

## YOUTH CAMPAIGN AGAINST CONSCRIPTION COMMITTEE

The Y.C.A.C. has as its aim opposition to the existing Conscription legislation, and is working for the repeal of the National Service Amendment Act (1964).

Particular aspects of the legislation, to which the Y.C.A.C. Committee takes strong exception, are:-

### 1. Lack of Popular Consultation:

For the first time in Australia's history, conscription for overseas service has been introduced without consultation by popular referendum. Even in periods of direct hostility it has not been possible for any government to place soldiers outside of Australia's territories unless they had volunteered.

### 2. Overseas Service:

Section 28 of the National Service Act (1951-57) has been amended by the 1964 Act to allow no choice in peace-time for conscripts to serve at home - overseas service is binding upon all who are called up.

### 3. Overseas Military Involvement:

The conscripts may be used as part of a professional, volunteer army for prosecuting wars in Asian countries with which Australia is not officially at war. As young Australians with a stake in the future of our country, the Y.C.A.C. rejects the aggressive involvement of young people in Asian countries as a direct threat to possible future good relations with our nearest neighbours.

### 4. Method of Introduction:

The methods used to enforce registration - compelling employers to police their 20-year old employees under threat of a fine, are a direct breach of peace-time civil liberties.

The secretive selection system is also condemned - allowing no public knowledge of those to be chosen, or of what actual methods are used in individual selection - as being open to abuse.

### 5. Length of Time:

The full-time service of two years, or part-time service of five years, which can be extended to five years full-time service, diverts much needed skills and labour from Australia's peace-time production. Young tradesmen and other skilled and semi-skilled workers, as well as professional and semi-professional workers, are being drained off at a time when Australia is desperately short of these personnel.

### 6. Job and Economic Discrimination:

Full-time students, whether trade or professional, are eligible for deferment. Part-time students are not. Deferment exists only as far as the completion of the first stage of post-secondary training - trade or professional.

No clear guarantees have been given by the Government that employment will be offered at appropriate rates of pay to conscripts returning from war service to private employment. Promotion rights in the large private sectors of industry and commerce are not protected. Wage or salary differences between civilian and military earnings do not clearly take into account annual increases which would or could be achieved by conscripts as civilian employees over the two year period.



## ACTIVITIES

### National Contact

The Y.C.A.C. has begun to contact other similar organisations of young people in other States of the Commonwealth, seeking their co-operation in activities which will make it clear to all interested citizens, and the young people involved, just what the 1964 conscription legislation means. A similar committee has been formed in Victoria, and activities are commencing in both South Australia and Queensland.

### A Referendum

Our aim is to have the citizens of Australia give their clear opinion, as a nation, on conscription. We are confident in the traditions of our country, which have always stated their opposition to compulsory overseas military service - in war time as in peace time.

### A Survey

We wish to make personal contact with as many young men likely to be affected as possible, to find out what they think about overseas service. Survey teams will conduct a questionnaire to give a true picture of what the voters of to-day, and of to-morrow, feel.

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