

October 19, 1971

On the Draft Lottery for 1971

It appears definite that the official limit for the lottery this year will be the number 125. This is a uniform number that cannot be exceeded by any draft board in the country. If you were born before January 1, 1952, and have received a number higher than 125, you are advised to drop your student deferment before the end of this year and thus enter the first priority category during this calendar year. THIS INCLUDES STUDENTS BORN BEFORE JANUARY 1, 1951, WHO KEPT THEIR DEFERMENTS LAST YEAR, as they had a number lower than 195, which was the highest number reached in 1970.

The upshot of dropping your deferment and allowing yourself to be re-classified 1-A is that as of January 1, 1972, anyone with a number over 125 will fall into the so-called second priority category and in essence be free of draft liability. If you care to, you may re-apply for and must then be granted a II-S rather than remain in class 1-A.

To drop a deferment, simply write the SSS board where you are registered and tell them: "I wish to drop my current deferment and be classified 1-A immediately." This will result in your being re-classified at the next board meeting. Send all correspondence to your board by registered mail, return receipt requested.

Lottery numbers from all three drawings are posted in Barn 8. Check your number there to make sure it is what you think it is.

Men born in 1952, who have already been assigned a lottery number as of the July, 1971 drawing, cannot be drafted until the year in which they become twenty (1972) and thus might as well retain their student deferments uninterrupted. They will be advised of next year's number in time to drop their deferment if appropriate.

It is noteworthy that the reason the number is so low is not because of any "winding down" of the war or other double-talk, but because the draft bill was held up in conference for nine weeks as a result of the Mansfield amendment calling for a specific date for troop withdrawals. Unfortunately, the amendment was finally watered down to a meaningless "sense of the Senate" resolution and the draft reinstated with no significant changes. The new law does expire in June, 1973, when another campaign to eliminate the draft completely will hopefully be successful.

This information is obviously relevant to men not enrolled in Bennington, and I urge you to pass it on.

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