

"LOADED" MILITARY TRAINING BILL TO OCCUPY CONGRESS

By W. R. POUNDSTONE.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Nov. 28.—The question of a permanent military policy for the United States, inevitably involving the acceptance or rejection of universal military training, undoubtedly will receive the consideration of congress at its forthcoming session. Its appearance upon the legislative stage is expected to stir up a national controversy equalled only by the recent agitation over the proposed league of nations.

Proponents of a national policy of compulsory military training for American youths have been quite active in Washington in recent weeks, and one of the leaders in the movement is Senator Harry S. New, of Indiana. He has the endorsement of the Indiana Legislature which, last February, went on record to the effect that it was the sentiment of that body "that the principle of universal compulsory military service should be embodied in the future military policy of our country," in concurrent resolution No. 1.

The question of compulsory military training is not a partisan one, for it has its advocates and opponents among the Republicans and Democrats forming the membership of the House of Representatives and the Senate. There is every reason to believe that when the question comes before congress for action the decision will be reached without the bias of partisanship intruding, which is as it should be for the determination of a permanent military policy for the United States is of too vital importance to make of it a political plaything.

Congress is not going to take up the question of compulsory military training with any particular relish. The majority of members of congress frankly admit it to be a "live wire" question, to be approached and handled with the utmost delicacy, for among the voters of the country there are just as many active and vigorous opponents of compulsory military training, of any form or character, as there are ardent proponents of such a plan.

The disposition of congress to postpone consideration of this highly loaded permanent military policy until the proverbial eleventh hour was clearly shown by the action of the military affairs committee of the House in submitting, just at the close of the recent special session, its army reorganization bill minus any provisions pertaining to compulsory military training. This committee explained in the report accompanying its bill that the committee expected at a later date to take up the question of universal service.

Pershing in Action.
Some of the big guns of the advocates of universal military training have been in action recently, notably General John J. Pershing and General P. C. March, chief of staff.

In testifying before the joint session of the military affairs committees of the House and Senate General Pershing advised the establishment of a regular army, to be recruited by voluntary enlistment, of between 250,000 and 300,000 men, to be supported by a citizen's army to be organized and maintained under the system of compulsory military training, to be available in time of war.

In advising a regular army not to exceed 300,000 men, General Pershing is in direct opposition to his superior, the secretary of war, Mr. Baker, who recommended to the house military affairs committee the establishment of a regular army of over 500,000 men.

So far, however, Mr. Baker has remained mute on the question of universal service.

In his report for 1919, just issued, General March, chief of staff, writes: "Universal training, which can be arranged so as to afford negligible interference with the industrial and educational activities of the individual or of the nation, will, by developing physically, mentally and morally the youth of the country, make them better citizens as well as better soldiers. The force which I have indicated as being the minimum required by a sound military policy for the adequate protection of the country, (a regular

army of approximately 500,000 men) could, without increase and without serious impairment to its efficiency, be utilized in time of peace to furnish, in great part at least, the trained, professional military specialists required to conduct efficiently such a system of intensive universal military training."

Recently the American Legion gave expression of opinion on the question of universal military training at its national convention held in Minneapolis. The Legion went on record as favoring universal military training, but with the important proviso that "the administration of this policy shall be removed from the control of any exclusive military caste," to quote from the Legion's official publication, the "American Legion Weekly."

The attitude the delegates to the American Legion convention would assume toward universal military service had been anticipated with the keenest interest by members of congress, the administration and by the military, for it was realized that the stand taken upon this question by such a powerful organization would have great influence on the action taken by congress.

Legion's Opinion.
The national citizen soldier, in the opinion of the American Legion convention, should be trained, equipped, officered and assigned to definite units before rather than after the commencement of hostilities; and "the national army should be administered by a general staff on which citizen soldier officers and regular army officers shall serve in equal number."

For the past year Indiana members of congress have received a desultory correspondence from their constituents on the question of compulsory military training, some favoring, some opposing the plan. But it is anticipated that when this question comes up for debate in congress the Indiana lawmakers will be subjected to a postal bombardment equalled only in intensity by the barrages of letters and telegrams laid down upon them during the debate, in the house, of the repeal of the daylight saving law and, in the senate, during the debate on the peace treaty. Indiana voters are ready and intelligent letter writers and their congressmen and senators rarely have any difficulty in gauging public opinion in their state.

Williamsburg, Ind.

Clynton Crull and family from Centerville, were the weekend guests of friends here. Mrs. Raymond Smith, of Newcastle, spent Wednesday night with her parents here. Miss Helen Smith, of Richmond, spent the weekend here the guest of her sister, Ruth. Mrs. Wilbur Fulton and daughter Blanch from west of town, were Richmond shoppers Thursday. Dr. Keith was in Richmond Monday on business. Miss Marjory Hollingsworth had her Sunday guests Miss Helen Bundy, of Richmond, Miss Ruth Unger of Chester, Miss Francis Martin, Miss Willis Kelley, and Miss Lucile Keltin, all of this place. The Monday afternoon bridge club met with Mrs. Omer Pierce this week. Dr. and Mrs. C. E. Martin, Mr. and Mrs. Omer Pierce motored to Richmond, Monday night to see "Widow by Proxy." The school gave a Thanksgiving entertainment in the Friends' church Wednesday afternoon at 1:30. The program was greatly enjoyed by all. The revival meetings at the Friends' Church closed last Sunday evening. Miss Marjory Hollingsworth had her weekend guests, Miss Ruth Unger, of Chester, and Miss Helen Bundy, of

Richmond. Mr. and Mrs. Byron Blair, of Illinois, visited Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Blair a few days last week.

Lewisburg, O.

Robert Mollett and wife are entertaining her mother, Mrs. Close, of Bluffton. Mrs. L. M. Paine, of Dayton, was the guest of Mrs. Annie Wood Saturday and Sunday. Born, to Otto Bunker and wife, a girl. A miscellaneous shower was given Mrs. Hazel Heeter Zimmerman Monday night at her home, south of town, by Mrs. M. V. Homan's Sunday School class of Trinity Lutheran church. J. B.

Knapke visited relatives in Indianapolis from last Tuesday till Thursday. Mrs. Mary Unger was in Eaton last Friday to see her nephew, Andrew Coffman, who will go to Arizona soon for the benefit of his health. Carl Unger, who has been chief steward on the U. S. S. Leviathan, is home on a 30-day furlough. Unger has enlisted in the navy for 2 years and at the expiration of his furlough will go to Chicago, where he will be stationed at the naval training school for the present. Charlie Matthews was in Dayton, Monday. Arthur Marsden, of Dayton, was the weekend guest of his mother, Mrs. Ed Bunker.

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