

WHO WILL BE DRAFTED NEXT?

Discussions in Congress as to Calling Youths Between 18 and 21 Years, and Men as Old as 45—Crowder's New Figures on Exhaustion of Present Eligible List

THERE are two good reasons for lowering the draft age. One is that between the ages of 18 and 21 the best material, in the opinion of most military men, for the making of soldiers is obtained. The other is that these young men may be withdrawn from civil life with the least disturbance to domestic and industrial relations.

There are two good reasons for raising the draft age: First-class fighting men between 31 and 40 years of age, and without families depending on them, can be found. Second, by applying the work or fight regulation, which becomes effective tomorrow, to whatever extension is determined upon, an industrial army of high efficiency can be mobilized behind the fighting army.

Congress will soon be called upon to enlarge the draft limit. The War Department is now at work on the plan. The question is: What changes are likely to be made? The prospect now is that there will be more opposition to lowering than to increasing the draft age. There is no doubt that the War Department will call for a new minimum age, as it is already on record to that effect. When the present law was before Congress the War Department asked that the draft be imposed between the ages of 19 and 26, inclusive. In both houses opposition developed at once against going below 21. The House of Representatives finally adopted 21 to 40 years as the age limits, the Senate 21 to 27 years. In conference 21 to 31 was agreed upon. Already defenders of the 21-year limit are becoming active. One of these is Julius Kahn of California, one of the most influential members of the House Committee on Military Affairs.

"I will advocate 21 to 45 years," he said the other day in Washington. "I do not think it advisable to lower the limit at this time. The European armies make the mistake of taking their young men first. The consequence was that as the war continued they had to turn more and more to older men, that is, men of less vigor. The soldiers who are doing the fighting in Europe today, with the exception of those in our own army, are men of this type, in the main older men. I am opposed to exhausting our young men now. Let us save them for the final knockout blow, if they be needed for that."

"Is it not going against all the military authorities in drawing the line at 21?" Mr. Kahn was asked.

"Lieut. Gen. March, Chief of Staff," said Mr. Kahn, "when asked by our committee what was the best fighting age, answered 26. Our committee does not expect to initiate any action with respect to changes in the draft age. We shall wait for the War Department to frame a policy. All the opinion I hear, practically, is in favor of extending the limit to 45, and I think that is what will be done, and at this session."

There are strong advocates in Congress of fixing the limit below 21, and it is certain that a much more determined fight will be made on this when the new bill comes up than was made on the first one. Senator George E. Chamberlain of Oregon is one of these. He is in favor of 18 to 45. Another advocate is Senator James W. Wadsworth, Jr., of New York.

men make the best soldiers. We went against that experience when we passed the first draft law. Why make that mistake again, when we need to muster all our power to defeat Germany?

"I am in favor of a superior limit of 45. I think a questionnaire up to that age will be of great value in finding out about man power, its qualifications, &c.; also that we shall find some good soldier material above 31."

There is a growing opinion in Congress in favor of 45 as the upper limit. Every bill or resolution on the subject



Senator James W. Wadsworth, Jr.



Congressman Julius Kahn.

lately introduced is for 45. It must be remembered, too, that the lower house voted for 40 when the present need for a vastly increased army and better mobilized man power was not foreseen. Secretary of War Baker is opposed to an inferior limit under 19, so that it is fairly certain that the new line will not fall below that.

What new reservoirs of men are needed in building an army of 5,000,000, of 6,500,000? Facts must guide the decisions as to fixing the new limits. The figures which follow, obtained from the Senate Committee on Military Affairs, and not heretofore published, have an



Senators Joseph I. France (Left) and Albert B. Fall (Right), Both of Whom Have Introduced Bills Fixing the Age Limits for the New Draft.



Major General E. H. Crowder.

important bearing on the issue which is soon to command the attention of the whole country. These figures, which show how near the present reservoirs are exhausted, were laid before the committee a few days ago, when Provost Marshal General Crowder appeared as a witness in the hearings on Senator France's bill to fix the draft ages at 18 to 45:

Registered of June 5, 1917, 9,585,508
 Inducted into military service prior to Dec. 15, 1917, including delinquents reported to Adjutant General of the

army as deserters prior to that date 807,061
 Remainder 8,689,447

These 8,689,447 registrants were, in pursuance to the law and in accordance with the information contained in the answers to the questionnaires, placed in five classes, as follows:

Class I 2,428,447
 Class II 504,096
 Class III 427,870
 Class IV 3,483,326
 Class V 1,868,858

An analysis of Class I, from which the soldiers were exclusively drawn, shows:

Total number classified in Class I 2,428,729
 Delinquents 244,434
 Emergency fleet list 36,770
 Limited service men 215,539
 Remediable defectives 79,298
 Cases pending and not physically examined on date of last report 166,643
 Total reductions from gross Class I 861,858
 Fighting men 1,624,871

The total number of men called to Aug. 1, 1918, including 290,000 for July, amounts to 1,347,512. This leaves remaining on Aug. 1, 277,359 men. The estimate of fighting men to be obtained from the June 5 registration of those who had become 21 in the last year preceding is 400,000. The estimate of fighting men in Class I to be obtained from rectification, work or fight order, decision of pending cases, and miscellaneous sources is 200,000. This makes the total number available after July calls are filled 877,359. The estimated calls for the remainder of 1918 are:

August 300,000
 September 150,000
 October 150,000
 November 150,000
 December 125,000
 Total 875,000

This leaves in Class I, on Jan. 1, 1919, after present estimates are filled, a little more than 2,000 men, with an army, all told, of about 3,975,000 men, as it is estimated that we shall have 3,000,000 under arms by Aug. 1.

Under the present enrollment, General Crowder told the Senate Committee on Military Affairs, we could go ahead and raise large numbers of men by invading the deferred classes. It was probably true that 4,000,000 men could be raised out of the present classifications, but it would throw the whole burden of war on men between 21 and 31, that is, on classes which we have enrolled, and would, by going into the deferred classes, cause stressful conditions in the fields of domestic relations and of economics. It would be necessary, in order to fill the quotas after Jan. 1, to go into Class II, and speedily exhaust that, and possibly through Class III, and into Class IV—that is, if Congress did not provide for additional enrollment by Jan. 1.

What number of fighting men will be made available by reducing the draft limit to 18 years?

In previous estimates General Crowder placed the number of young men between 18 and 21 at 3,087,063. The number of men between 31 and 45 has been put at 10,683,249. In the two classes the possibility of an additional army of 2,500,000 is seen, on the proportion of married men and men physically and otherwise acceptable, based on previous experience. It is likely that of those only a few between the ages of 18 and 21 would be married, so that what this registration would return to the army would in the main be limited only by physical disability. Figuring this at 30 per cent., on the basis of experience in similar classes, about 1,000,000 fighting men would be provided out of the reservoir from 18 to 21 years.

By adding these to those already included in the estimates up to Jan. 1 the size of the army would reach 5,000,000 men. But if 5,000,000 were the goal, in-



Admiral von Cappelles—"See what I got!" Germany—"But see what you didn't get!"

stead of a force of unlimited number sufficient to overwhelm Germany, as President Wilson called for, sufficient provision would not be made by lowering the age limit to 18 years, for there is the wastage at the battlefield to be considered. What this will be it is not easy to estimate, but, with our men holding a larger sector at the front, it is certain that our replacements will show from now on a steady increase.

Even taking the most conservative estimates of wastage, it will be necessary, on the basis of present standards of deferment, to turn to recruiting above 31 in order to maintain an army of 5,000,000 men. It has been estimated that at least 1,500,000 fighting men—that is, physically fit and not subject to deferment because of family or industrial relations—could be found between the ages of 31 and 45, the greatest number of them, of course, in the lower levels. Without counting the factor of wastage, lowering the draft to 17 and increasing it to 45, as called for in Senator France's bill, according to these estimates, would provide, including the present force, about 6,500,000 fighting men. Each year's new recruits, it should be said, would be a factor in taking care of replacements.

Between 40 and 45 it is likely that a very small number would be found fit for active service. Why, then, consider an extension above 40? The answer is that the larger the fighting army the larger the industrial army that must be mobilized to insure the necessary flow of supplies and munitions; the more stringent must be the distinction between useful and non-useful occupations. This could be obtained through the authority the President has over deferred

classes. The present law authorizes the deferment of persons "engaged in industries, including agriculture, found to be necessary to the maintenance of the military establishment or the effective operation of military forces, or the maintenance of the national interests during the emergency." It also authorizes the President to excuse or discharge from the draft "those in a status with respect to the persons dependent upon them for support which renders their excusion or discharge advisable."

"No one questions this authority of the President," said General Crowder, in testifying before the Senate Committee on Military Affairs, with reference to the sections of the draft law just referred to. "Now, if the registered men were over 31 and up to some superior age limit or under 21 to some inferior age limit, we could say under the authority of the law: 'Age alone will have the right to deferment, provided that on the date fixed by the President in regulations applicable to the section a registrant is usefully employed.' I think the effect of additional registration would be to recruit industry up to the point where there would be no shortage of man power and that the army would be a gainer to the extent that there would be no deficiency in military power."

Under Senator France's bill, first of the new draft measures, all between the ages of 18 and 45 would take the oath of allegiance. General Crowder said it was not plain to him whether those in Senator France's noncombatant service could be construed as being in military service and subject to the Articles of War, but he assumed from the explanation given by Senator France

and from the fact that the bill carried no penalties for nonperformance of non-combatant national service that it did not. General Crowder added that the substitute legislation that he had prepared carried with it a more compelling sanction.

"Under the law as I have drafted it," continued General Crowder, "military service is exacted, but the President is authorized to excuse or discharge from the obligation of military service those who are found neither idle nor engaged in occupations designated by the President as not necessary to the national interest during the present emergency, the administration in these regards being left to the local and district boards."

Senator Fall introduced an amendment fixing the ages of military service from 18 to 45 years, and then, on Tuesday last, Senator Hitchcock proposed a compromise measure fixing the ages from 20 to 40 years, both inclusive.

A surprise was sprung by the War Department on Wednesday, when Secretary Baker and General March asked the Senate Committee on Military Affairs to oppose action on extending the draft ages. Mr. Baker said the department would be ready to announce its program and recommend draft law amendments in August, and that the present eligible draft lists would supply the army's needs until then. The committee voted to support Mr. Baker's request.

In reference to the number of delinquents as shown in the analysis of Class I, General Crowder said that the number, 334,634, was not alarming when the facts were known. This list included those who failed to return questionnaires or, having returned them and reported

for physical examination, failed to report under an order for entrainment. It embraced a large number of men who volunteered in the army or Marine Corps and whose record of enlistment failed to reach their local board. It also included aliens who left the country after registration.

Of the cases pending in Class I, 166,643, a large number, probably three-fourths, would be held for military service, but for the present they had been grouped with other classes to be deducted from the gross total. The comparatively low return from the class which had come of age between June 5, 1917 and 1918, General Crowder said, was accounted for by the fact that 208,000 of these already had enlisted as volunteers and that the cessation of immigration had cut out 48,000. By adding these two items to the total of registrants the result came within 13,000 of the census estimate of 1,001,000.

The emergency fleet list, 36,770, is a special classification, and registrants found enrolled therein are, under the President's order, required to be passed in the draft so long as they are performing satisfactory work in shipyards. The number of shipyard workers in other classes of the draft is 120,000.

The limited service list, 215,539, consists of men whose physical qualifications are not up to requirements of general military service but who are qualified for less arduous duties connected with certain noncombatant work, including military administration.

Remediable defectives, numbering 50,268, are composed of men who, by a slight surgical operation, will be qualified to render general military service.