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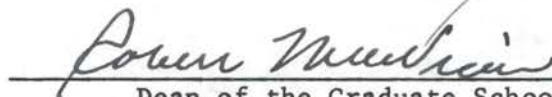
THE R.O.T.C. AND PUBLIC OPINION, 1920-1937

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THE R.O.T.C. AND PUBLIC OPINION, 1920-1937

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1959

Submitted to the faculty of the Graduate School of
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
MASTER OF ARTS
May, 1961

PREFACE

Little attention has been devoted to public attitudes towards the Reserve Officers' Training Corps during the years from 1920 to 1937, although this program of drill for college boys was the only form of compulsory peacetime military training which survived the post-war demobilization of 1919-1920. Thus it was the ROTC that served as a whipping boy for opponents of militarism. The training attracted numerous critics ranging from isolationists to communists and from the Farmers' Grange of Oregon to the American Federation of Labor. Rising in opposition to these critics, the War Department, the American Legion, the Daughters of the American Revolution, and other groups assailed the attackers of the ROTC.

An attempt has been made in this study to illustrate the diverse opinions surrounding the ROTC training and to identify the reasons for these attitudes. In endeavoring to follow these guidelines, the approach has been that of a historical narrative and the object of the study has been to reveal information, rather than to indict.

In chapter three, the thread of the narrative follows the activities of the student opposition to the ROTC during the 1930's. During these years the college students merged the anti-ROTC movement with the anti-war crusade. The results produced nation-wide demonstrations against war and the ROTC with 500,000 students participating in a "peace strike" in 1936. As a separate entity the ROTC was rather insignificant but viewed in perspective of the questions surrounding and reflecting themselves in the college program, one is convinced that it served as a

mirror of public opinion towards great problems.

I would like to express indebtedness to Mr. Alton Juhlin of the Special Services Department for prompt and courteous help in obtaining much of the source material; to Dr. Homer L. Knight for fatherly guidance throughout the year to a graduate assistant; to Drs. Norbert R. Mahnken and Theodore L. Agnew for critical readings of the thesis; and to Dr. O. A. Hilton who guided this student to the subject and whose frequent question marks are responsible for any degree of scholarship which may exist herein.

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CHAPTER I

THE ORIGIN OF THE RESERVE OFFICERS' TRAINING CORPS

The roots of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps¹ extend back to the Land-Grant Act of 1862, which enacted into law the efforts of Representative Justin S. Morrill. Morrill's original bill had been introduced in the House on December 15, 1857, without mention of military training. This bill passed both houses, only to be vetoed by President Buchanan, who considered it an interference with the sovereign rights of states in education.² After this defeat, the land-grant bill was reintroduced by Senator Benjamin F. Wade of Ohio in 1862. Wade did not mention military training in his discussion of the bill, but between the first reading of the bill and its acceptance by President Lincoln on July 2, 1862, a provision for military training was included.

The Land-Grant Act offered tracts of public land or land script to each state, stipulating that the funds derived from their sale should be placed in endowment for the support of at least one college. The act stated that the primary purpose of these institutions was "without excluding other scientific and classical studies, and including military tactics," to teach subjects related to agriculture and mechanical arts.³

¹The common abbreviation of "ROTC" will be used to indicate the Reserve Officers' Training Corps.

²U.S. Senate, 74th Congress, 2nd Session, Report of the Subcommittee of the Committee on Military Affairs, Compulsory Military Training, s. 3309, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1936), p. 292.

³U.S. Statutes At Large, Vol. XII, p. 503.

Speaking of this legislation in later years, Representative Morrill asserted that the fundamental idea of the Land-Grant Act had been "to offer an opportunity in every state for a liberal education to larger numbers, not merely those destined to sedentary professions, but to those much needing higher education...for the industrial pursuits of life."⁴ Thus the paramount objective of the act was to promote the liberal and practical education of the "industrial classes" and the advancement of agriculture, rather than the cause of national defense.⁵ The insertion of military instruction had resulted from the North's unpreparedness at the onset of the Civil War. West Point had failed to provide a sufficient number of officers.⁶

The results of the Land-Grant Act proved inconspicuous for a decade. This slow development was not due to any reluctance on the part of the states to accept subsidies. The land grants had been readily received, but with the exception of New York, the lands were thrown on the open market for what they would bring, which was usually less than a dollar an acre. In addition to the tortoise-like growth of land-grant institutions due to a lack of funds, there was no immediate stampede of students to enroll for courses of study in agricultural and mechanical arts. Teachers were few in these fields and the curriculum was only in the process of development.⁷

⁴Garrett B. Drummond, "Military Training in Universities and Colleges," Infantry Journal, XXXII, Jan., 1928, p. 57.

⁵William Bennett Bizzell, "Military Training in Land-Grant Colleges," Department of the Interior, Bureau of Education, Bulletin 37, 1924, p. 65.

⁶Gene M. Lyons and John W. Masland, Education and Military Leadership, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), p. 30.

⁷William Belmont Parker, The Life and Public Services of Justin Smith Morrill, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1924), p. 271

Military training was not immediately provided in newly established land-grant institutions due to a lack of competent officers and equipment. Not until 1866 did Congress authorize the detailing of twenty officers to serve as military instructors in the new colleges, and it was four years later before Congress authorized the issuing of arms and equipment.⁸ These acts were so inadequate that in 1872 the National Agriculture Convention's committee on military instruction submitted a report recommending that the convention ask Congress for an annual appropriation of \$15,000 to help each institution maintain its college of military science. The committee further suggested that if Congress could not provide the necessary aid then the clause of the Land-Grant Act requiring military instruction should be withdrawn. While the report was not adopted by the convention, the discussion of it indicated the inadequate support which military training was receiving.⁹

Once military instruction was adopted by an institution it virtually became a required course, since the elective system had not become entrenched in American education. It was also generally accepted that the Land-Grant Act of 1862 made military training compulsory. Although the War Department had this captive audience, it seemed to have little desire to support the college program.¹⁰ The students who completed the military training could not be commissioned as officers in the regular army, and no reserve program existed. This lack of interest in utilizing the

⁸J. C. Breckinridge, "Report of the Inspector General," Annual Reports of the War Department, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1897), p. 257.

⁹U.S. Senate, 42 Congress, 2 Session, Doc. 164, Proceedings of the National Agriculture Convention, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1872), pp. 69-75.

¹⁰Lyons and Masland, Education and Military Leadership, p. 32.

potential officer material was primarily due to the decreasing size of the military forces following the Civil War, with the Army cut to 30,000 men in 1870 and in 1874 to 25,000. The appropriations for the War Department were also decreased, and in 1877 Congress even failed to pass the military appropriations bill for the next year.¹¹ Thus the War Department's failure to supply a sufficient number of training officers and equipment was understandable.

The military instruction in the colleges consisted primarily of close-order drill, with the officers giving little attention to theory. Military instructors were not granted faculty status and in most institutions were received with an indifferent attitude.¹² The training was clearly unpopular in some schools, such as the University of Wisconsin. There, in 1886, the students' distaste for enforced drill led a few individuals to break into the arms room and remove about a hundred muskets. This attempt to escape drill by creating a shortage of weapons was thwarted when university officials borrowed rifles from state authorities.¹³

One major problem with military training was the lack of uniformity that existed among college programs. The Inspector-General of the Army reported in 1897 that in 21 colleges strict military discipline was applied, while others adopted civil discipline or a combination of the two. In some thirty institutions, cadets were required to march in formation to meals and chapel, but in a majority of the colleges military training

¹¹The Senate refused to pass the appropriation bill with the Democratic rider prohibiting the President from supervising the southern ballot boxes.

¹²Bizzell, "Military Training in Land-Grant Colleges," p. 66.

¹³Merle Curti and Vernon Carstensen, The University of Wisconsin, Vol. I, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1949), p. 416.

did not extend outside the drill field. In the adoption of uniforms, the colleges again had no precise standards. The selection was left to each institution, and southern universities such as the University of Alabama even retained the trim grey uniforms of the Confederacy. In only four institutions, the State Agricultural College of Kansas, the University of Missouri, the Agricultural College of South Dakota, and the non-land-grant Girard College of Philadelphia,¹⁴ did the cadets receive their uniforms free. In all other schools, each student was required to furnish his own uniform, and it was not unusual for the more poverty-stricken students to drill in civilian dress.¹⁵

This lack of conformity was equally prevalent in the selection of textbooks and in classroom instruction. Professors of military science gave lectures at 86 schools, but while some of these were elaborate and illustrated lessons, a larger percentage than the War Department cared to admit were informal and offhand. Only in 18 colleges was a study of military campaigns included in the curriculum. Thus the Inspector General in 1897 saw the need for more uniformity and suggested that it should be corrected by appropriate legislation.¹⁶

Legislation was required because the authority to control military instruction in the land-grant institutions rested not with the War Department, but with the Department of the Interior. The Secretary of the Interior could determine whether the military instruction was sufficient

¹⁴The Morrill Act was expanded in 1881 to include schools other than land-grant institutions for military training.

¹⁵Breckinridge, "Report of the Inspector General," 1897, p. 261.

¹⁶Ibid.

to justify the expense involved; while the War Department had only the negative power of removing its officers if the Department was dissatisfied with the existing conditions. Military spokesmen considered it most unfortunate that trained army men were not allowed a voice in prescribing military instruction.¹⁷

The lack of a standardized system of military education was not considered a serious defect to most observers before 1898. No real need existed for such a system, since the graduates of land-grant institutions passed out into civilian life without a definite place in the military establishment. The Spanish-American War called attention to the weakness of this military system, and following the war the army organization was improved by the creation of a general staff and the establishment of federal regulations for the national guard. The creation of an army reserve, however, with positions for graduates of college military programs did not follow until after the First World War had begun in Europe.

During the years when the European armament race became more competitive, the War Department turned its attention towards improving and extending military instruction in the colleges. In 1912 the Secretary of War suggested that the graduates of college military training could serve as reserve lieutenants in the army.¹⁸ The following year the Chief of Staff proposed that 400 graduates of land-grant institutions be selected each year, commissioned as provisional second lieutenants, and assigned to regular army units for one year of further training.¹⁹ With

¹⁷H. L. Scott, "Report of the Chief of Staff," Annual Reports of the War Department, 1915, Vol. I, p. 160.

¹⁸Henry L. Stimson, "Report of the Secretary of War," Annual Reports of the War Department, Vol. I, 1912, p. 99.

¹⁹Leonard Wood, "Report of the Chief of Staff," Annual Reports of the War Department, Vol. I, 1913, p. 151.

the outbreak of war in 1914, the War Department recommended legislation and appropriations which would enable it to require four years of military education for all college males.²⁰ These recommendations for improving college military training culminated in section forty of the comprehensive military act of 1916.

The National Defense Act of June 3, 1916, authorized the President to establish Reserve Officers' Training Corps units²¹ in all land-grant institutions and in other public and private institutions where the authorities would agree to maintain a two years' elective or compulsory course of military instruction. Once the student entered the course, it was to be a requirement for his graduation. After the two required years of training, a select group of students were to be allowed to continue to advanced training for two additional years, and upon graduation they were to be eligible for appointment to the Officers' Reserve Corps.²²

The War Department optimistically planned to utilize the facilities of both public and private institutions at which officers could be detailed as professors of military science and tactics. It was estimated that this source would provide trained reserve officers for less than \$1,000 a man; since approximately 170,000 male students were enrolled in 567 colleges in the country, the War Department looked forward to an ample supply of men trained for reserve commissions.²³

²⁰H. L. Scott, "Report of the Chief of Staff," Annual Reports of the War Department, Vol. I, 1915, p. 161.

²¹This was the first usage of the term "ROTC" to apply to college military training.

²²U.S. Statutes, Vol. XXXIX, p. 191.

²³H. S. Scott, "Report of the Chief of Staff," Annual Reports of the War Department, Vol. I, 1916, p. 170.

By June, 1918, the ROTC had been established in 102 institutions with 36,000 students enrolled in the training, but the shortage of officer material grew more serious as a result of the army's plan to place eighty divisions in France. This shortage led to the orders of August 24, 1918, which established the Students' Army Training Corps. Under this new plan, which superseded units of the ROTC, the academic plants of 527 colleges and universities were absorbed for military purposes. By November the SATC claimed an enrollment of 170,000.²⁴

The formation of the SATC had been partially an effort to discourage the hasty enlistment of college men for front-line duty in Europe.²⁵ These students were encouraged to enlist in the SATC and later go to Europe as officers. Upon entering this program they became enlisted men in the United States Army who were under military discipline and who received military benefits including the base pay of thirty dollars a month.²⁶ The student-soldier's non-military classes were taught by the academic professors who operated under the direction of the War Department. This created something of a problem, because being enlisted service men, many of the student-soldiers seemed to be under the impression that they were not expected to study or to obey certain rules of some colleges, such as prohibition of smoking on campus.²⁷ The relationships during this period probably influenced the professors' attitudes towards the ROTC in the following decade.

²⁴Newton D. Baker, "Report of the Secretary of War," Annual Reports of the War Department, Vol. I, 1918, p. 19.

²⁵Literary Digest, Sept. 28, 1918, p. 28.

²⁶Nation, Sept. 28, 1918, p. 338.

²⁷John Lee, "Drafted University," Nation, Dec. 7, 1918, p. 636.

The armistice of November 11, 1918, was followed by the demobilization of the Students' Army Training Corps and the reorganization of the ROTC. By the close of the academic year in June, 1919, units had been reestablished in 191 collegiate institutions, and 635 officers had been detailed as professors of military science and tactics.²⁸ Twenty-seven additional units were established by June 30, 1920, but during this time 24 units had been withdrawn for a net gain of three.²⁹

As the war faded into the past, the need for military training in the colleges was not seen so clearly by many citizens, but the War Department and members of Congress realized that the Military Academy at West Point would provide only a small portion of the officers who would be needed in the event of another armed conflict. Thus the necessity for a reservoir from which the deficiency could be filled, led to the retention of the ROTC as a permanent establishment. Its acceptance in land-grant schools was a foregone conclusion, since those institutions were considered to be under legal obligation to require military training, but it was anticipated that the training would continue to find acceptance among colleges which had no such obligation.³⁰

²⁸Chester W. Cuthell, "Report of the Secretary of War," Annual Reports of the War Department, Vol. I, 1919, p. 21.

²⁹P. C. Harris, "Report of the Adjutant General," Annual Reports of the War Department, Vol. I, 1920, p. 260.

³⁰Newton D. Baker, "Report of the Secretary of War," Annual Reports of the War Department, Vol. I, 1920, p. 8.

CHAPTER II

THE REACTION OF THE TWENTIES

Attitudes and opinions concerning the ROTC during the twenties were colored by the "Red Scare" and the disillusionment following the World War. The latter resulted in part from the failure of the United States to achieve the objectives for which the American citizens had believed they were fighting. In addition to this failure of the utopian goals, the war itself had caused a reaction against armed conflict and against the leadership which had brought the nation into war. Probably starting with the news of the first Americans killed in Europe, the reaction was evident in the 1918 congressional election, in which President Wilson suffered a sharp defeat. This reaction against the war and the peace left many individuals with a distaste for all things of the military order, including the ROTC.

A further opposing viewpoint was created by the big "Red Scare." Frightened by industrial unrest, bomb scares, and the sensational headlines of the newspapers, the American public was unable to face rationally the specter of Bolshevism which seemed to be spreading from Europe.¹ The wartime feelings of fear, hate, and intolerance seemed to remain within the American people even after the war ended, and they were apparently unable to distinguish between the various shades of radicalism. What resulted was the phenomenon known as the "Red Scare." The number of

¹Robert K. Murray, Red Scare: A Study in National Hysteria, 1919-1920, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1955), p. 32.

Bolsheviks, however, had been greatly exaggerated, and after radicals and liberals retreated to outward respectability most of the public by late 1920 had lost interest in the investigations for Bolsheviks. But the underlying fear of radicalism and the crusade for 100 per cent Americanism was continued throughout the twenties by patriotic organizations who were to identify anti-ROTC agitators with Bolsheviks and Reds.

A great majority of the American people did not consider patriotism to be incompatible with demobilization, and the conclusion of the armistice turned the attention of the country impatiently towards bringing the boys home. Since the United States had just won the "war to end all wars" and had "made the world safe for democracy," it was generally believed that there was no need to maintain an army in Europe. Perhaps the public temper was best reflected in the colorful language of Senator Percy Edwards of Mississippi who stated, "The bobwhites in the cornfields are calling for the boys back on the farm."²

In opposition to this sentiment for demobilization, a strong counter movement was supporting national defense, a large standing army, and universal military training. Following the armistice, the War Department had been confronted with the task of writing a new defense act because the Stone Amendment to an emergency military appropriations act of 1917 had provided that all men serving under the selective service act should be discharged within four months of the conclusion of the peace. In an effort to prevent a depletion of the army's ranks, on January 16, 1919, the administration's bill, requesting an army of 509,909, was introduced into the House of Representatives. But the Military Affairs Committee

²U.S. Senate, 65th Congress, 3rd Session, Congressional Record, Vol. 57, pt. 4, p. 3287.

decided against adopting the bill, and it was dropped.³

At the beginning of a new session of Congress in June, 1919, the administration had first to obtain a military appropriation for the next year before it could offer its proposals to Congress for a permanent army policy. Following the appropriation for a temporary army of 325,000, the general staff bill was submitted to Congress on August 3, 1919. This measure, known as the Baker-Marsh bill, called for an enlisted force of 509,000 and for universal military training of three months for all youths of the ages of 18 and 19. After receiving this bill and other similar ones, the Senate and the House committees on Military Affairs began three months exhaustive study of the future military establishment, but at the conclusion of these hearings, failed to adopt any of the bills before them.⁴ The Baker-Marsh bill had been especially condemned by Senator George Earle Chamberlain, who described it as "radical and revolutionary" and further stated that it spelled staff despotism to a greater degree than that which had been exercised by the great General Staff of the German Army.⁵

The congressional committees next proceeded to draft their own bills. The Senate Committee, with the technical assistance of Colonel John McAuley Palmer, drafted the Wadsworth Bill which requested an army of 280,000 and universal military training of four months for all young men. Public sentiment by this time, however, was running strongly against compulsory training. The press throughout the South and West was

³ John Dickinson, The Building of an Army, (New York: Century Company, 1922) p. 325.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 325-363.

⁵ Nation, Nov. 29, 1919, p. 676.

almost universally hostile. The House committee, more responsive to this public attitude, prepared a bill omitting any provision for military training.⁶

Despite the advice of President Wilson to abstain from taking any action on universal military training until after the presidential election, Democratic congressmen decided to make military training a campaign issue. Meeting in caucus on February 9, 1920, House Democrats listened while Secretary of War Baker read the President's message, and then voted 106 to 17 to oppose universal military training. Campaigning with their ears near the ground, the Democrats asserted that they knew the sentiment of the country better than the President.⁷

Senator Henry Cabot Lodge advised his fellow Republicans that they could not afford to pick up this gauntlet in support of universal training.⁸ And when Senator Wadsworth called up his bill on April 5, its advocates defended the compulsory feature for only three days and then offered to substitute voluntary training. By a vote of 40 to 9, the provision was included to allow young men of 18 to 28 the opportunity to apply for four months of active training and enlistment in the organized reserves for four years. The House, however, rejected even voluntary training and the Senate was forced to abandon training completely.⁹

The election of anti-war politicians to Congress in 1922 was an indication of the continuing reaction against American intervention in the

⁶Dickinson, The Building of an Army, pp. 363-364.

⁷New York Times, Feb. 10, 1920, p. 1.

⁸John McAuley Palmer, America in Arms, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941), p. 179.

⁹Dickinson, The Building of an Army, pp. 371-73.

European conflict. Representative Clarence C. Dill of Washington, who had voted against the declaration of war in 1917 and was removed from office by his constituents, was in 1922 elected to the Senate after a campaign in which he stressed his past efforts to keep the country out of war. In 1922 the Wisconsin voters continued to reelect Robert M. LaFollette and Victor L. Berger. In Ohio, Isaac R. Sherwood, an 87-year old veteran of the Civil War and a pacifist, returned to his seat in Congress after having been defeated because he had protested the entry into war. In Montana Senator Burton K. Wheeler found that his opponent's charges of "sympathy with sedition" were an asset in his reelection in 1922. In the same state, John Morgan Evans, who had been defeated in 1920, was elected in 1922 on a platform calling for disarmament and a referendum before any declaration of war.¹⁰

Revealing its post-war disgust at the wartime infringement of civil liberties, the Wisconsin legislature in 1923, defined an "outstanding American" as one who "had the courage during the hysteria and war madness to stand up and defend the ideals and splendid traditions of the founders of the republic...." This anti-war spirit continued, with the state senate cutting the National Guard appropriations from \$600,000 to \$255,000 and abolishing compulsory military training at the University of Wisconsin, which had been the scene of student agitation against the ROTC.¹¹ This action was printed on page 35 of the New York Times with only six lines devoted to the subject.¹² Apparently the opposition to the ROTC was not significant enough to draw the attention of the forces of Americanism.

¹⁰O. G. Villard, "Anti-War Men Re-elected," Nation, Nov. 29, 1922, p. 569.

¹¹Nation, May 30, 1923, p. 616.

¹²New York Times, May 25, 1923, p. 35.

The emergence of a frontal assault upon the ROTC was to follow under the leadership of organizations such as the League for Industrial Democracy, which traced its antecedents back to 1905, when it was founded by Upton Sinclair, Jack London, Clarence Darrow, and others. By 1925, the organization was actively campaigning to abolish compulsory drill in the colleges. The League's field secretary, Paul Blanshard, spoke at 95 colleges and before 35,600 students during that year. Harry W. Laidler, from their editorial and administrative department, delivered college lectures at Barnard College of Columbia University, New York University, General Theological Seminary (also of New York), and Wesleyan College of Connecticut, while another member of the League, Norman Thomas, spoke at 29 colleges.¹³

The Fellowship of Reconciliation was a second organization which launched a crusade against militarism in education. In 1925 this group published Military Training in Schools and Colleges in the United States, a pamphlet by Winthrop D. Lane which surveyed the educational effects of military training, concluding that they were more detrimental than beneficial and that the training should be abolished. Moreover, the training had not been made compulsory by the National Defense Act of 1920, and Lane saw no reason for its continuation. This pamphlet was signed by fifty-eight persons, of whom forty were listed in Who's Who In America; of these, four were Senators, William E. Borah, Henri Shipstead, George W. Norris, and Robert M. LaFollette. Among the other signers were two Representatives, an ex-governor of Colorado, three Protestant bishops,

¹³U.S. House of Representatives, 69th Congress, 1st Session, Committee of Military Affairs, Abolition of Compulsory Military Training in Schools and Colleges, House Report 8538, 1936, p. 242.

and two well-known Jewish rabbis.¹⁴ This pamphlet was circulated so widely that the War Department was forced to take cognizance of the movement and to send an official statement of policy to the area commanders of every zone, declaring that the Department stood squarely in favor of military training for the greatest possible number of students.¹⁵

Military training was depicted by anti-ROTC forces as being a yoke of militarism which bore heavily upon the students at land-grant institutions. To prove this point, these forces related incidents such as the bayonet drill instruction reported to have occurred at Kansas State Agricultural College. "Now, fellahs," the drill instructor said as he stood in front of a line of rookies, "remember when you run the bayonet through their guts, grunt a little and look fierce. It is not only what you do that counts, but how you feel and look." By such propaganda, the ROTC instructors were described as "gory militarists" and "boneheads" who fostered a spirit of militarism.¹⁶

Supporters of the ROTC retaliated by attempting to brand the anti-ROTC movement as one composed of left-wing radicals. They were able to drag a skeleton from the Lane closet by discovering that his pamphlet had been partially financed by the "Garland Fund." This fund had been established by a Charles Garland, who had inherited \$950,000 from his father and had turned it over to the Civil Liberties Union. These supporters of "Americanism" were most happy to discover that Garland had been indicted in Allentown, Pennsylvania for actions in an alleged free

¹⁴Winthrop D. Lane, Military Training in Schools and Colleges of the United States, (New York: Committee on Militarism in Education, 1935) p. 1.

¹⁵New York Times, Dec. 7, 1925, p. 29.

¹⁶Paul Blanshard, "Liberalism in the Colleges," Nation, Sep. 17, 1924, p. 286.

love colony.¹⁷

The American Legion's Commission on Americanism warned its members to be unrelenting in their campaign against radicals who would attempt to abolish the ROTC. The Commission reported that radicalism was making progress in the colleges and universities, where highly paid and intellectual "pinks" were alleged to have infiltrated the faculties and to have instigated youth movements. The Commission on Americanism reported that it was keeping a close watch upon these individuals, but it warned the members that they should be alert to help spot other radicals.¹⁸

Advocates of ROTC training concentrated much opposition on the Young Communist League and its protégé, the Young Pioneers. These minute groups distributed inflammatory pamphlets exhorting the students to fight against the education they were receiving in the schools. "They are teaching us a lot of patriotism," one bulletin asserted, "how to be loyal to our country, and serve our bosses as well....If you join the ROTC, are you learning music? No! of course not! You are learning to handle a gun for one purpose, to kill... The ROTC teaches us to be soldiers, teaches us militarism. The ROTC makes us good cannon fodder... The war to end all wars has resulted in a coming fiercer war. Let's not be fooled again."¹⁹

These tiny particles of radicalism were not evidence of any alarming swing to the left by college students. The collegiate opposition to

¹⁷E. B. Johns, "Is Military Training Unpopular," Infantry Journal, May, 1926, p. 495.

¹⁸U.S. House of Representatives, 68th Congress, 2nd Session, Doc. 517, Report of the National Americanism Commission, Proceedings of the Sixth National Convention of the American Legion, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1924), p. 145.

¹⁹Paul J. Mueller, "The Forces Fighting the ROTC," Infantry Journal January, 1927, p. 76.

compulsory ROTC probably was little more than a part of the general opposition to rules and regulations. The same feeling was directed against compulsory chapel. Apparently the disillusionment following the World War had left its mark of cynicism and irony upon the college student. His loyalty to great ideas had been shaken, and he had become a skeptical individual, determined to be fooled by no one.²⁰

Generally more radical than the student bodies, collegiate newspapers frequently assumed the initiative in agitating for abolition of compulsory military training. This was especially true at the College of the City of New York, where Felix S. Cohen, editor of the Campus, began the crusade in 1925.²¹ This agitation stimulated the student council to conduct a referendum to ascertain the student sentiment on military science. The election date was set for November 18, and the anti-ROTC forces resorted to reading their ROTC manuals for maxims with which to launch a campaign against compulsory drill. Some of the quotations printed on posters were: "The object of all military training is to win battles," "The inherent desire to fight and kill must be carefully watched for and encouraged by the instructor," and "The principles of sportsmanship and consideration for your opponent have no place in the practical application of this work."²²

On the day of the referendum, seventy-five per cent of the student body turned out for the largest vote in the history of the college. The anti-ROTC forces won with 2,092 against, and only 345 for continued

²⁰Norman Thomas, "Youth in American Colleges," Nation, Aug. 7, 1923, p. 187.

²¹New York Times, Nov. 12, 1925, p. 7.

²²Nation, Dec. 2, 1925, p. 616.

compulsory military training. The president of the College, Sidney E. Mezes, was quick to point out: "The issue must not be understood as one of patriotism or pacifism. It is just a matter of a lot of young college men being opposed to conscription...." State Representative Louis A. Cuvillier disagreed with Mezes' analysis of the student behavior and sent a letter to Secretary of War Dwight F. Davis requesting that the allotment of United States funds towards the support of the College of the City of New York be cut off, if the institution eliminated compulsory training. "Shall a majority of 1,300 cowards," he wrote, "say what their matriculation or curriculum shall be when it is paid for out of the public treasury? I should say no. We who fought the war and suffered after the war have the privilege of imposing discipline on the present and future generations."²³

Neither did Representative Anthony J. Griffin of the Bronx agree with President Mezes that the student campaign reflected only a boyish desire to get out of two hours' weekly attendance at drill. Speaking at the Winter Plattsburg meeting of the Quartermaster Reserve Officers, Griffin asserted, "I don't like these pup traitors and I would not force them to receive instruction to prepare to assist in national defense. They might be dangerous later. I would make a note of each man and would fingerprint him."²⁴ With more temperance than Griffin had exercised, even the New York Times agreed that the vote had placed the students' patriotism in question.²⁵ On the other hand, the Nation declared that none of the conventional justifications for compulsory military training was

²³New York Times, Nov. 21, 1925, p. 2.

²⁴Ibid., Nov. 25, 1925, p. 23.

²⁵Ibid., Nov. 23, 1925, p. 20.

intellectually creditable, and that the increasing spirit of revolt in student bodies was heartening.²⁶

This agitation was attributed by some individuals, such as Professor William Bradley Otis of the City College, to the Jewish element which composed sixty-five percent of the school's enrollment.²⁷ Many of these students were sons of immigrants who had suffered under military systems abroad. While the students' disapproval of militarism had received the support of Jewish leaders, other colleges and universities with a non-Jewish majority were scenes of student opposition to compulsory drill. Students at the University of Wisconsin had led in the campaign which had culminated in the state legislature's abolishing the compulsory feature. Pomona College students in California persuaded their board of trustees to end compulsory military training. Students at Howard University, the University of Minnesota, and Ohio State University made notable protests against compulsory drill. At the University of Missouri the students arranged for a referendum which was called off at the request of the president after the board of regents unanimously endorsed compulsion.²⁸

The agitation against ROTC seemed to hit a peak in 1926. This was the year in which the War Department discontinued bayonet practice in the colleges due to its unfavorable publicity. This was also the year that the House Committee on Military Affairs conducted hearings on the abolition of compulsory military training in the schools. As a result of the student and public disapproval, Representative George A. Welsh had introduced a

²⁶Nation, Dec. 2, 1925, p. 616.

²⁷U.S. House of Representatives, 69th Congress, 1st Session, Committee On Military Affairs, Abolition of Compulsory Military Training in Schools and Colleges, 1926, p. 47.

²⁸Nation, Dec. 2, 1925, p. 616.

bill to abolish compulsory military training. The groups backing this bill, he stressed, "were not faddists, not radicals, nor unpatriotic, but were essentially Americans who wished to democratize their educational institutions."²⁹ He stated that this bill was intended to apply only to civil institutions and would have no effect on West Point or other military academies. It would permit any civil institution to offer an elective course in military training or even a compulsory course if the training was not given by an army officer.

The Welsh bill was designed to amend the National Defense Act of 1920, which had provided that the President might establish military training in any civil educational institution where the authorities of that institution agreed to maintain a two-year program. The training could be either compulsory or elective, but when a student had entered the course he was required to pursue it for two years if he was to receive his degree. The act of 1920 permitted each institution to decide whether the course should be elective or compulsory, but the Welsh bill would prevent any civil institution from making the training compulsory.³⁰

At the committee hearings on the Welsh bill, the American Federation of Labor was represented by Edward F. McGrady, who declared that his organization was opposed to the continuation of compulsory drill. McGrady stated further that the United States was on its way to becoming a militaristic nation if the activities of the War Department were not curbed and if the propaganda of the military saber rattlers was not prevented

²⁹ U.S. House of Representatives, 69th Congress, 1st Session, Hearings before the Committee of Military Affairs, Abolition of Compulsory Military Training in Schools and Colleges, 1926, p. 11.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 10.

from making "goose-steppers" of the students. He emphasized that the A.F. of L. had not opposed selective service in the last war, but that it was definitely opposed to compulsory training in peacetime, just as it was opposed to industrial conscription. Labor was opposed to compulsion itself and to the attempt to create a spirit of obedience in the workers. In fact, organized labor seemed to be opposed even to voluntary military training in peacetime. McGrady presented a copy of a letter which he claimed Standard Oil and General Motors had sent to their superintendents. The letter stated "Encourage the workers to join these camps /Citizen's Military Training Camps/ because they will learn discipline. There they will learn to carry out orders and not question why."³¹

After revealing that organized labor favored the Welsh Bill, the supporters of the legislation presented Professor William Bradley Otis of the College of the City of New York to present the educational viewpoint. Speaking only for himself, Otis stressed the threats of creeping centralization in the government which threatened to standardize American thought and action just as Henry Ford standardized automobiles. This he asserted would endanger academic freedom, especially when combined with the growing power of the army in the educational institutions. To support his argument against military training, Otis quoted Thomas Jefferson, "It is error alone that needs the support of the Government, truth can stand by itself."³²

To indicate Church support for the Welsh Bill, a resolution passed in May, 1925, by the Church Peace Union was included in the records. This

³¹Ibid., pp. 17-24.

³²Ibid., p. 32.

group, which represented twenty million members of the major demoniations, declare "We are opposed in principle to the policy of permitting the use of the educational system of the United States of America for military training or propaganda by the War Department."³³

The witness stand was then turned over to those who opposed the bill. Lieutenant Colonel William M. Mumm of the Reserve Officers' Association of Ohio explained the position of the ROTC in the national defense, stressing that a dependable source was needed from which the ranks of the reserve officers could be replenished. Colonel Mumm stated that since intelligence, education, and training were the most desirable qualities for an officer, there was no better source of officer material than college men; furthermore, it was the duty of every citizen to prepare himself to defend his country. This bill to abolish compulsory military training, he asserted, was in accord with the purposes of every pacifist, defeatist, socialist, and communist organization in the country.³⁴

Colonel Mumm attempted to buttress his statements by evidence which revealed that socialists such as Norman Thomas and Paul Blanshard were agitating against compulsory military training. Statements alleged to be from a radical Young Pioneer pamphlet were also included in the record, along with statements of individuals such as Stanley High of New York, who had advocated, "Go to Leavenworth, rather than fight." Also inserted was the 1926 resolution adopted by the National Executive Committee of the American Legion, which denounced the attack upon the Reserve Officers' Training Corps as a "vicious and un-American assault upon our national

³³Ibid., p. 50.

³⁴Ibid., p. 96.

defense and a reflection upon American patriotism...." And to prove that educators were not in opposition to military training, a favorable statement issued by the president of the National Association of State Universities was included in the record. This statement by John C. Futrall, President of the University of Arkansas, expressed a "strong feeling" that military training had distinct educational benefits.³⁵

The opponents of the Welsh Bill were successful in gaining the approval of the Committee on Military Affairs, and the bill was never reported out of the committee.

Despite the Welsh Bill's lack of success, even the President of the United States commented on the subject of military training in 1926. The remarks of President Coolidge were made by the official "White House Spokesman"³⁶ in such a fashion that it was impossible to quote the President directly, and the remarks were couched in his usual on-the-one-hand-but-on-the-other style. The New York Times stated that the President was opposed to compulsory military training, but he felt that the youth of the country should get the advantage of training for its physical benefit. "Those who are in a position to take the training should do so," Coolidge was reported as saying, "but the government should not attempt to make it widespread or anything like compulsory."³⁷

College boys had been called traitors, reds, and pacifists for expressing sentiments no stronger than those found in Coolidge's statement.

³⁵Ibid., p. 156.

³⁶This was the President himself, but the rule that he could never be quoted directly except by his express permission gave rise to synthetic devices such as the "White House Spokesman" and "Sources close to the President."

³⁷New York Times, June 16, 1926, p. 25.

Opponents of compulsory military training had been strongly denounced by military men such as Colonel R. S. Allyn of the U.S. Army. Speaking to the Lions Club at the Hotel Commodore in New York City, the colonel had condemned anti-ROTC agitators and in doing so had interlarded his remarks with bitter attacks on socialists, communists, and anarchists. At one point in the speech he had ordered the only woman present to leave the room while he read extracts from Bertrand Russell in which nationalism was called superstition and in which the sex standards of the future were discussed.³⁸

Statements by officers such as Colonel Allyn were accepted by college professors as further indications of the academic incompetence of military officers. This did not help august scholars to accept professors of military science and tactics as equals. ROTC officers were assigned by the War Department and were not responsible to university administrations, but they were frequently as influential as the deans. This was another point of conflict in situations such as the one at the University of Iowa, where Colonel Morton C. Mumma was chairman of the discipline committee. In opening a campaign against militarizing the state colleges, the Des Moines Register had complained that at Iowa City Colonel Mumma took charge of every major university event and attempted to turn it into a military ceremonial. Further west at the University of Wyoming, the head of the ROTC was a member of the committee on speakers for student convocations. Twice he supported convocations for military speakers but vetoed a compulsory student assembly for an anti-military speaker, the Rev. John Nevin Sayre.³⁹

³⁸Ibid., May 14, 1926, p. 9.

³⁹Nation, April 21, 1926, p. 436.

Another indication of the uncomfortable relations between professors and the military departments was that the National Association of State Universities maintained a standing committee on military affairs which expressed itself by citing the woes, common to member institutions.⁴⁰ The 1927 committee report, which dealt with the cooperative relationships between the university and the War Department, declared that this relationship was being jeopardized. This jeopardy was said to come "not so much...from those outside the educational institutions who are demanding an abandonment of military training, as to difficulties due to a lack of cooperation between the Federal Government as represented by the War Department and the educational institutions of the country." The report went on to state that "The impression still prevails apparently... that even in time of peace, when army men are assigned to our universities, they are the representatives and advocates of the army and not primarily educational officers." Although the report was adopted without a dissenting vote, this action was not an indication that all state universities were at odds with their departments of military science and tactics. The Association of Land-Grant Colleges frequently reiterated its stand in favor of compulsory military education. The association even adopted a report stating that the compulsory feature promoted the general effectiveness of the program of education.⁴¹

Regardless of the land-grant resolution, a minority of university professors were predisposed to oppose military training in the colleges. They approached the subject as an educational problem rather than one of

⁴⁰Clarence Cook Little, The Awakening College, (New York: W. W. Norton, 1930), p. 120.

⁴¹Proceedings of the 42nd Annual Convention of the Associations of Land-Grant Colleges, (Burlington, Vt.: Free Press, 1928), p. 445.

national defense. After evaluating the educational merits of the ROTC, many scholars concluded that it did not have enough educational value to replace any discipline and they considered the military science and tactics department to be the most irritating cross which the college was forced to bear. With no small animosity, they were inclined to agree with Upton Sinclair, who had written of the ROTC instructors who strutted about with "artificial pomposity."⁴²

Fearing the effects of the military program, some individual educators stressed that the leaders of tomorrow were being trained for war in such a fashion that they would accept the inevitability of conflict. The cadets were said to receive an insufficient instruction as to the causes of war or how the foreign policy of a nation could lead to conflict. These educators felt that nothing was being done to offset the militarization of the student.⁴³

Not all educators were impressed with the claims that the ROTC developed discipline. This discipline which was defined in an ROTC manual as "willing and instant obedience to the commands of a superior," was considered obnoxious by progressive educators. Student's minds, these professors declared, should be trained to experiment, to act on convictions based upon scientific truths, and to plan by sharing in discussion with other leaders.⁴⁴ These values, they maintained, could not be taught by a system which believed that theirs was "not to reason why, but to do

⁴²Upton Sinclair, The Goose-Step: A Study of American Education, (Pasadena: Privately Printed, 1922), p. 237.

⁴³New York Times, June 3, 1926, p. 42.

⁴⁴Willard Lee Nash, Military Science and Tactics and Physical Education In the Land-Grant Colleges of the United States, (Teachers College, Columbia contributions to education, no. 614: 1934), p. 85.

and to die."

Equally skeptical of the type of citizenship which the ROTC taught, progressive educators feared the professors of military science and tactics were preaching patriotism instead. Many of these educators had read Roswell P. Barnes' sequel to the Lane Pamphlet, in which Barnes listed alternate statements of basic philosophy from the Prussian General Friedrich von Bernardi's Germany and the Next War (1912) and from the United States War Department Training Regulations.⁴⁵ The only distinguishable difference that had been apparent was that the Americans expressed the thoughts of Bernardi in a more precise manner.

Military educators stressed the duty of each citizen, irrespective of his opinions or beliefs, to serve the nation as a soldier. Students were taught that to question the status quo was unpatriotic and unAmerican. It was this type of patriotism which was repulsive to many American scholars whose sentiments were echoed by Carlton J. H. Hayes of Columbia in a speech advocating the abolition of compulsory ROTC. In this address, Hayes labeled nationalism as a brand of religion with a special brand of worship and he derided patriotic cults because of their apparent effort to keep the people in ignorance. "The fruits of the religion of nationalism," he stressed, "are ignorance, intolerance, and docility of the masses."⁴⁶

Taking issue with these charges leveled at the ROTC, upholders of military training could point to a Sunday meeting of the Brooklyn Young Men's Christian Association as evidence that the supporters of the ROTC

⁴⁵Roswell P. Barnes, Militarizing Our Youth, (New York, 1927), p. 5.

⁴⁶New York Times, Jan. 16, 1927, p. 26.

had no monopoly on arbitrary actions. On April 18, 1926, Dr. S. Parkes Cadman, president of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ of America, spoke on "Disarmament and World Peace" and attacked the ROTC as encouraging belief in violence as the final resort in international differences. Trouble began immediately after Cadman finished his address and the floor was opened for questions. Lieutenant James Holton of the U.S. Army gained the floor and declared, "This meeting has become political and I have a right to present my side of the question. The Doctor failed to mention that there are more than 400 colleges to which a young man can go who does not want military training." Cries of "Boo" and "Put him out!" on one side and "Speak up" and "Let him be heard" on the other rose throughout the meeting hall. The executive secretary of the local YMCA, Halsey Hammond, motioned to the trumpeters to commence playing and told an assistant to telephone the police. Holton's voice was drowned out by the trumpet music, while four ushers and a policeman ejected the Lieutenant amid his protests against the intolerance of the expulsion.⁴⁷

Another of the more open clashes between an opponent of compulsory military training and an army official occurred at the University of Oklahoma in Norman. There John Nevin Sayre, the national vice-chairman of the Committee on Militarism in Education, an organization devoted to removing the military training from the schools, ran into interference from Lieutenant Colonel George Chase Lewis, who was stationed in Oklahoma City with the Ninety-Sixth Division of Infantry Reserve. The Rev. Sayre had promised to address the students at Norman on December 9, but before his arrival Colonel Lewis wrote a letter to President W. B. Bizzell asserting that

⁴⁷New York Times, April 19, 1926, p. 13.

Rev. Sayre was advocating a bolshevist program and concluding, "I trust that you will be able to curtail pernicious activities at Norman." As a result, Sayre was barred by President Bizzell from speaking both on the campus and under the auspices of the Young Men's Christian Association, but the doors of the Presbyterian Church were opened for him. Colonel Lewis attended the meeting and publicly denounced Mr. Sayre from the floor.⁴⁸

The Infantry Journal selected the University of Oklahoma as a case study so that army officers across the country would have the benefit of that institution's experience with pacifist operations. The Journal informed its readers that "On all university faculties there is probably a small number of men who are more or less radical." These men, the magazine stated, would instigate a radical drive and then in cooperation with the radical members of the faculty, a national pacifist organization such as the Fellowship of Reconciliation would send a speaker to "sow the seed."⁴⁹

This case study emphasized that every effort would be made to secure attendance of all students at the anti-war addresses, but that if this were unsuccessful the speaker would hold an open forum under the auspices of some church organization outside the university. This meeting would be advertised by "flaming posters denouncing militarism in no uncertain terms" and by "pink" faculty members in their classes. "It is at this stage of the game," the report continued, "that the cancerous growth becomes really dangerous." Only the faculty members with radical tendencies

⁴⁸Nation, Jan. 11, 1927, p. 30.

⁴⁹Edwin E. Schwien, "Pacifist Agitation in Schools and Colleges," Infantry Journal, September, 1927, p. 277.

and a few "peculiar" dissenters among the students would be infected by the doctrines, but an attempt would follow to keep the subject of compulsory military training in agitation. Forums and discussions would culminate in a petition requesting the abolition of military training in schools and colleges of the state, and a petition would be presented to the state legislature. This report ended with a note of extreme caution, urging all army officers to avoid allowing themselves to be drawn into open forums because they would only play into the hands of the radicals.⁵⁰

The official organ of the college military departments went a step further than this case study. The Scabbard and Blade asserted that the Committee on Militarism in Education was working "in line with instructions received from the Communist International." This bi-weekly magazine made a thumb-nail sketch of a few of the allegedly more radical socialists such as Norman Thomas, who had signed the Committee's pamphlet, and concluded that "any citizen with a grain of sense, after reading this document [Lane Pamphlet] and the records of the signers, can come to but one conclusion, namely, that there is a large size colored gentlemen in the woodpile and that woodpile is in Moscow."⁵¹

The selection of acts, utterances, and affiliations which the Scabbard and Blade considered to be damning evidence reveals even further the attitude of this national honorary fraternity of the ROTC. The following excerpts were taken from the magazine.⁵²

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Scabbard and Blade quoted by New Republic, May 4, 1927, p. 291.

⁵² Scabbard and Blade quoted by Roswell P. Barnes, Militarizing Our Youth, (New York: Committee on Militarism in Education, 1927), p. 22.

Jane Addams: For the past twenty years her efforts have been directed to international and subversive channels until today she stands out as the most dangerous woman in America.

William E. Borah: R. M. Whitney in Reds in America indicated connection with American Civil Liberties Union.

Henry Sloane Coffin: The Lusk Report lists him as one of a group of clergymen who signed a protest against the Espionage Act.

Charles W. Gilkey: He was one of a group of clergymen who, under date of May 22, petitioned the Chicago Tribune to remove Stephen Decatur's statement, 'My country right or wrong,' from its editorial page stating that it bred a false kind of patriotism.

Rufus M. Jones: He is author of a number of books, one of his last being The Churches' Debt to Heretics.

William H. Kilpatrick: He is also openly opposed to the Lusk laws.

George Foster Peabody: He is interested in Negro schools, being a trustee of the American Church Institute for Negroes and the Hampton Normal Agricultural Institute. The latter is said to be a hotbed of race equality.

J. Henry Scattergood: In an address before a peace luncheon in Minneapolis, on July 20, 1924, he declared in effect that the people must drop hate and work for peace.

Abba Hillel Silver: He is very pro-labor. Finance and Industry of December, 1920, speaking of Silver stated: Rabbi Silver said that the open shop was an attack against unionism and that any attempt on the part of the employers to crush unions would be resented by the general public.

These acid assessments seemed to mirror the prejudices of the judges better than the characters of their victims. A suspicion was raised, however, by an editorial in the Army and Navy Register, that the military fight against college radicalism was more an attempt to secure larger appropriations and compulsory military training than to keep down radicalism. The editorial stated that the young men of the country are naturally conservative and conventional rather than radical, and that the "Red" danger in the colleges was simply a lot of noise. "If we had compulsory military training," the editorial stated, "we could park our

spurs on our desk and let the citizen go hang.... But with a voluntary training system we need the limelight...and the best way to bring anything to the attention of the public is to fight about it." Thus, the Army and Navy Register seemed little concerned with the "Reds" in the colleges, but did favor using the opportunities which the radicals provided for military publicity.⁵³

While the War Department probably had little fear of radicalism, it was not deaf to the vocal opposition to the ROTC program. The Department eliminated bayonet drill and re-wrote two offensive manuals in 1926. It attempted to popularize military training with what was labeled "sex appeal." Girl officers and sponsors were elected, and girls' rifle teams were organized. More emphasis was placed upon dress parades, reviews, medals, and spectacular sham battles.⁵⁴

This use of "sex appeal" to popularize the ROTC was indignantly condemned by Miss Margaret Taylor of the YWCA. She disgustedly asserted that in many schools "Our sex has been exploited to add to the glamor of military training and...pretty ankles have been used to conceal machine guns." She revealed that the support of the girls was obtained by the national publicity and by the campus adulation which accompanied the winners in all contests for honorary ROTC officers. "Refusal of this 'dubious' honor of an officership," Miss Taylor declared, "immediately subjects a girl to condemnation, criticism, and social disapproval."⁵⁵

⁵³Army and Navy Register, Oct. 9, 1926, p. 340. quoted in Howard K. Beale, Are American Teachers Free? (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), p. 103.

⁵⁴Nation, May 1, 1929, p. 523.

⁵⁵U.S. Senate, 74th Congress, 2nd Session, Subcommittee of the Committee on Military Affairs, Compulsory Military Training, s. 3309, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1936), pp. 35-36.

The military ball was another means of increasing the popularity of the ROTC, according to Miss Taylor. This became the outstanding social event of the year, and a "bid" to the dance was a mark of social distinction. "The pain of being stepped on by one's riding-booted partner," she said, "or getting one's new formal caught in some cadet's spurs is outweighed by the thrill of the uniform, the delight of the 'chosen,' and no one hears the rumble of guns in the music of the orchestra."⁵⁶

This attempt to popularize military training was carried to the extent that it drew opposition as a measure of public extravagance. Representative Ross A. Collins of Mississippi asserted that a great deal of money was being spent in an effort to place a sugar icing upon the training. He was indignant that the government was paying officers to train men for battle, yet they were instead spending their time "playing around with coed marksmen."⁵⁷ Collins also produced statistics to prove that nearly 2,000 horses were furnished by the government to educational institutions, and he suggested that certain schools would not have maintained a ROTC unit if it had not been for the riding horses.⁵⁸

At Princeton University, the renaissance of polo was attributed entirely to the establishment of an ROTC unit. There strings of government ponies were made available for student use, and the War Department even cooperated in promoting the first intercollegiate polo tournament.⁵⁹

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 36.

⁵⁷Congressional Record, Vol. LXX, pt. 1, 1929, p. 1159.

⁵⁸He might have had Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College in mind, since the Oklahoma City Oklahoman reported on Nov. 15, 1927, that 49 coeds had been enrolled in ROTC for rifle training.

⁵⁹Tucker P. Smith, So This is War, (New York: Committee on Militarism in Education, 1929), p. 24.

Adding frills to the ROTC did not silence all opposition to the training. With the Daughters of the American Revolution and the American Legion standing resolutely for military training in colleges and universities and opposing pacifists, radicals, and communists whom they considered to be scheming to stop such training, the ROTC continued to be a live issue. The hotbeds of agitation appeared to be the College of the City of New York and Cornell in the East, and the University of Minnesota, Ohio State, and Indiana University in the Middle West, with the University of Washington and the University of Oregon students leading the movement on the Pacific Coast. The South did not produce agitation comparable to that of other sections. Although the South has had its share of rabble rousers, militarism has rarely been considered a major sin by southerners.⁶⁰

The anti-ROTC agitation which emerged from the colleges during the 1920's stemmed more directly from students' reactions against authority than from any deep-rooted feelings of pacifism. The agitation was mainly one of isolated incidents which developed into no nation-wide student movement, proving the judgment that students of this decade were generally cynics rather than crusaders. This was indicated also by the lack of admiration for pre-war Progressives; but perhaps the students' lack of idealism was also an indictment of the "intellectuals" who had no program to offer during the twenties. The so-called intellectuals seemed to have been carried along in the reaction against idealism and reform.⁶¹ They were disenchanted with the extension of a government

⁶⁰Robert Douthat Meade, "The Military Spirit of the South," Current History, April, 1929, p. 55.

⁶¹Arthur S. Link, "What Happened to the Progressive Movement in the 1920's?" American Historical Review, Vol. LXIV, July, 1959, p. 844.

authority which could be used to justify the Eighteenth Amendment or the suppression of free speech. Apparently suffering a loss of faith in the American people who had joined in red hunts, Bryan's crusade against evolution, and the Ku Klux Klan, the thinkers of this decade had few constructive ideals to inspire the college student.

Perhaps the college students were no more receptive to crusading ideals than the intellectuals or the general public appeared to be during the twenties. Socialist groups had attempted to persuade students to fight for the abolition of compulsory ROTC as a reform measure,⁶² but the great majority of students would not accept this idea. They were the generation labeled by newspapers and magazines as part of the flaming youth of the jazz age that danced in the dark and questioned all moral codes. Their antics were portrayed by F. Scott Fitzgerald's This Side of Paradise, Stephen Vincent Benet's The Beginning of Wisdom, and Percy Mark's The Plastic Age. If one can accept fiction as good social history, then these collegiate iconoclasts were rebels against authority and not crusaders against evil. This decade, however, ending with the depression, was to be followed by one in which students were deeply concerned with the problems of war, peace, and depression. Their attitudes towards these problems were to be reflected by their opinions of the ROTC, which was considered an emblem of the established order.

⁶²Paul Blanshard, "Liberalism in the Colleges," Nation, Sept. 17, 1924, p. 286.

CHAPTER III

THE PACIFISM OF THE THIRTIES

A distinct change seemed apparent in the college student of the early thirties. In comparison with his more vocal counterpart of the previous decade, he was inclined to be less frivolous and perhaps more thoughtful.¹ Coming largely from the American middle class, students were among the last to be hit by the depression, but by 1932 only a small percentage of the graduating seniors looked forward to lucrative positions. Of those who had located employment, many were forced to be content with extremely humble situations. Reports of unemployment, and actual want were abundant. Faced with the uncertain and gloomy future, more than a few students harbored doubts about the existing order.

Many students during these years seemed to be drifting to the left. Perhaps this was not because they did more thinking than other students, but because they were faced with gigantic problems of world economic collapse, and socialism or communism seemed to supply an easy answer. All problems of the capitalistic world could be blamed on the system. This minority could cite Charles A. Beard's undressing of the founding fathers as evidence that the United States was not immune from class conflict. They could relate how the progressives had their chance from the time of Theodore Roosevelt through Woodrow Wilson, how their reforms had failed to go far enough, and how most progressives had beat the drums of

¹Harold Seidman, "How Radical are College Students," The American Scholar, June, 1935, p. 328.

war in 1917 while idealists had advertised the war with moralistic slogans. When the depression was added to the list of failures, it seemed obvious that the United States was not a secure place in which to live, nor was it operated according to the golden rule. These students thought that this desired security could be provided by a new economic system.²

Becoming concerned with the youth in the colleges, the editors of Fortune magazine undertook an intensive investigation of American students. These editors concluded that the college generation was fatalistic and unadventurous. This was a passive generation, these men stressed, which would not stick its neck out. The student's desire centered around a safe and permanent job, and security was his summum bonum. Thus the editors feared that their generation was not likely to produce Everest-climbers or crusaders against racketeers.³

These fears were only partially justified. The American student, indeed, seemed to be searching for new answers to meet the problems of the world. Enrollments in courses of history, economics, and sociology increased as students sought the answers to the problems of war and depression.⁴

Students of the late 1920's and the early 1930's came to college at the peak of revulsion against the First World War. They were repelled by stories of the mass hysteria in 1917, the beating of German saloonkeepers, the spy hunts, the stoning of pacifists, and the arrests of

²James A. Wechsler, The Age of Suspicion, (New York: Random House, 1953), pp. 38-39.

³"Youth in College," Fortune, Vol. XIII, June, 1936, p. 100.

⁴Ibid., p. 101.

conscientious objectors. These "enlightened" students felt that too many of their professors had degraded themselves by succumbing to the war hysteria and by writing propaganda accusing the Germans of depravity. Students read of the war guilt controversy and became convinced that Germany was not solely responsible for the war; moreover, no basic issues had been involved which intelligence and a little forbearance could not have solved. These students felt that no nation had desired to rule Europe and that the war had been a big mistake.⁵

The fundamental attitudes of many students were derived not from historians but from playwrights and novelists. Richard Aldington's Death of a Hero, Erich Maria Remarque's All Quiet On the Western Front, and Ernest Hemingway's A Farewell to Arms told most students all they desired to know about the war.⁶ To many, war had lost its appealing glory when courage ceased to be of value against the new weapons of war such as poison gas or the unseen mine. As the world situation gave rise to fears of another war, many a college student sat down to do some serious thinking. The old resentment against compulsory ROTC training not only did not disappear, but became buttressed by concrete arguments emphasizing the futility and stupidity of war.

Becoming integrated with the anti-war movement in the 1930's, the anti-ROTC agitation was no longer distinguishable as a separate entity. This trend was illustrated by collegiate meetings such as the one in Buffalo, New York, on January 2, 1932, where 2,200 students representing

⁵Eric Sevareid, Not So Wild a Dream, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946), p. 62.

⁶Christian Gauss, "Student Attitude Toward War," New York Times, April 14, 1935, IX, p. 12.

600 Canadian and American colleges considered disarmament and compulsory military drill; ninety per cent voted for complete disarmament, while ROTC was opposed by a vote ratio of 30 to 1.⁷ Similar results were returned in a referendum taken by the Intercollegiate Disarmament Council; ninety-two per cent of the 24,345 students voting favored a reduction of armaments, and eighty-one per cent opposed compulsory drill.⁸ In December the Student Congress Against War met in Chicago and denounced the ROTC as an integral part of the country's war machine and distributor of jingoistic propaganda.⁹

Pacifism of a bold new sort appeared in the American colleges during 1933.¹⁰ At Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, the Daily Herald inaugurated a nationwide campaign against war. The students at Columbia were the first to respond, with Princeton and Bucknell following. By summer 23,000 students had signed the "Oxford"¹¹ pledge not to bear arms in another war. This movement drew fire from individuals such as Mrs. Paul FitzSimons, president of the Newport County Women's Republican Club. She had, she said, "no words to express her scorn and contempt for those who would corrupt the youth of the nation to cowardice." And she echoed the sentiments of many Americans in stating, "I am not in favor of war, but we must have an army and navy to protect our commerce and nationals

⁷New York Times, Jan. 3, 1932, p. 21.

⁸Nation, Jan. 27, 1932, p. 91.

⁹New York Times, Dec. 30, 1932, p. 10.

¹⁰Nation, April 12, 1933, p. 386.

¹¹The Oxford Pledge received its name from the Oxford Student Union, a student debating society, which adopted a resolution during February, 1933, that the members would in no circumstances fight for King and country.

abroad...for until the soul of man is purged of jealousy and ambition, there is going to be war."¹²

The Rhode Island state legislature decided to investigate the students at Brown University, but many prominent persons and especially well-known Providence lawyers offered support to the students. The legislature's investigating committee decided that the legislature had been a bit hasty in its suspicions of the University students, and without holding a single hearing the committee exonerated the student newspaper of charges of communism and treason. The committee report stated that "the embryonic editors were apparently toying with ideas...but actuated by the principle of anticipatory threatened invasion, like Brown men of other years, would be among the first to answer the call of the colors." This conclusion was doubted by the Nation reporter who felt that it would take "more than flag-waving and bugle calls to empty the colleges for another war."¹³

This campaign against war and the ROTC was not a passing fad that ended with the school year. The following fall revealed an increased spread of militant pacifism. Pledges, anti-war congresses, and petitions were renewed with vigor. On December 28, 1933, two delegations of students from American colleges descended upon the White House in Washington. One group of 300, with posters and shouts of "Down with war and the ROTC," marched two abreast with a police escort to the White House steps. This group, representing the National Student League and the League for Industrial Democracy, presented their 5,000 signature anti-ROTC petition to the President's secretary, Louis McHenry Howe.

¹²Harold Seidman, "The Colleges Renounce War," Nation, May 17, 1933, p. 554.

¹³Ibid.

The other group, representing the National Student Federation and composed of student government presidents from Oregon to Georgia, traveled by bus to meet Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt. She spoke briefly to the group on the necessity of finding substitutes for war.¹⁴

The following year saw the first student peace strike against war, organized by the Student League for Industrial Democracy and the National Student League. At eleven o'clock on April 13, 1934, many students at their individual universities cut classes, attended one hour campus demonstrations and cheered speakers who denounced war, the ROTC, militarism, and imperialism, and adopted resolutions embodying Oxford pledges against war. At the City College of New York, organizers had distributed handbills urging the walkout. Banners and placards were displayed on the campus urging "Strike against War," and "Cut Classes 11 to 12," and "Abolish the ROTC." Six hundred students gathered at the City College flagpole at eleven o'clock, but police arrived and prevented the speakers from addressing the crowd.¹⁵

Disorders occurred at Harvard and Johns Hopkins, where right-wing students clashed with the demonstrators. The Cambridge meeting ended when the ROTC supporters began a barrage of grapefruit and onions upon the strikers. In Baltimore the police were called out to stop the student riot, and fire hoses were used to disperse both patriots and pacifists. Events at other colleges around the New York area were confined to boos, catcalls, and noisy disputes between student factions.¹⁶

¹⁴New York Times, Dec. 29, 1933, p. 23.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Ibid.

The New York Times expressed a feeling of sympathy for the efforts of these college students. Editorially it stated that the demonstrators were unquestionably sincere and had revealed an admirable spirit in protesting against war as a cruel and useless resort which should not be used as an instrument of international policy; nevertheless the students were misguided. Rather than crying out against war, the Times lectured, students should support every international agency designed to prevent war.¹⁷

Students were not averse to supporting international agencies, but they also desired to publicize the issue and swing the American people toward a policy of disarmament. The student leaders seemed to be actual crusaders who thought that war could be eradicated from civilization if only man was determined to eradicate it. And as a first step in removing the evil, students opposed the competitive international race for increased armament. Europe had attempted a competitive armament policy prior to 1914, the students stressed, and it had not prevented war. The progress in science had produced weapons with twice the destructive power of their 1914 counterparts; therefore students did not wish to travel down the road of a competitive armament race, which might be the road to the destruction of civilization.¹⁸ And since preparedness was not considered an effective means of avoiding war, the only purpose which the ROTC could serve, asserted the pacifist leaders, was that of creating a militaristic attitude in the youth of America.¹⁹

¹⁷Ibid., April 16, 1934, p. 16.

¹⁸Christian Gauss, "Student Anti-War Drive," New York Times, IX, April 7, 1935, p. 12.

¹⁹New York Times, April 12, 1935, p. 23.

The student strike against war had been led by two groups whose thought was more influenced by opposition to imperialistic wars than by a religious conviction against armed conflict. The Student League for Industrial Democracy was the reorganized Intercollegiate Socialist Society, founded by Jack London, Upton Sinclair, and Clarence Darrow in 1905, but broken during the First World War. The League was predominantly socialist in sympathy, but it contained many so-called liberals and some communists.²⁰ Most of the students who considered themselves to be communists had joined the National Student League when it broke with the Student League for Industrial Democracy in 1932.

During the Christmas holidays of 1935, the Student League for Industrial Democracy and the National Student League held conferences which suggested that these groups were not doctrinaire Marxians. They revealed a dissatisfaction with existing social institutions but seemed to have no clear vision of a new society. They passed long resolutions against child labor, war expenditures, the ROTC, and racial discrimination, while favoring federal relief to the unemployed and the needy. Such actions led the New Republic to report that while these groups were mild in character and had a membership of no more than 7,000, they were vocal and had led 25,000 students out of class for the 1934 peace strike.²¹

The Student League for Industrial Democracy's executive committee chairman, Albert W. Hamilton, announced the completion of plans on March 31, 1935, for a much larger student peace strike than that of the previous year. This time the National Council of Methodist Youth, the American Youth Congress, the National Student League, the Inter Seminary

²⁰New Republic, Jan. 16, 1935, p. 264.

²¹Ibid.

Movement, and the American League Against War and Fascism were supporting the proposed April 12 strike. In the previous year's walkout only 25,000 students in eastern schools had participated, but plans called for participation by 150,000 students and 150 institutions in 1935.²²

The protest strike was staged as anticipated, with approximately 125,000 students in all parts of the country participating. The demonstrations were generally orderly and peaceable; college authorities either kept hands off or in some cases participated by holding general student assemblies, addressed by members of the faculty or guest speakers. A few institutions, such as Hunter College, attempted to prevent the demonstrations and punished students who participated in the strikes.²³ On other campuses violence occurred between strikers and what the Nation labeled "student hoodlums." At the University of Chicago, a battle occurred when the pacifists attempted to organize a parade, but were met by a barrage of eggs and stench bombs from ROTC supporters. The results of the fight were reported as a clear victory for the pacifists.²⁴

The New Republic asserted that the major violence had occurred in cities where Hearst newspapers were circulated. In an indictment of the newspaper chain's tactics, the New Republic further stated that "Mr. Hearst has now reached the point of approving and inciting this sort of thing throughout the country...."²⁵

The activities of the student pacifists seemed to be turning

²²New York Times, April 1, 1935, p. 8.

²³New Republic, April 24, 1935, p. 296.

²⁴New York Times, April 13, 1935, p. 3.

²⁵New Republic, April 24, 1935, p. 296.

respectable in many areas, and no longer were agitators considered merely Jewish radicals, even at Columbia University. There the Spectator had been in the control of Jewish leaders, but in 1935, both the paper and the radicalism passed into the hands of old American stock.²⁶

A "nordic" radical from Tacoma, Washington ran the Spectator, while a slow drawling southerner from Little Rock, Arkansas was prominent on the soapbox. Apparently radicalism on the ROTC issue had also ceased to be a bar to respectability in the churches; most major Protestant denominations had adopted resolutions clearly opposing military training in the colleges.²⁷

Denying that it had any quarrel with true religious pacifism, the American Legion's Commission on Americanism asserted that the taking of oaths to refuse to rally around the flag in the emergency of war might spread a philosophy that would end Christianity itself. This group labeled the national student strikes as a product of communist headquarters

²⁶ Fortune, June, 1936, p. 161.

²⁷ Churches and religious organizations which had taken official action in opposition to compulsory military training.
 American Unitarian Association, 1934
 Church of the Brethren, annual conference, 1932
 Congregational and Christian Churches, general council, 1934
 Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1928
 Disciples of Christ, international convention, 1930
 Evangelical Synod of North America, special general conference, 1934
 Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, 1926
 Methodist Episcopal Church, general conference, 1932
 Methodist Episcopal Church, South, general conference, 1934
 Northern Baptist Convention, 1934
 Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, general assembly, 1934
 Presbyterian Church in the United States, general assembly, 1931
 Reformed Church in America, general synod, 1932
 Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, synod, 1926
 Religious Society of Friends, 1928
 United Presbyterian Church, general assembly, 1934
 Universalist General Convention, 1933
 World Alliance for International Friendship Through the Churches, 1928

in the United States. The commission stated that practically all of the literature was prepared and sent out by "variously" inspired peace organizations. The communist agencies allegedly organized other peace agencies in the schools and churches to fight imperialist wars, but at the same time taught methods of bringing about class war and revolution.²⁸

A unification of American communists, socialists, and liberals occurred in 1935 in the manner which theorists of the "popular front" had advocated. This was the merger in Columbus, Ohio on December 28, 1935, of the Student League for Industrial Democracy and the National Student League into the American Student Union. The program of both groups had been based upon the belief that capitalism could no longer provide a safe and secure future for the bulk of the students. Both organizations had opposed fascism and had strongly condemned the ROTC.²⁹ This union was so desirable to the communists that they allowed the socialists to name the executive secretary of the new organization. Apparently the communists were motivated by a desire to use the American Student Union to recruit more communists.³⁰

The American Student Union planned an even larger student peace strike for 1936. This time the executive secretary, Joe Lash, wrote to 500 college presidents throughout the country, asking for support of the

²⁸U.S. House of Representatives, 74th Congress, 2nd Session, Doc. 351, "Report of the Americanism Commission," Proceedings of the 17th National Convention of the American Legion, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1935), p. 116.

²⁹James Wechsler, "Ferment in the Colleges," New Republic, Oct. 16, 1935, p. 266.

³⁰Wechsler, The Age of Rebellion, p. 84. The executive secretary of the Young Communist League, Gilbert Green, had delivered a speech before the Seventh World Congress of the Third International in Moscow, stressing the importance of uniting student youth. James Oneal & G. A. Werner, American Communism, (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1947) p. 249.

strike called for May 22 at eleven o'clock. The presidents were told that the strike was not intended to bedevil them, but to convey most forcefully a student desire for peace. Disorder and violence of previous anti-war demonstrations, the letter stated, had been caused by a misunderstanding between students and college officials.³¹

In marked contrast with preceding years, little actual disorder occurred on May 22, when approximately half a million students participated in the student walkout. Only in a few cases, at Lawrence College of Appleton, Wisconsin, Temple University at Philadelphia, and the University of Kansas, was violence reported. Even at the City College of New York the only disturbance was the booing of cadets by students who chanted "Down with ROTC," and "War is Hell and to Hell with War."³² But in most institutions authorities either cooperated with pacifist-minded students or, as in the case of Vassar and Mount Holyoke, the presidents of the institutions took part in student assemblies.³³

The communists had been actively engaged in this peace strike; operating through the Young Communist League and attempting to infiltrate all peace groups. The militancy of the Marxians almost compensated for their minority handicap, although their attempts to dominate the Student Union had not been successful. The inadequacy of the communist numbers was revealed in 1936 when Russia changed her foreign policy to the position of "collective security" and signed mutual defense pacts with France. The Communist line became even more anti-fascist than anti-war after July, 1936 when General Franco launched a rebellion against the

³¹New York Times, March 16, 1936, p. 11.

³²Ibid., May 23, 1936, p. 9.

³³New Republic, May 6, 1936, p. 354.

Spanish Republic. Adhering to the new policy, student communists met stubborn pacifistic opposition in the fall of 1936 when they attempted to "reorient" the Student Union towards collective security. When the second annual convention met in December, a battle began over the issue of peace. Shouting vainly that most of the old anti-war slogans were outworn, and all that mattered was halting fascist aggression, the communists were voted down, and the Oxford oath was again adopted by the Student Union.³⁴

Since the Student Union had a membership of only 20,000, the number of communist students in the colleges was not impressive. It was also probable that among the approximately 500,000 participants of the May peace strike, the sincere demonstrators had been in the minority, with a majority turning out only to see the excitement.³⁵ Yet a definite current of pacifism seemed to be running through the American colleges and universities. Perhaps, on the other hand, it was the same sentiment revealed in Congress by Senator Gerald P. Nye's investigation of the munition makers. This so-called college pacifism was not of the submissive brand, neither was it predominantly religious. Part of the militant feeling of the student leaders seemed to spring from their desire to improve the condition of man in society. They believed that war was caused by the capitalistic system and the collision of its imperialisms, encouraged by the professional military, the financiers, and the munitions makers. These students seemed to believe that it was their duty to change the system, expose the conspiracies, and create trust among peoples. To solve this world problem they began at home by

³⁴Wechsler, Age of Suspicion, pp. 86-92.

³⁵Fortune, June, 1936, p. 158.

by refusing to arm themselves and by making contact with other student and anti-war groups abroad.³⁶

Using the teachings of Christ as the basis for their opposition to war, churches were also prominent in opposing compulsory military training in the colleges. This sentiment was best illustrated by the Methodists' judicial fight against compulsory ROTC. At the University of Maryland, Ennis H. Coale, a Methodist student and a conscientious objector was suspended by President Raymond A. Pearson for refusing to take ROTC. Coale appealed to the Superior Court of Baltimore, Judge Joseph N. Ulman ordered the University to readmit Coale as a student. "While perhaps fanatical," the judge said, "he is sincere in his religious beliefs and is certainly a conscientious objector."³⁷ The Maryland Court of Appeals reversed Judge Ulman's decision and declared that persons and societies should not be permitted to interfere with the authorities in control of colleges and universities while acting in their lawful authority.³⁸ Coale's lawyer appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, but was refused on the grounds that no Federal question was involved.³⁹

A similar judicial question arose in 1934 between Methodist students and the University of California. The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church had petitioned the United States Government in 1932 to grant to members of the Church who might be conscientious objectors to war, the same exemption from military service that had long been granted to the Society of Friends. Going one step further, the Church had also

³⁶ Eric Sevareid, Not So Wild A Dream, p. 63.

³⁷ Literary Digest, Feb. 18, 1933, p. 18.

³⁸ New York Times, Oct. 13, 1933, p. 22.

³⁹ Coale v. Pearson 290 U.S. 593.

petitioned educational institutions, which required military training, to excuse any Methodist student who might have religious scruples against ROTC training. This addition to the official tenets of the Church led Albert Hamilton and Alonzo Reynolds, son and grandson respectively of Methodist ministers, to request exemption from the ROTC when they enrolled at Berkeley in the fall of 1933. Their petition was denied by the board of regents; and after refusing to take the required course, the students were suspended from the university.⁴⁰

Attempting to have Hamilton and Reynolds reinstated by court action, a committee of California churchmen sought to obtain a writ of mandate from the state courts which would force the University to readmit the students. The Methodists asserted that "Compulsory membership and service in the ROTC abridges the privileges and immunities of Hamilton and Reynolds as citizens of the United States, in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment." It was added that the students were being deprived of their religious liberty without due process of law, and that compulsory military training violated the spirit if not the letter of the Kellogg pact outlawing war.⁴¹

Failing to receive a writ from the California courts, the Methodists carried the case to the U.S. Supreme Court, where they again met defeat. In writing the majority opinion for six members of the court, Justice Butler declared that obviously the only compulsion involved was university enforced and that none of the alleged infringements of Hamilton's and Reynold's "privileges and immunities" were protected by the Fourteenth Amendment. The privilege of attending the university, he stated, came

⁴⁰Hamilton v. University of California, 293 U.S. 245.

⁴¹Literary Digest, Dec. 15, 1934, p. 7.

not from federal sources but was given by the state. Neither did he consider the alleged immunity from ROTC training to be a legitimate one, because this was not a case of liberty being denied without due process of law, since students were not forced to attend the University of California. And furthermore, Butler did not even believe that the Constitution relieved the conscientious objector from the obligation to bear arms. He stated that this privilege had been derived from acts of Congress and "that body may grant or withhold the exemption as it sees fit: and if it is withheld, the ...conscientious objector cannot successfully assert the privilege." With this dictum Butler concluded that no ground existed for the contention that the regents' order transgressed any constitutional right asserted by Hamilton or Reynolds.⁴²

Better grounds for refuting the Methodist contentions were provided by Justice Cardozo in a concurring opinion with Justices Brandeis and Stone; these justices believed that the Constitution did protect religious liberty. Stressing that instruction in military science was too indirectly related to bearing arms for hostile purposes to claim religious exemption, Cardozo pointed out the danger in extending religious liberties. If the liberties of the conscientious objector were expanded, he stated, then one might even refuse to contribute taxes to support a war or any other project condemned by his conscience. "The right of private judgment," Cardozo declared, "has never yet been exalted above the powers and the compulsion of the agencies of government. One who is a martyr to a principle--which may turn out in the end to be a delusion or an error--does not prove by his martyrdom that he has kept within the law." With

⁴²Hamilton v. University of California, 293 U.S. 245.

this and Justice Butler's opinion, it was evident that the churches could gain no victory against compulsory ROTC through the courts.

Operating with less dignified methods than the churches, in 1936 the general student reaction to war took the form of a college satire on the organizations of veterans which attempted to raid the treasury to provide immediate payment of a veterans' bonus. This takeoff developed from a conversation at a Princeton supper table, where a few upperclassmen were discussing the passage of the latest soldier-bonus bill in Congress and the growing power of pressure groups at the national capital. Lewis J. Gorin, a senior from Louisville, Kentucky, remarked that as veterans of the next war, why shouldn't they have pressure groups and get a bonus for themselves. Thus, in a spirit of fun, the Veterans of Future Wars was organized with a membership of eight.⁴³

The Veterans of Future Wars filed for incorporation papers on March 16, 1936, elected Lewis Gorin as National Commander, and printed their platform in the Daily Princeton. In outlining the goals and objectives of the organization, the document stated:⁴⁴

Whereas it is inevitable that this country will be engaged in war within the next thirty years, and whereas it is by all accounts likely that every man of military age will have a part in this war, we therefore demand that the government make known its intention to pay an adjusted service compensation, sometimes called a bonus, of \$1,000 to every male citizen between the ages of 18 and 36, said bonus to be payable the first of June, 1965.

Furthermore, we believe a study of history demonstrates that it is customary to pay all bonuses before they are due. Therefore we demand immediate cash payment, plus 3 per cent interest compounded annually and retroactively from the first of June, 1965, to the first of June, 1935. It is but common right that this bonus be paid now, for many will be killed and wounded in the next war, and hence they, the most deserving, will not otherwise get the full benefit of their country's gratitude....

⁴³ L. H. Robbins, "College Front Swept by Future Veterans," New York Times, March 29, 1936, IV, p. 11.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

This college comedy might have died in Princeton if a member of the Veterans of Future Wars had not contacted a New York editor. The organization got into print, and within ten days campuses from coast to coast had joined the Princeton group in poking fun at the veterans. Delighted with the response, the National Commander set up an office outside the Princeton campus and hired two secretaries to handle the business. Campaign buttons were adopted, and there was talk of a bonus march on Washington. At Vassar the girls began the movement for a woman's auxiliary, the Future Gold Star Mothers. These girls demanded a trip to Europe to visit the site of their future son's graves. On March 19, the national headquarters in Princeton received a telegram from Representative Maury Maverick of Texas endorsing the movement and promising to sponsor a bill in Congress to pay \$1,000 to every young man under thirty-five who expected to serve in the next war and to pay the expenses of every woman under thirty-six for a trip to Europe to visit the site of her future son's grave.⁴⁵

The movement received additional publicity when James E. Van Zandt, national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, attacked the "future war" group at Princeton as pacifists and anti-veterans.⁴⁶ He asserted that they were "yellow monkeys" and idle sons of rich men. This attack gave Commander Gorin the opportunity to challenge Van Zandt to a debate, which he declined, and the chance to announce the new regulation salute which was to be used at all meetings of the Veterans of Future Wars and when members passed each other. The salute was similar to that of the

⁴⁵New York Times, March 20, 1936, p. 21.

⁴⁶Ibid., March 22, 1936, p. 19.

Nazi, with the right arm raised, but differing in that the palm was turned upward with anticipation.⁴⁷

The Veterans of Future Wars set the example for collateral organizations which sprang up after the Princeton pattern. At the City College of New York, students called upon the governor to train them to write atrocity stories. At Rutgers the Association of Future War Propagandists was organized, while at Rensselaer Polytechnic the Profit-eers of Future Wars were vociferous in their demands for fat contracts without delay.⁴⁸

The Veterans of Future Wars continued to grow in size until they suspended their activities in the summer of 1936 for the presidential campaign. The organization failed to resume its activities on a national scale, due to financial reasons and the public's loss of interest in the satire, but the organization had accomplished its intended purpose, that of ridiculing the raid on the treasury. This group, which had boasted a membership of 60,000 men and 534 chartered posts, on April 3, 1937, officially dissolved the executive council and closed out the organization's life with a 44 cent deficit. In a last proclamation the officers stated that the organization had fulfilled its usefulness. It had pointed out the absurdity of the treasury exploitation in which veterans had been allowed to indulge, and it had awakened the people to the stupidity of war and especially to youth's reaction to war.⁴⁹

⁴⁷Ibid., March 23, 1936, p. 3.

⁴⁸L. H. Robbins, "College Front Swept by Future Veterans," New York Times, March 29, 1936, IV, p. 11.

⁴⁹New York Times, April 3, 1937, p. 15.

The opposition to war and compulsory military training was more than a school-boy crusade. That the issue was a matter of national concern was indicated by the attempt made in 1935 to remove compulsory military training from the colleges by congressional action. Senator Gerald P. Nye of North Dakota and Representative Paul J. Kvale of Minnesota on June 24, 1935, introduced identical bills to eliminate the compulsory feature in the colleges. These bills were designed to insert a proviso into the National Defense Act of 1920 stating that no ROTC unit could be established or maintained at any school until the institution had satisfied the Secretary of War that enrollment in such a unit was not compulsory.⁵⁰

In 1935, ROTC units were in operation at 228 institutions; of this number seventy-three had voluntary training, while thirty-seven were primarily military schools which were exempt from the bill. The remaining 118 schools, where ROTC was obligatory, were the ones which the proposed legislation would effect. The New Republic stated that the "passage of this bill would be a tremendous step towards liberty of action for individual students."⁵¹ But even those who favored the legislation were rather skeptical of the Nye-Kvale bill's chances of becoming law. The New York City Evening Post stated that the "War Department pressure plus a few patriotic snorts on the Senate floor, will, of course, throttle the measure." This paper expressed regret that students would be required to continue mixing geometry with goosesteps and pedagogy with

⁵⁰U.S. Senate, 70th Congress, 2nd Session, Subcommittee of the Committee on Military Affairs, Compulsory Military Training, s. 3309. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1936), p. 1.

⁵¹New Republic, Aug. 7, 1935, p. 347.

with parades. It was understandable that anti-militarists were opposed to the ROTC, but the article questioned why the military was so "hell-bent" on having campus cadets, since "What they learn about the art of war in their three-hour-a-week saluting and strutting would not fill a mess kit."⁵²

It was a year after its introduction before the Senate subcommittee on the Committee on Military Affairs opened hearings on the Nye-Kvale bill. Since the Congressional hearings in 1926, the major Protestant churches had made declarations in opposition to the training in colleges, and page after page of documentary material opposing compulsory military training was submitted. The American Federation of Labor reiterated its opposition to compulsion. Petitions signed by educators ranking in qualifications from John Dewey, retired from Columbia, to Dean F. S. Rankin of the College of the Ozarks were submitted as evidence that educators opposed compulsory military training in the colleges. In addition to petitions, statements by noted professors were read before the subcommittee. John Dewey had written that military training in schools could not be defended even on the ground of physical benefits gained. "All the authorities," he said, were in agreement that there were better methods for physical training. He expressed the opinion that the real purpose of military training was to create a state of mind which was favorable to militarism or war, and he asserted that it was criminal to create such emotional habits.⁵³ Among the other statements agreeing with Dewey's

⁵²Ernest L. Meyer, "As the Crow Flies-About College Cadets and Drill Sergeants' Commands," Evening Post, July 30, 1935, quoted in record of the Subcommittee of the Committee on Military Hearings, 1936, p. 188.

⁵³Subcommittee Hearings, 1936, p. 20.

conclusions, Reinhold Niebuhr, an eminent theologian, thought that the ROTC thrust an attitude and a type of training into the college atmosphere that was thoroughly incompatible with the spirit of democracy and science.⁵⁴

Support of the ROTC program was led by Lieutenant Colonel Roy A. Hill, representing the War Department. In full command of the situation, he stated that his Department was not the "exponent of any social theories, philosophy of life, or any revolutionary experiments in the field of pedagogy." Concerned only with providing for the national security, the War Department opposed the Nye-Kvale bill which they feared would effect the principal feeder of the commissioned and non-commissioned personnel of the organized reserves. In support of this argument, Colonel Hill revealed that participation in ROTC training at the University of Minnesota dropped from 2,400 to 400 after it was placed on an elective basis in 1933. The War Department had no illusions about the popularity of the training but stressed that military education was part of good citizenship. This duty of American students was echoed by official representatives from the Daughters of the American Revolution, American Legion, Reserve Officers' Association, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Convinced that compulsory ROTC was an essential part of the reserve officer program and that the Nye-Kvale bill might be a wedge which would allow the abolition of all military training in the colleges, a majority of the committee members opposed the bill. It never emerged from the Committee on Military Affairs.

In the House of Representatives, Maury Maverick of Texas introduced

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 92.

a bill in 1936 which proposed to eliminate "sex appeal and false glory, the emotional by-products of militarism, from military training." It would have banned the use of girls as sponsors or honorary officers of cadet corps and prohibited their participation in drills or military ceremonies under the ROTC. In a corollary measure, Maverick proposed to make seven books required reading for the ROTC. The proposed reading list included Arnold Zweig The Case of Sergeant Grischa, John Dos Passos Three Soldiers, Stephen Crane The Red Badge of Courage, Walter Millis The Road to War and The Martial Spirit, Erich Maria Remarque All Quiet on the Western Front, and Laurence Stallings The First World War.⁵⁵ But, in view of Maverick's association with the Veterans of Future Wars, no one would take the Representative seriously.

Serious opposition to compulsory military training was revealed in the state of Oregon, when the general electorate had an opportunity to vote on the question in the 1936 election. The issue of compulsory military training in the colleges had been placed on the ballot by initiative petitions circulated by students of Willamette University and the University of Oregon, with the cooperation of the State Grange, the State Federation of Labor, and the American Civil Liberties Union. The state Methodist conference and the Presbyterian U.S.A. Synod of Oregon had endorsed the initiative measure without a dissenting vote. A committee for Peace and Freedom, with O. G. Villard⁵⁶ as honorary chairman, further promoted the initiative project. Sentiment seemed to be so overwhelmingly in favor of the measure that a journalist at the University of Oregon,

⁵⁵Nation, March 11, 1936, p. 304.

⁵⁶The editor of the Nation was strongly opposed to compulsory drill, his father having left Prussia at the age of 16 to escape military training.

Richard L. Neuberger, was confident that the measure would pass.⁵⁷

The optional drill proposal was defeated by a vote of 212,246 to 131,917, as indeed were all seven of the initiative proposals on the ballot. It was significant that optional drill received the largest affirmative vote of these initiative measures, but the results indicated that the Oregon people were not opposed to requiring army service of young men who sought a higher education at public expense. Only two-fifths of the Oregon voters had opposed the compulsory training.⁵⁸

Apparently the two decades of controversy over the causes and effects of the war had altered the American student's opinions towards compulsory drill, more than it had his parents'. This militant opposition of the students toward the ROTC seemed to be most vocal before 1937, and this anti-war feeling was slow in changing; in fact, considerable opposition to American intervention continued until December 7, 1941.

In the Jesuit weekly America's poll of 50,000 college students in Catholic colleges and universities in 1939, American intervention was voted down by ninety-seven percent of those participating and one-third said they would refuse to fight.⁵⁹ These Catholic results were not different from those of students at large in 1940, as reported by the New Republic, which stated that ninety-eight percent of the students were opposed to immediate participation by the United States.⁶⁰ The campus

⁵⁷Richard L. Neuberger, "Oregon's People Confront the Military Drill Issue," Christian Century, Aug. 19, 1936, p. 1110.

⁵⁸Christian Century, Dec. 23, 1936, p. 1709.

⁵⁹America, Nov. 18, 1939, p. 145.

⁶⁰Irwin Ross, "College Students and the War," New Republic, July 15, 1940, p. 80.

leaders were reported to be overwhelmingly isolationist, and student newspapers such as the Oberlin Review and the University of Kansas Daily Kansan reminded professors who were advocating intervention that it would be a young man's fight.

Of what consequence after Pearl Harbor was this student opposition to war? Taking the University of Minnesota as an example, many of the students who had been predominantly involved in the fight against compulsory ROTC were among the earliest volunteers for service. Lee Loevinger, who had declared that he would not "listen to the scream for slaughter," went on the first naval mission to England, while Eric Sevareid, a fellow student pacifist, became a noted wartime correspondent.⁶¹

⁶¹James Gray, The University of Minnesota, (Minneapolis: The University Press, 1951), p. 372.

CONCLUSION

Public opinion prevented the War Department from obtaining a peacetime program of universal military training in 1920 and no form of compulsory training existed until 1940, except in the colleges where units of the ROTC were established. This training attracted a critical audience ranging from isolationists to communists and from the Farmers' Grange of Oregon to the American Federation of Labor. Rising in opposition to these critics, the War Department, the American Legion, the Daughters of the American Revolution, and other patriotic groups assailed the attackers of the ROTC.

During the 1920's the anti-ROTC opposition was spearheaded by groups such as the League for Industrial Democracy and the Fellowship of Reconciliation. The student participation in such movements was generally local in nature, even though ROTC training was a leading issue at the City College in New York, the University of Minnesota, and numerous other institutions. The early thirties saw the issue become national in scope and interwoven with the anti-war sentiment. Nationwide peace strikes against war and the ROTC were staged as college students became concerned with the issues. In 1935 this opposition to compulsory drill encouraged Senator Nye and Representative Kvale to sponsor an unsuccessful bill to abolish the compulsory feature of the ROTC. Other signs of discontent with college training and with war, manifested themselves through actions varying from Supreme Court cases to the Veterans of Future Wars, a college take-off on the veterans' organization.

Opponents of war and military training were generally called pacifists

by the contemporary press although this term could not be correctly applied to all groups involved. Pacifism has historically implied a belief that to participate in any form of military training is morally wrong or irreligious; while the anti-war groups included persons whose tenets were based upon humanitarian or economic motives in addition to those opposing conflict upon religious grounds. All groups supported peace, but some individuals thought defensive war permissible while others advocated revolutions for suppressed peoples even though they disapproved of international war.

Although 500,000 college students joined the 1936 peace strike, this action was no evidence that students were confirmed pacifists. It was true that these students opposed war, as did the American public, but after Pearl Harbor they did not refuse to fight. Most students had felt that war was futile and had declared themselves opposed to it on those grounds in addition to condemning it as a problem caused by capitalism. The feeling was widespread that the United States had entered the First World War because of economic ties and especially the interests of munition manufacturers with the allies.

The entrance of the United States into the Second World War seemed to suggest that the principles which opponents of ROTC and preparedness had supported, were only false illusions. Anti-war groups had preached peace and had opposed national defense but to no avail, for despite their efforts the country was drawn into the war. It appeared that the work of these groups was of no consequence other than obstructing rearmament and contributing to the unpreparedness of the country's defense.

Obviously the opponents of war and the ROTC during the 1930's were justified in opposing certain aspects of military education. One such point was the teaching that war was a natural part of a nation foreign

policy. Although the Second World War validated military predictions of future conflict, during a period when the United States foreign policy is said to rest upon a doctrine of "massive retaliation," one looks back with skepticism upon the indoctrination of students with the philosophy that war was inevitable.

The opposition to militarism seemed to act as sandpaper which rubbed the American conscience until it became sensitive to all attempts at "Prussianization" of the students. These anti-ROTC forces pointed to the differentiation between patriotism and chauvinism and they called the War Department on the carpet for a Training Manual which labeled democracy as a government of the masses that "results in mobocracy," and which described internationalism as "impractical and destructive idealism."

Apparently the anti-ROTC agitation failed to exert a marked influence on the national government, for no anti-compulsory legislation was adopted, but it did perform a positive good. Acting as a balance wheel for the War Department and groups advocating 100 per cent Americanism, opponents of militarism contributed to the free exchange of ideas concerning war and peace. It is this balance of pressure groups that the United States strives to maintain.

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