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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, January 10, 1865.— Ordered to be printed.

[By Mr. AYER.

The undersigned, a minority of the special committee of five, appointed under resolution upon the subject of conscription, differing from the majority of the committee, beg leave to submit the accompanying bill, as embodying their views upon the subject, and recommend its adoption in lieu of the bill reported by the majority of the committee.

S. ST. GEO. ROGERS,
LEWIS M. AYER.

AN ACT

To provide for the more efficient execution of conscription, and for the arrest of deserters and absentees from the armies.

1 *The Congress of the Confederate States of America do enact,*
2 That there shall be established at the city of Richmond, under
3 the orders of the President and Secretary of War, a Bureau
4 of Conscription for the purpose of supervising, controlling and
5 directing all matters concerning the administration of conscrip-
6 tion, and of performing such other duties in relation thereto as,
7 by regulations, the Secretary of War may charge on said Bu-
8 reau: and the President is authorized to assign to the superin-
9 tendence and management of said Bureau, such officer as he
10 may select. *Provided,* Such officer shall not be of rank below
11 that of brigadier general, *And provided,* said officer shall not,
12 during such time as he is exercising the office of superinten-
13 dent, hold or exercise any actual military command in the field
14 nor in the reserve forces, nor in any other military organiza-
15 tion. And, with like limitations, the President shall assign to
16 duty in said bureau, one officer with the rank of colonel, one
17 officer with the rank of lieutenant-colonel, one officer with the
18 rank of major, one officer with the rank of captain, three offi-
19 cers with the rank of first lieutenant, and such clerks as may be

20 found necessary; *Provided*, All such officers, except the superin-
 21 tendent, shall be selected from the classes hereafter indicated in
 22 the sections of this act:

1 SEC. 2. There shall be assigned from the general staff or in-
 2 valid corps, or from officers certified by the proper medical
 3 boards to be unfit for service in the field, and from drill masters
 4 now employed in the enrolling service, a sufficient number of
 5 officers to perform the duties herein prescribed in the several
 6 states, with the temporary rank of colonel, lieutenant-colonel,
 7 major, captain or lieutenant, according to the nature and impor-
 8 tance of the duties prescribed.

1 SEC. 3. *Be it further enacted*, That the President may appoint,
 2 by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, for duty in
 3 the conscript service, with the temporary rank aforesaid, per-
 4 sons from civil life; *Provided*, The said persons so appointed be
 5 otherwise exempt from military service, or found by medical
 6 examination for light duty, or are over the age of forty-five
 7 years.

1 SEC. 4. Nothing in this act shall be construed to prevent the
 2 President from assigning to conscript service, officers now en-
 3 gaged in that service, or officers in the army of any rank.

1 SEC. 5. *Be it further enacted*, That it shall be the duty of the
 2 officers of conscription, under the control and direction of the
 3 bureau, to make and keep records of the condition of the vari-
 4 ous branches of the military service within their respective dis-
 5 tricts, and to make monthly returns of the same to the bureau,
 6 through the commandant of conscripts of the State, and in fur-
 7 therance of this purpose, it shall be the duty of all officers and
 8 others employed in the service of the Confederate States, and

9 not actually in the field nor attached to any army in the field, in-
10 cluding quartermasters and commissaries and their agents, com-
11 manders of posts, provost marshals, officers of the ordnance,
12 nitre and mining and medical bureaux and others, to make cer-
13 tified monthly returns to the nearest conscript officer, of the
14 nature and exact condition of their service, which returns shall
15 be forwarded as above directed.

1 SEC. 6. Generals commanding the reserve forces shall be re-
2 quired, on the demand of the commandant of conscripts for
3 the State, to place at his disposal and for the enforcement of the
4 duties imposed upon him, such detachments of the reserve forces
5 as may be deemed necessary.

1 SEC. 7. For the purpose of facilitating the granting of de-
2 tails and exemptions under the act of the 17th day of February,
3 1864, to persons who may be more useful to the country in ag-
4 ricultural and mechanical pursuits than in the military service,
5 there shall be appointed by the President in each county, dis-
6 trict or parish, an agricultural board, consisting of three farm-
7 ers or planters over the age of fifty years, to whom shall be re-
8 ferred by the county, district or parish enrolling officer, every
9 application for a detail in their respective counties, districts or
10 parishes; and whose duty it shall be to enquire and report up-
11 on the merits of such applications, which report, with the appli-
12 cation, shall be forwarded to the commandant of conscripts
13 for the State: and if he approve such application the detail
14 shall be allowed. If the commandant of conscripts disapprove
15 such application, the applicant shall have the right of appeal to
16 the superintendent of the bureau of conscription, whose decis-
17 ion shall be final.

1 SEC. 8. There shall be assigned to each congressional district
2 a medical board consisting of three surgeons, at least one of
3 whom shall be an army surgeon, who, after due notice of the
4 time and place of their meeting, shall, under the direction of
5 the commandant of conscripts, visit each county of the district
6 at least once in every two months, and shall examine for dis-
7 charge or recommendation for light duty, all conscripts who
8 may be brought before them. Every discharge granted by the
9 said medical board shall be final, and shall relieve the party so
10 discharged from all military service in the future, when the
11 disability is permanent and the cause of it is set forth in the
12 certificate.

1 SEC. 9. The power to order general court martials, assigned
2 in the 65th article of war to general officers commanding armies,
3 or colonels commanding separate departments, is hereby ex-
4 tended to the general or field officer acting as superintendent of
5 conscription, in all cases of persons attached to the conscript
6 service or under his orders, other than general officers. He
7 shall also have power to order courts of inquiry in like cases,
8 under the condition of the 92d article of war. The general court
9 martial hereby authorized to be ordered, shall not be composed
10 of less than three nor more than seven members, who shall be
11 selected from among any officers of the invalid corps, or drill-
12 masters, or officers of the general staff or line of the army who
13 may be at the time attached to the conscript service, whether by
14 transfer or temporary assignment, including the detachments of
15 reserve forces, herein before provided for in section 6th, of this
16 act.