

GENERAL SCIENCE

Scientists to Be Drafted?

It is hoped that scientific talent will not be misused due to the draft. Draft boards now decide if a man is essential.

► SCIENTISTS hope Selective Service this time will put no scientists or promising science students on KP. They remember misuse of scientific talent during World War II and, in light of the much greater need for full utilization of our science brain power today, they hope Selective Service and the Armed Forces have learned their lesson.

Putting it most politely, Dr. Detlev W. Bronk, president of the National Academy of Sciences, expresses the hopes of scientists this way: "The administration and Congress have during the past years wisely recognized the important role of science and scientists in the maintenance of our military strength and security. They have given strong support to scientists in their efforts to prepare for such an emergency as this. Accordingly, I am confident that the draft act will be administered in such a way that our scientists will be utilized where they can most effectively serve our country. I am confident too that the training of scientific students who will be necessary for the security and welfare of our nation will not be interrupted."

As of now, there is no special provision for scientists or scientific students in the draft law or in selective service regulations. It is up to the local boards to decide whether a man is in an essential occupation. Either the prospective draftee or his employer or, if he is in college, a college official, can ask for deferment. Many scientists who are otherwise eligible for the draft are reluctant to ask for deferment. They feel they should be ordered to do the work for which they are most fitted and which is most valuable to the nation.

Early in 1949, a study made for the General Staff of the Army with the cooperation of nearly 5,000 veterans who were scientists, declared that, if these 5,000 soldier-scientists had their way, the present selective service system would not have jurisdiction over the utilization of scientists in the armed forces in another emergency. Over half the 5,000 strongly advocated some national agency to allocate and assign the scientists to jobs they could best do in war, whether in uniform or civvies.

Maj. Gen. A. C. McAuliffe—of Bastogne fame—declared in the report: "Scientists constitute an exceedingly small segment of the national population. They compose less than 2 per cent of the Armed Forces, but the military functions dependent on their specialized skills and knowledge are highly disproportionate to their num-

bers. The small numbers involved and the great complexity of scientists' experience and training require the use of special measures to assure their maximum utilization."

Gen. McAuliffe, at the time, was deputy director of the Army's research and development.

Although there is no deferment for students in the medical field, a memorandum has gone out to local boards advising them that students in medical, dental, veterinary and osteopathic fields are in a class where there is a shortage. Physicists, chemists, engineers and students in those vital fields do not even have this protection.

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GENERAL SCIENCE

Korea, Oft Invaded, Was Cultural Bridge

► AT the entrance of many country towns in Korea can be seen curiously carved posts, representing the Five Point Generals. These Generals are supposed to prevent the entry of evil spirits from the five points of North, East, South, West and Center. It must be said that the Generals have not done too good a job for Korea down through the ages.

Korea is a land of 86,000 square miles and about 25,000,000 people. Less than half the land is below the 38th parallel, which divides the Russian-sponsored North Korean Republic from the American-sponsored South Korean Republic. But more than two-thirds of the people live below that crucial parallel.

Koreans are presumed to be of the Mongol family although no one is quite sure. There have been additions to the original stock of both Caucasian and Malayan strains. They are distinct from both the Chinese and Japanese in looks.

Korean history began with somebody named either Dan Koon or Tangun, who began his rule of the country in either 2257 B.C. or 2333 B.C. He founded a dynasty which lasted 1050 years. He taught the uncivilized people of Korea agriculture and the art of building and introduced the beginnings of a religion.

There was no name for the whole peninsula in those days. It received a name which probably sounded something like Chosen when Ki-tze emigrated from China with several thousand followers. He founded a dynasty which lasted another thousand years. The name Korea is derived from the

Koryu dynasty which lasted from 918 to 1392 A.D.

During all this time, the influence of China on the culture of the Koreans was quite marked. Literature of the higher class was exclusively in Chinese characters, although an ingenious 25-letter alphabet with 11 vowels and 14 consonants was developed for everyday use.

The Koreans were a sort of bridge for the transmittal of culture and religion from China to Japan. The Japanese paid for these favors by trying to conquer the land, beginning with pirate raids and then in 1592, staging a 300,000-man invasion.

This invasion would have succeeded had not the Koreans produced an admiral with a little of Sir Francis Drake in him and a flair for inventions. This admiral, Yi Sun Sin, invented the first iron clad naval ships. They looked like turtles, propelled by oars, and fire arrows emanated from portholes in the sides. With these ships, the Admiral cut the Japanese invaders off from their transports and finally routed and destroyed the Japanese navy. The Koreans did not see the Japanese again for 300 years.

Korea is a mountainous land, with very few plains worthy of the name. Everybody says its climate is delightful, although there is a rainy season which lasts through July and August.

Most of its rivers are shallow and rocky. The Han, however, which just about bisects the country below the 38th parallel, can be navigated for 150 miles.

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MEDICINE

Two Modern Drugs Fail in Polio

► HOPE that an effective treatment for poliomyelitis might have been found in two modern drugs is dispelled by reports to the JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION (June 10).

The drugs are the sulfa drug, phenosulfazole, also called darvisul, and the antibiotic, aureomycin.

Phenosulfazole was given to 29 patients with bulbar and spinobulbar polio during the 1948 epidemic in Milwaukee. The mortality rate in this group was 34.5%, compared to 42.1% in a group of 19 similar patients who did not get the drug. Reporting this, Drs. Max J. Fox and Evans Z. Hornberger, Jr., state that the difference is not statistically significant and that there appeared to be no difference in the length of time the patients had fever and had to stay in the hospital.

The aureomycin trials are reported by Drs. Emanuel Appelbaum and Raymond Saigh of New York. The drug was given to 38 patients with nonparalytic polio, 66 similar patients not getting the drug and serving as controls. The results were about the same in both groups of patients. The drug did not seem to affect favorably the clinical course of the disease.

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