

Letters

At Yale on 4 March

The statement "Yale University scientists have indicated that they will join . . . in a 1-day research stoppage on 4 March to examine priorities in scientific research" was misleading (14 Feb., p. 656). A small group of scientists, social scientists, humanists, and physicians at Yale arranged two seminars which were held 4 March concerning "Science and the Direction of American Society" and "Science and the Military." A number of workshops were also organized such as the meeting devoted to the "Warfare State" which was directed by the student head of the local chapter of the Students for a Democratic Society.

The material circulated by the organizing committee before the meetings indicated that the primary purpose of the "Day of Reflection" was to condemn (not judge or evaluate) the relations between the military and the physical sciences, and few of the physical scientists at Yale were associated with the program. Certainly most of the senior faculty of the physics department were strongly—and sometimes profanely—opposed to the activities, and opposed to any work stoppage. The large research projects in the physics department in atomic physics and elementary particle physics, and the extensive research in nuclear physics conducted with the several particle accelerators at Yale, proceeded as usual.

While it is impractical to attempt to summarize all the reasons for this opposition to the program, certain views were widely held. There was no disagreement that in a democracy all citizens, scientists included, have an obligation to concern themselves with the direction of research supported by their government. As members of the faculty of a university, these obligations might well lead them to organize an inquiry into the values to be considered in such research where the traditional honesty and open-mindedness of good scholarship might contribute uniquely to an understanding of these values. In the view of many of the faculty of the physics department, such a dispassionate inquiry could not be conducted on 4 March in

view of the connotations of that date following the publicity accorded to the "research strike" at M.I.T. And they believed that no honest inquiry could be conducted without an adequate representation of speakers concerned with the applications of science to defense. But the conditions requisite for an unbiased inquiry were not followed and the support of a broad segment of the scientific community at Yale was lost.

Although the documents circulated to the faculty before 4 March by the organizing committee of 16 faculty members (which included two physicists) unequivocally called for a condemnation of the relations between science and the defense efforts and indicated that the object of the program was to condemn these relations, the actual program was not so strongly biased. (Here I speak from hearsay as I spent the day at a government laboratory working at my research!) Indeed M.I.T. physics professor Steven Weinberg, a long-time consultant for the Institute for Defense Analyses, might be considered to have presented the views of those who believe a citizen has a degree of obligation to cooperate with his government on defense matters. But, predictably, the newspaper accounts centered on the polemics offered by the most extreme speakers.

Much of the objection and bitterness which remain concerns the character of the publicity. Many of us believe that the committee instituted the program as an act of protest—on issues which it prejudged—which was designed to indict government-supported research at Yale. Since most, if not all, of this work is unrelated to any direct military applications, this character of the protest seemed a device designed to extract a maximum of publicity for the views of the committee. And those of us conducting scientific research at Yale, who are not as certain as members of the committee that there are simple answers to the difficult questions which confront us all, resent being used for the purposes of the committee.

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Today's Army:

Drafted or Professional?

Wallis's editorial "Abolish the draft" (17 Jan., p. 235) is an admirable statement. The American educational process is being undermined by the draft as by nothing else. The draft is a continuing source of harassment, distraction, and insecurity to the undergraduates. Also, the present drafting of graduate students, upon whom we depend for laboratory instruction of undergraduates in the sciences, seriously undercuts the training of students for the sciences, medicine, and engineering.

Two points in the editorial need re-examination: the assumption that our armed forces need to be kept at their present levels; and that to maintain an adequate volunteer force, pay scales need to be considerably increased.

It seems probable that a much smaller force—a total of at most one million men—should be adequate for our peacetime needs. If that is not so, I should like to hear debated the argument for a larger force. A volunteer force of that size is readily obtainable at present levels of compensation. Indeed we have it now. The overwhelming majority of our total military personnel are true volunteers. About 49 percent of all first-term enlistments are in this category; another 30 percent are "reluctant volunteers" who join up under threat of the draft, and only 21 percent are draftees. Of course, all reenlistments are voluntary. The Air Force and the Navy are entirely volunteer and the Marine Corps is largely so.

Nor is the pay poor, as is sometimes claimed. It must be understood that the basic pay is in addition to all ordinary living expenses—quarters, food, clothing, and medical care. In the lowest enlisted grade the base pay is now about \$110 to \$150 per month. The lowest grade of sergeant receives \$262 to \$437 per month, depending on length of service. Master sergeants go from \$576 to \$742 monthly. In addition there are dependency allowances, extra pay for foreign service and hazardous duty, incentive pay, and rather handsome bonuses for reenlistment. A man who goes in at 18 to 20 can retire 20 years later with half-pay for the rest of his life *in addition to* social security.

It is not commonly realized that the base pay was raised throughout the services by Act of Congress in 1967, in three installments. The above figures represent the levels after the second increase. The third increase will come