Feel a draft?

Any poll taken on any college campus at the present time would probably indicate that a majority of students below final exams in total popularity.

This widespread reaction against the draft is not surprising from a generation engaged not in growing up to serve in the military but in fighting the lie of misperception of the real purpose of military service has become a real presence, and not something which might have been fixed in the dim years of the next generation.

Yet the cries of anguish cannot all be dismissed as the self-centered, self-interested complaints of soft-living college types suddenly scared by the thought of finals. There are obvious features of the present society which many fear are both arbitrary, discriminatory, and even senseless.

One obviously needed reform is a viable alternative to service in Viet Nam for those who honestly do not want to be part of US policy there with their conscience. A second problem is the fact that while the draft is just what it is, a "selection" of the best and the brightest, the burdens of the present system fall too heavily on those members of our society whose environment did not prepare them for serious education or high scores on draft deferment exams.

Finally, the present system encourages far too many students to make career decisions on the basis of what will or will not keep them out of the army; while any student who would benefit from a year's leave in which to straighten out other affairs, leaves school only at the risk that he won't be back for several years.

The fact is that most MIT students will already have left the campus before they are drafted, if only because the same skills which got them into the Institute makes them eligible for the draft, if only because the same skills which got them into the Institute makes the Institute a draft-deferment test pretty simple. Yet this security must not degenerate into impotence with the real problems which many young Americans face to-day.