

UNIVERSAL MILITARY SERVICE IN PEACE TIME

REPORT OF A SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE WAR POLICY COMMITTEE¹
OF THE
AMERICAN MATHEMATICAL SOCIETY AND THE MATHEMATICAL
ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Foreword (prepared by Professor M. H. Stone, Chairman of the War Policy Committee): The War Policy Committee of the American Mathematical Society and the Mathematical Association of America was formed to study the many questions of professional and scientific policy arising out of the war. No subject has been of greater interest or more vital concern to the Committee than the relations between scientific effectiveness on the one hand and the military requirements of the nation on the other. A most important aspect of this subject is treated in the report on Universal Military Service in Peace Time which is now made public. This report, prepared some time ago by a special subcommittee, is directed in the main at points upon which mathematicians as such are particularly qualified to express informed opinions. Whatever view may ultimately prevail concerning universal military training in peace time—and it should be emphasized that there are many citizens, mathematicians included, who doubt the wisdom of introducing such a peace-time military program—it is clearly of the first importance that no program deleterious to the scientific and technological vigor of the nation should be adopted. The report deals frankly and in detail with this vital segment of the problem now before Congress. In offering the recommendations of the report as a professional contribution to the current discussion, the War Policy Committee hopes to render a modest public service strictly within the natural sphere of its activity.

1. *Introduction.* In the Congress of the United States, bills are under consideration (S. 188 and H.R. 515, companion bills) which would prescribe a year of military service in peace time for all young men of suitable physical qualifications. These bills present the nation with a proposal for a fundamental new departure in our national life and it is appropriate that the widest discussion should occur concerning all sides of the situation which would result. It is natural that the greater part of the arguments pro or con about S. 188 in the public press should deal with military, internal political, and international

¹ Prepared, in July, by a subcommittee consisting of Professor W. L. Hart, Chairman, Saunders MacLane, and C. B. Morrey, and approved by the War Policy Committee and the Council of the American Mathematical Society.