote from the October 1, 1860, *New York Herald*:

Hundreds of thousands [of blacks] will emigrate to their friends — the Republicans — North, and be placed by them side by side in competition with white men. Are you ready to divide your patrimony with the Negro? Are you ready to work with him in competition — to work more than you do now for less pay?

(Cited in Man, 1951: 378–379).

The economy in the large cities suffered throughout the war. Inflation mounted rapidly. By the time of the New York Riots, wages had risen only 12 percent, while prices had soared 43 percent. Economic conditions deteriorated to such an extent that the 4th and 6th wards of lower Manhattan, where most rioters lived, were described by the visiting Charles Dickens as worse than any of London’s slums (A. Cook, 1974: 49–50; McCague, 1968: 20–35).

The factors cited above only intensified resentment of the Federal government and the draft. The draft’s discrimination against the poor sparked the New York City riots. The inclusion of the rich on the draft rolls only heated the situation. This charade fooled no one. The well-to-do could buy their way out (Headley, 1970 (1873): 149; McCague, 1968: 70). A *New York Daily News* editorial charged that “the evident aim of those who have the Conscription Act in hand, in this state, is to lessen the number of Democratic votes at the next election” (Cited in McCague, 1968: 47–48).

The Riot

The first draft draw in New York City was on Saturday, July 11, 1863. The following Monday, two columns of men, women, and children rioted.* From lower Manhattan, the march began with shouts of anti-draft slogans. The columns moved north, halting street cars and cutting telegraph wires (which connected police stations), and in general, causing minor property destruction. The columns joined, and for a time gathered around the Central Park reservoir. Eventually, they proceeded to burn the draft office at 667 Third Avenue at 46th Street. The crowd then divided into smaller groups and throughout the remainder of the day, battled police, and burned, or tried to burn, public buildings.

By the end of the first day, the target of attack shifted from the draft. Attacks on blacks — adults and children — were numerous; they were burned, lynched, and shot. Rioters looted and burned blacks’ homes, businesses which catered to them, and even the “Colored Orphan Asylum”. The pro-Lincoln newspaper *The New York Tribune* and specifically, its editor, Horace Greeley, became another target of the crowds. There were repeated attempts to burn the paper’s headquarters, and many of its reporters were beaten.

The rioting continued for three days, with an ever-growing list of targets: the draft; the armory; the blacks; the *Tribune* and much of the press; the police; the rich; and stores for general looting. Only several losing battles with 10,000 federal troops finally quelled the rioters. The draft served as only the initial spark for a segment of the population heavy with grievances spanning political ideologies.

The extent and seriousness of the riot can be assessed in the numbers killed. The estimates begin with 105 dead, but most place the figure much higher, with at least 1,000 and up to 3,903 killed. No accurate figure is possible to obtain, particularly because there was no real way to determine the number of blacks killed (Gates, 1970: 158; Headley, 1970 (1873): 271; Milton, 1942: 151–152).

Government Panic: Pay off the Poor

As a direct response to the riots, the draft was suspended in New York City and not resumed until August 19 of the same year. Once it had been resumed, few expected it to produce men directly. As a significant outcome of New York’s and other cities’ draft riots, large

*The description of the riots is drawn from the following sources: Headley, 1970(1873): 148ff.; McCague, 1968: 66ff.; Man, 1951: 375ff.; Murdock, 1967: 42–49; Schliesel (ed.), 1968: 88; Werstein, 1971: 49ff.)

amounts of municipal, state, and federal funds were ear-marked expressly to subsidize those who could not buy their way out of the service. All levels of government were caught up in buying off the poor. On July 15, 1863, New York's City Council approved approximately \$2,400,000 to pay the commutation fee of all draftees. The mayor vetoed the ordinance, but approved payment for police, firemen, militia, and men of indigent families. Brooklyn, then a separate city, presented \$300 to each draftee to use for whatever he wished — commutation, substitution, etc. Syracuse, Buffalo, and Albany led a long list of others in following suit for fear of future riots (Murdock, 1967: 20–22, 29). Murdock (Table 1-1) captures the degree to which this practice swept the nation.

Did it Work?

The Civil War draft failed in direct procurement of manpower for the military. Avoidance (exemptions and commutations) and resistance (no-shows and non-registrants) hampered the draft, which ultimately

Table 1-1 Commutation Money Paid By State

State	Amount (\$)	Manpower Equivalent
Maine	\$ 610,200	2,034
New Hampshire	208,500	695
Vermont	593,400	1,978
Massachusetts	1,610,400	5,368
Rhode Island	141,300	471
Connecticut	457,200	1,523
New York	5,485,799	18,286
New Jersey	1,265,700	4,219
Pennsylvania	8,634,300	28,781
Delaware	416,100	1,387
Maryland	1,121,900	3,773
D.C.	96,900	323
Kentucky	997,530	3,325
Ohio	1,978,087	6,593
Illinois	15,900	53
Indiana	235,500	785
Michigan	614,700	2,049
Wisconsin	1,533,600	5,112
Iowa	22,500	75
Minnesota	316,800	1,056
Totals	\$26,366,316	87,887

(Murdock, 1967: *Patriotism Limited*, 31)

directly brought in only 46,347 men, so that, in a Union Army of well over 2,000,000 men, only 2.3 percent were draftees. Even after adding substitutes, that is, indirect draftees, to these figures, only 6 percent were draft induced (Gates, 1970: 159; Useem, 1973: 73). Murdock (Table 1-2) illustrates just how this process worked for the four draft calls during the war.

Widespread avoidance and resistance characterized this war. The former, exclusive to the rich or subsidized, included substitution and, until 1864, commutation. The latter involved the destruction of draft records; non-registration; no-shows for induction; desertion; and flight to Canada. Beyond these individual acts of non-compliance, widespread discontent, manifest in the draft riots of 1863, expressed the general movement of opinion.

Yet the 1863 Enrollment Act was effective (Murdock, 1971: 33ff.). The draft directly supplied few men. However, substitution and the over \$700,000,000 paid out in Federal and state bounties made the difference. Indeed fear of further draft resistance prompted localities to conduct bounty pledge campaigns and bond drives, and even to levy bounty taxes to avoid a direct draft. Bounties induced volunteerism and made possible the meeting of local draft quotas, although the "margin of success was narrow" (Murdock, 1971: 33ff. and 344). Largely poor men, induced by bounties rather than patriotism, comprised the Union Army. This was enough to achieve victory.

Deserters, Evaders, and Canada

The draft riots provided the most vocal resistance to military service during the Civil War. "No-shows" signified a more covert strategy of evasion. Over 161,286 draftees, who held no exemptions and paid

Table 1-2 Total Draft Statistics (All Union States)

Call	Drawn	Did Not		Held To		Furnished		
		Report	Exempted	Service	Committed	Subs	Drafted	
Summer								
1863	292,441	39,415	164,395	88,171	52,288	26,002	9,881	
Spring								
1864	113,446	27,193	39,552	45,005	32,678	8,911	3,416	
Fall								
1864	231,918	66,159	82,531	56,005	1,298	28,502	26,205	
Spring								
1865	139,024	28,477	28,631	17,497	460	10,192	6,845	
Totals	776,819	161,244	315,509	206,678	86,724	73,607	46,347	

(Murdock, *Ibid.*, p. 13)

neither substitutes nor commutations, simply failed to show up. Beyond this, hundreds of thousands simply failed to register at all (Milton, 1942: 139; Murdock, 1971: 356).

Desertions through bounty jumping have already been discussed. Deserters left for many other reasons as well. Desertion rates were so high that the army created a Deserter Branch to track these men down; 260,399 men deserted from the Union Army. Desertions in 1863 numbered 4,647 per month, rose to 7,333 per month in 1864, and were 4,368 per month in 1865 when the war ended (Lonn, 1928: 151–154; Milton, 1942: 138). At the end of the war more than 100,000 deserters remained at large (Baskir and Strauss 1978: 112).

Canada again provided a popular refuge. This time individual evaders and deserters traveled north without their families. In an effort to halt this traffic, an executive order, issued by President Lincoln in 1862, prohibited citizens subject to the draft from traveling outside of the United States. To help implement this order, Secretary of War Stanton ordered a cordon drawn at the Canadian border. Nevertheless, well over 10,000 Union deserters are estimated to have entered Canada during this war (Lonn, 1928: 201–203; Murdock, 1967: 52–53).

Several features of the Civil War became precedents for even the Vietnam Era. First, a national draft was established. Second, this draft reinforced systematic patterns of class discrimination. Third, avoidance and resistance to an unpopular war emerged concurrently in the civilian and military sectors. During the Civil War, the methods of procuring manpower, while strained, worked. One hundred years later, during Vietnam, the draft and military were again strained. This time the system came even closer to collapse.

WORLD WAR I: A TRADITION CONTINUES

The National Enrollment Act expired shortly after the end of the Civil War and received little attention until the First World War began. When it was reintroduced, Congress quickly approved a national wartime draft. The draft's old inequities, commutation and substitution, had been eliminated — but only in form, not in substance.

Prepared as a comprehensive draft law, the Selective Service Act of 1917 required that men be drafted into a federalized National Guard by county draft boards comprised of local citizens. Enlistments were forbidden in 1918, so as not to unbalance the conscription process (Gates, 1970: 159–160; Useem, 1973: 74).

Avoidance

Though this draft was proclaimed as fair, its loopholes indicate otherwise. The so-called “orderly process of selection” clause illustrates its inequities. Each registrant was evaluated in terms of his value to the war effort. Unskilled and blue collar workers, “assessed” as contributing the least, were drafted first. Thus, the “orderly process” really meant that “the poor inevitably bore a disproportionate share of the burden of service” (Gates, 1970: 160). On the other hand, those who qualified could legally avoid service through class-biased deferments. Over half of those first called received deferments, usually for family hardship or occupational reasons. All deferments were permanent, since no one was reclassified in this war (Baskir and Strauss, 1978: 18–19; Useem, 1973: 73–74).

Students stand out as one of the most conspicuous beneficiaries of favored treatment. The Student Army Training Corps allowed 145,000 men to drill for emergencies while they continued their studies. Although some students were finally “activated”, the signing of the Armistice prevented their actual service (Marmion, 1969: 57).

The 1917 Selective Service Act had a provision for Conscientious Objector status (CO's) — for members “of any well-recognized religious sect or organization . . . whose existing creed or principles forbid its members to participate in war in any form. . . .” However, these conscientious objectors, unlike other exempted classifications, had to perform “in any capacity that the President shall declare to be non-combatant” (Chatfield, 1971: 68–69). By any “well-organized religious sect” the writers of the Act recognized the traditional Peace Churches: Mennonites; Quakers; Church of the Brethren; Jehovah's Witnesses; and Hutterites. The numbers of men applying for CO's rose from 1,500 in the Civil War to 64,693 in World War I, with 56,380 accepted by the government. Of these only 20,873 received calls to service, with 3,989 refusing to accept noncombatant status. Later about 1,300 did accept such assignments in the military; 1,200 were placed on farms, and 100 in Quaker War Relief Camps in France. “Absolutists” refused to cooperate in any way. Of these, 17 received death sentences (none carried out): 142, life prison terms; and 345, terms averaging 16½ years. It was not until 1933 that a Presidential pardon by Roosevelt secured the release of the last of these men (Schlissel (ed), 1968: 129–131; Sibley and Jacob, 1952: 12).

Evasion

Although scattered, opposition to the World War I draft did exist (Weinstein, 1959: 215 ff.). Estimates of the number of draft evaders