Opinion

The other viewpoint on 'National Service'

A national service for American youth is one of the best and most exciting social action proposals to come out of Washington, DC in a long time. The idea has some question marks, of course, but the benefits of such a program easily outweigh any possible harm it would do.

Program works right out of New Deal

The program places to place 18-year-olds in a variety of social work positions, including schools, hospitals, jails, and public housing projects, or in two years of military service, or six years in the draft.

The social work programs are right out of the New Deal. While most of the work done in the 30's was simple bookwork, and those from this proposal might also be just that, there are many areas of American society which need help they can get.

Volunteer work is needed desperately in many health institutions across the country, especially in rural health centers, state homes for the aged, and those for the mentally retarded.

American jails are overcrowded, dirty, and inefficient. Youth would probably end up in the schools and hospitals, while the youth itself. It would expose teenagers to many of the aspects of American society they see only on "National Service" programs in the 1930's were simply busywork, and the peace corps and VISTA.

Additional draft would not cause war

There is also the value such a program would have on American youth itself. It would expose teenagers to something about something else besides records, movies, and vocational education.

Youth registration for the newly enfranchised US youth is dismal; and perhaps a year or two in service to the country would interest Americans in the political system beyond their own lives.

Opposition of the plan point out correctly that middle and upper class upbringing and education keep the poor out of the schools and hospitals, while the poor teenagers would likely wind up in the draft or military. This is a real concern which must be addressed by legislators; they can offer incentive to poor to enlist them to work in the social work area.

The fear that an additional draft would propel the US into another major war is unfounded, however. For one thing more help is needed in the army reserves and national guard than in the standing army.

For another, the idea that currently armed forces are perfectly adequate for fighting a quite a few countries in the world, the Joint Chiefs of Staff do not have to wait until the draft is re-instituted to start a conflict. I hope that the American public, Congress, and even the President might be reluctant to create another Vietnam no matter how large the Army.

National service for youth could have a marvelous impact on American society among Americans themselves. Every new idea takes some getting used to, and this one is no exception. In light of its potential benefits, though, it is a good one.

Steven F. Frans '80 — Chairman

Thomas Curtis '80 — Editor-in-Chief

Kevin Drost '80 — Managing Editor

Pandora Berman '80 — Business Manager

Beto Wasserman '80 — Executive Editor

Friday, March 9, 1979

SPORTS DEPARTMENT

Sports Editors: Gordon R. Haff '79, Bob Hast '81; Staff: Gregg Stone '79, Dennis Smith '81, Rich Archcus '82.

ARTS DEPARTMENT

Arts Editors: Joel West '78, David G. Shaw '82, Associate Arts Editor: Margie Salke '82; Staff: Bruce Nowak '79, Al Sanders '81, Dan Tagasaki '79, Kevin Cunningham '82.

BUSINESS DEPARTMENT

Advertising Manager: Brenda L. Hamilton '79; Assistant Advertising Manager: John Hogger '79 Circulation Manager: John Morgan '80; Staff: Mary Mahoney '79, D. R. Dumont '80, Lynn Grubert '80, Penn Martin '81, Doug Marden '81.

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Gary England '80, John Granfield '80, Jordane Holland '81, Leigh Farnsworth '81, Michael Taviss '81; indexing of Subject Representative: A. David Boccuti '79.

IM Chairman says refs don't bring on abuse

To the Editor:

Gordon Haff's article on intramurals contains a number of questionable statements that need some major clarification. Mr. Haff reports of a conversation he had with Gerald Adolph. Mr. Adolph seems to feel that there is "a lot of pressure to play IM sports to let off steam, and that is therefore only natural that they sometimes give refs a hard time. There are two separate issues that need to be addressed from this statement.

First, the purpose of the intramural program at MIT is to provide organized, recreational sporting activities for the MIT student body. While we recognize that sports are a good way to "let off steam," there is no pressure to do so, and the vast majority of IM games are played in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere.

Second, for the times that IM's are used to let off steam, the referees should not be the target of that steam. Mr. Haff doesn't understand why Mr. Adolph thinks that referees have to "let off steam." Isn't it much more natural to let off steam by playing the game? Giving the referee a hard time is a part of the game. There is no reason, justification, or excuse for an Intramural referee a hard time!

Mr. Haff finishes his article by saying: "The problems of referee and eligibility rule abuse have been steadily worsening over the last year. They have reached a point where they can no longer be glossed over and swept under the table."

By saying this, Mr. Haff indicates that he is now becoming aware of problems which the IM Executive Committee has been dealing with for a number of years. The Executive Committee has considered referee abuse a major offense and has acted on every case that it has heard about. Depending on the severity of the infraction, players and teams have been warned, put on probation, and suspended.

Actual physical abuse of referees has been rare, but when it has occurred it has been dealt with severely. The reason IM Council feels that eligibility rule abuse has seemed to go up is that the Executive Committee has been cracking down on ineligible players, and generally tightening up on all IM rules. Independent A-League soccer players were culled when three out of four teams were found to have ineligible players. A complete check on the A-League Independent basketball roster was done by the Executive Committee, and a number of ineligible players were discovered, and actions was taken against them. (Mr. Haff even mentions this in his last article on IM). The problems facing Intramurals have not been "glossed over."

They have been met head on, and thus they are now more publicized. I'm confident that the new Executive Committee will continue to face these problems, and I hope that they get the cooperation of the rest of the student body.

Richard D. Kunin '79

The Tech is published twice a week during the academic year by students of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139. Telephone: 617-253-1541. Advertising, subscriptions, and operating reports available. ISSN 0148-9607.