

Yank: September 17, 1944

As of last weekend, the dope on demobilization plans was that the War Department will decide on who gets out first. Washington correspondents, who presumably got it straight from the feedbag, were saying that first consideration will be given to men with the best military records, regardless of whether they're married or single. Length of service and dependency are also expected to weigh heavily in a man's favor. Representative Andrew J. May, Democrat of Kentucky and chairman of the House Military Affairs Committee, said that the order in which men are let out is something for the WD to decide, but that "Congress, which determined the policy on inducting men into the service, certainly should be informed on what's planned and, if necessary, should lay down the broad policies." It was reported that the other members of the committee, which wrote the original draft law, agreed with their chairman and that the WD was about ready to submit its demobilization plan to May and his colleagues.

And don't think there aren't going to be plenty of men hollering to get out. The latest figures, released last week, show that the total strength of the armed forces now comes to about 11,417,000. The House Military Affairs Committee, to which Selective Service gave this information, released it to the public without comment, but several committee members were reported to have said privately that it confirmed their suspicions that some 2,000,000 more men have been inducted than necessary.

The Army totals about 7,700,000 and the Navy 3,717,000. Other figures: 3,798,000 men have been classified in 4-F; 1,614,000 have been deferred as farmers; 4,192,000 have been deferred to work in fields other than agriculture; and 70,000 have been deferred as hardship cases.