Is science value-free?

(Continued from page 7)

Within the scientific community, the valuation of truth has other consequences as well, such as the necessity of independence for the scientist, the valuation of originality, and the necessity for the safeguard of dissent. But the thrust of this article is to defend science from what appears to be an error in the thinking of critics of science, the thinking that maintains that science is value-free or value-neutral. Rather, the scientific community must hold truth as the highest value within the scientific tradition.

Opinion Feedback

Draft is necessary for national defense

To the Editor:

As an American of draft age with a personal interest in the military, I have always been concerned to light some facts relating to the draft which seem to have been overlooked.

We would like to begin by pointing out that a truly informed decision on the issue of the draft would require detailed knowledge of the fields of history, economics, military science, political science, psychology, ethics, and specialties like arms control and engineering. We are not experts in all these fields, but we know a little about some of them and we would like to share our views with you, to let you know what we think are the real issues in the debate over the draft.

Many of the anti-draft people with whom we have spoken seem to ignore the reality of the world in which we live and the history of the past thirty-five years. The world is a dangerous place. We have enemies and we have responsibilities to our friends. The capability of our volunteer army to protect us is questionable, as more and more: disci-pline problems. This is due in part to lack of standards for volunteers. The army has crusades to fight and appealing to it in order to spur enlistment and meet manpower requirements. Some non-commissioned officers doubt it will fight if called upon. People join for pay, benefits, or technical training, not to become soldiers. They are a less effective fighting force because of it. Sol- dier is hard. People ought to resist it more.

Voluntary enlistment is not an equitable way to distribute the responsibility of national defense. It draws mainly from the poor, the uneducated, the unemployed, and the unskilled. Not only is its actual capability inadequate, but the perception abroad is that our army is weak. Perceptions are very important. Perceptions of power, of capability, of intent, affect the decisions of other nations. Perceptions of weakness invite aggression. Perceptions of strength deter ag-gression.

We think a drafted army will be more capable. In the last decade alone, the Soviets have sponsored communist takeovers in Angola, South Yemen, Ethiopia, South Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Mozambique, and Afghanistan. There are 50,000 Cuban troops in Africa. There are also Cuban troops in Iraq, which share a long border with Iran. In Europe, the Russians have a two to one manpower advan-tage, a three to one tank advantage, and a two to one aircraft advan-tage. This is not a defensive force posture, Classical military thinking calls for a three to one advantage in numbers when at-tacking, and the Russians have that capability. The recent NATO decision to install Pershing II missiles in Europe is a direct response to Soviet deployment of the SS-20 and the Backfire bomber, both of which are capable of hitting all of Western Europe. However, there is another more basic reason why critics of the draft should realize. Theater nuclear weapons are a substitute for manpower, and an inability to stop an attack with conventional forces increases the probability that theater nuclear weapons will be resorted to, with the terrifying possibility of escalation into thermonuclear war.

In the past decade, the Soviet Union has spent over a hundred billion dollars more on the military than the US. Since its peak in 1968, the US defense budget has gone down in constant dollar terms. The Soviets have increased their defense budget $18 every year for the past fifteen years; they spend 14% of their gross national product on defense while the US spends less than five. Their spending cannot be explained by the idea of "mirror-imaging," that they are simply reacting to American initiatives. Their mas- sive arms build-up has gone far beyond trying to just have parity of "equivalence" with American defense capabilities.

The analogies between Nazi and American military capability are false. People ought to resist it more.

Voluntary enlistment is not an equitable way to distribute the responsibility of national defense. It draws mainly from the poor, the uneducated, the unemployed, and the unskilled. Not only is its actual capability inadequate, but the perception abroad is that our army is weak. Perceptions are very important. Perceptions of power, of capability, of intent, affect the decisions of other nations. Perceptions of weakness invite aggression. Perceptions of strength deter ag-gression.

We think a drafted army will be more capable. In the last decade alone, the Soviets have sponsored communist takeovers in Angola, South Yemen, Ethiopia, South Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Mozambique, and Afghanistan. There are 50,000 Cuban troops in Africa. There are also Cuban troops in Iraq, which share a long border with Iran. In Europe, the Russians have a two to one manpower advan-tage, a three to one tank advantage, and a two to one aircraft advan-tage. This is not a defensive force posture, Classical military thinking calls for a three to one advantage in numbers when at-tacking, and the Russians have that capability. The recent NATO decision to install Pershing II missiles in Europe is a direct response to Soviet deployment of the SS-20 and the Backfire bomber, both of which are capable of hitting all of Western Europe. However, there is another more basic reason why critics of the draft should realize. Theater nuclear weapons are a substitute for manpower, and an inability to stop an attack with conventional forces increases the probability that theater nuclear weapons will be resorted to, with the terrifying possibility of escalation into thermonuclear war.

In the past decade, the Soviet Union has spent over a hundred billion dollars more on the military than the US. Since its peak in 1968, the US defense budget has gone down in constant dollar terms. The Soviets have increased their defense budget $18 every year for the past fifteen years; they spend 14% of their gross national product on defense while the US spends less than five. Their spending cannot be explained by the idea of "mirror-imaging," that they are simply reacting to American initiatives. Their mas- sive arms build-up has gone far beyond trying to just have parity of "equivalence" with American defense capabilities.

The analogies between Nazi and American military capability are false. People ought to resist it more.

Voluntary enlistment is not an equitable way to distribute the responsibility of national defense. It draws mainly from the poor, the uneducated, the unemployed, and the unskilled. Not only is its actual capability inadequate, but the perception abroad is that our army is weak. Perceptions are very important. Perceptions of power, of capability, of intent, affect the decisions of other nations. Perceptions of weakness invite aggression. Perceptions of strength deter ag-gression.

We think a drafted army will be more capable. In the last decade alone, the Soviets have sponsored communist takeovers in Angola, South Yemen, Ethiopia, South Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Mozambique, and Afghanistan. There are 50,000 Cuban troops in Africa. There are also Cuban troops in Iraq, which share a long border with Iran. In Europe, the Russians have a two to one manpower advan-tage, a three to one tank advantage, and a two to one aircraft advan-tage. This is not a defensive force posture, Classical military thinking calls for a three to one advantage in numbers when at-tacking, and the Russians have that capability. The recent NATO decision to install Pershing II missiles in Europe is a direct response to Soviet deployment of the SS-20 and the Backfire bomber, both of which are capable of hitting all of Western Europe. However, there is another more basic reason why critics of the draft should realize. Theater nuclear weapons are a substitute for manpower, and an inability to stop an attack with conventional forces increases the probability that theater nuclear weapons will be resorted to, with the terrifying possibility of escalation into thermonuclear war.

In the past decade, the Soviet Union has spent over a hundred billion dollars more on the military than the US. Since its peak in 1968, the US defense budget has gone down in constant dollar terms. The Soviets have increased their defense budget $18 every year for the past fifteen years; they spend 14% of their gross national product on defense while the US spends less than five. Their spending cannot be explained by the idea of "mirror-imaging," that they are simply reacting to American initiatives. Their mas- sive arms build-up has gone far beyond trying to just have parity of "equivalence" with American defense capabilities.

The analogies between Nazi and American military capability are false. People ought to resist it more.

Voluntary enlistment is not an equitable way to distribute the responsibility of national defense. It draws mainly from the poor, the uneducated, the unemployed, and the unskilled. Not only is its actual capability inadequate, but the perception abroad is that our army is weak. Perceptions are very important. Perceptions of power, of capability, of intent, affect the decisions of other nations. Perceptions of weakness invite aggression. Perceptions of strength deter ag-gression.

We think a drafted army will be more capable. In the last decade alone, the Soviets have sponsored communist takeovers in Angola, South Yemen, Ethiopia, South Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Mozambique, and Afghanistan. There are 50,000 Cuban troops in Africa. There are also Cuban troops in Iraq, which share a long border with Iran. In Europe, the Russians have a two to one manpower advan-tage, a three to one tank advantage, and a two to one aircraft advan-tage. This is not a defensive force posture, Classical military thinking calls for a three to one advantage in numbers when at-tacking, and the Russians have that capability. The recent NATO decision to install Pershing II missiles in Europe is a direct response to Soviet deployment of the SS-20 and the Backfire bomber, both of which are capable of hitting all of Western Europe. However, there is another more basic reason why critics of the draft should realize. Theater nuclear weapons are a substitute for manpower, and an inability to stop an attack with conventional forces increases the probability that theater nuclear weapons will be resorted to, with the terrifying possibility of escalation into thermonuclear war.

In the past decade, the Soviet Union has spent over a hundred billion dollars more on the military than the US. Since its peak in 1968, the US defense budget has gone down in constant dollar terms. The Soviets have increased their defense budget $18 every year for the past fifteen years; they spend 14% of their gross national product on defense while the US spends less than five. Their spending cannot be explained by the idea of "mirror-imaging," that they are simply reacting to American initiatives. Their mas- sive arms build-up has gone far beyond trying to just have parity of "equivalence" with American defense capabilities.

The analogies between Nazi and American military capability are false. People ought to resist it more.