

G. I. SCHOOL LAW ENDS WEDNESDAY

7,800,000 Veterans Trained in World War II Plan — Korean Benefits Go On

The world's largest educational venture comes to an end on Wednesday.

The G. I. Bill of Rights for World War II veterans will bow out on that day. It has provided educational opportunities for 7,800,000 former service men at a cost to the Federal Government of \$14,500,000,000.

At the height of the program in 1947, the majority of students on the nation's campuses were veterans. Some colleges found that 90 per cent or more of their male students had served their country in the war.

When President Roosevelt signed the bill on June 22, 1944, many educators "viewed it with alarm." Some even warned that institution of higher education would become little more than hobo camps. There is little gloom today, though.

The G. I. program has proved successful, far more successful than even the most optimistic supporters could have predicted.

In addition to the original bill, known as Public Law 346, the Seventy-eighth Congress also adopted another program, known as Public Law 16. It made provisions for the rehabilitation of disabled veterans. Vocational training centers were created. Some 610,000 disabled veterans were helped to become self-reliant.

Korea Bill Continues

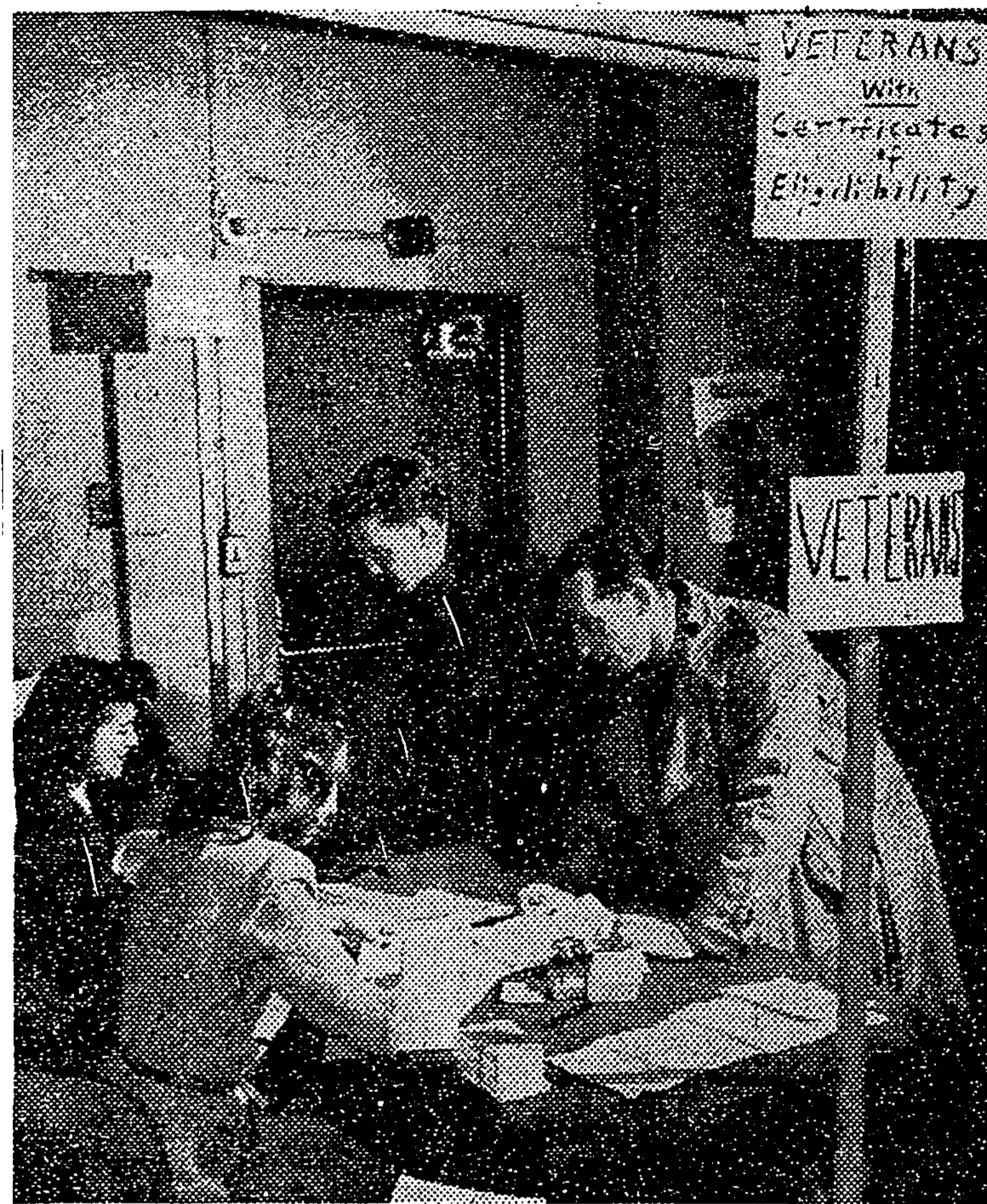
The veteran, though, will not vanish from the American campus. The Korean G. I. Bill is just beginning its fourth year. And, this fall, some 750,000 Korean veterans will be attending school and college, or will receive on-the-job training.

Although the educational provisions end on Wednesday, some portions of World War II measure will remain for another year. Veterans will be able to get loans under the home and business provisions of the bill until July 25, 1957. However, the Senate passed a bill yesterday that would extend the home loan provision to Jan. 25, 1958.

The World War II veteran has left an imprint upon American education. More mature, more determined than the average college student, the former service man brought greater intellectual curiosity to the classroom.

"I had to throw away my yellowed notes when the veterans came," one economics professor said, somewhat ruefully. "They wanted more than pat answers. They wanted to know why."

The G. I.'s received money for going to school or college. When first adopted, the law provided a



Veterans Administration

QUESTING FOR KNOWLEDGE: Veterans of World War II were quick and eager to obtain educational benefits of the G. I. Bill of Rights. Colleges made special provision for them. Here, in a typical postwar scene, ex-servicemen offer their credentials at George Washington University.

subistence fund of \$50 a month with their academic blueprints for unmarried veterans and \$75 a month for married veterans. Soon that was raised to \$65 and \$90. In addition, the veterans received an allowance of \$500 for tuition fees, books and incidentals. This sum went directly to the colleges.

Started Slowly in '45

Under the Korean bill a change has taken place. A single veteran gets \$110, a married one \$135 and a married veteran with dependents receives \$160 a month. But he must pay his own tuition fees out of this amount.

The first veterans began to trickle back to school in the fall of 1944, soon after the bill had been enacted. The colleges did not realize what was in store for Europe and the Pacific.

With the end of the war the veterans started to return to civilian life. The educational advantages of the bill began to receive attention. In the fall of 1945 the trickle grew to a slow stream. But still few recognized that the veterans would jump at the chance to get free schooling the way they did.

Indeed, officials at the highest government levels predicted that a total of 500,000 veterans might take advantage of the bill. It was not long, though, before they revised their estimates and guessed perhaps 1,000,000.

Actually, even this highest estimate, which was met with skepticism in 1945, soon proved too conservative.

Consternation set in, Plainly, the colleges had been caught

by their academic blueprints. Conferences were suddenly called by school groups to solve the crisis. The veterans filled every nook and corner of the dormitories, laboratories and classrooms.

Emergency measures were adopted. Quonset huts dotted the campuses, from the University of Maine to the University of California. A rush call for professors came next.

Reached Peak in '47

The peak was reached in 1947, when about 1,500,000 veterans were on the campuses. In the pre-war days of 1939-40, the enrollment was less than that.

The colleges responded nobly. Most institutions started counseling services for veterans. The former service man was king on the campus. He was given every kind of break. Brown University, for example, established a special school for veterans who could not qualify as regular students.

And Brown found what most other institutions did: That the veterans came to the top. The veterans in the Brown experiment soon showed that they could compete on equal terms with the "regular" students. Yale University established an Institute of Collegiate Study for former service men. Other institutions chartered new branches or divisions for veterans.

But the education did not end there. A world of educational opportunities was opened. The Veterans Administration ruled that ex-service men might take their educational

benefits anywhere. The sole criterion was this: do the foreign schools meet American standards?

Young Americans were soon found in Oxford and Cambridge, England. They were found at the University of Paris and the Sorbonne. They made their way to institutions in Germany and Italy, to Belgium and the Netherlands.

"We never had it so good," one of the young veterans said, as he recalled his days at Oxford. "What an ideal situation! We went to school abroad and got paid for it."

In New York the problem became so acute that Governor Dewey called together the heads of the private and public colleges at Albany. They were told that come what may room had to be found for the veterans.

The state institutions doubled their facilities in some instances.

And the state did its share. It helped create a new institution at Plattsburgh, known as Champlain College. This had been a base for the Air Force. Now thousands of veterans received a collegiate education there.

Many old traditions fell by the board. Such old-line well-established women's colleges as Vassar, Sarah Lawrence, Barnard, Finch and others admitted men to their campuses. It even got to the point where the ninety or so co-eds at Vassar wanted a football team. That was going too far, said the officials, who vetoed the idea.

A public school in Philadelphia set aside no-smoking signs. In their place the principal created a smoking room. But this was reserved for veterans. It was off-limits for the teen-aged civilians.

All was not smooth and peaceful for the Veterans Administration. It found that human nature had rather low greedy depths. Soon a number of fly-by-night schools was established to fleece the veterans of their \$500 tuition allowance. Some of these "schools" pretended to make a man an architect in seven months. All taught little in the way of trades.

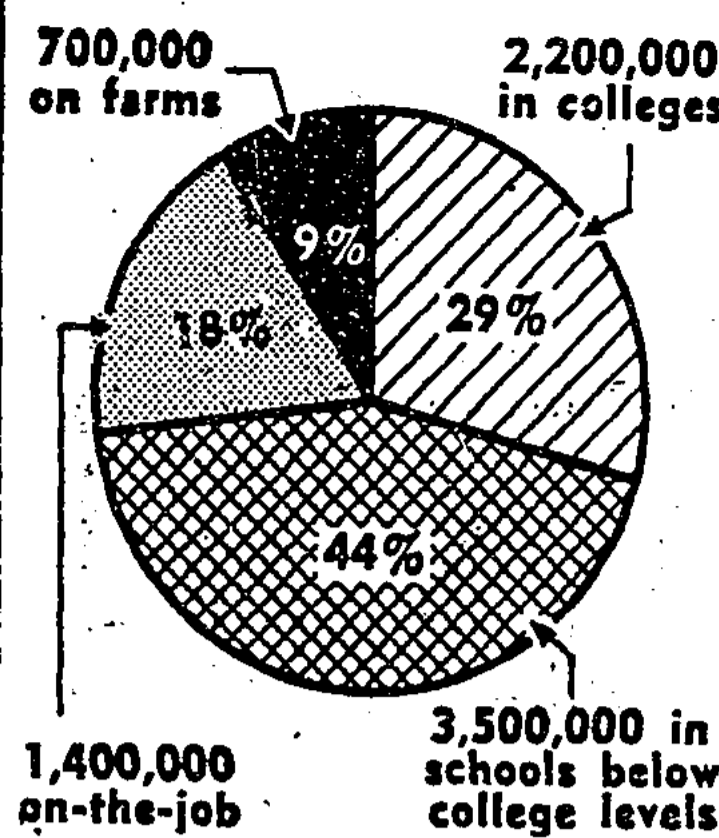
Schools of ballroom dancing, bartending and even chicken-sexing sprang up. It was estimated that close to \$500,000,000 was wasted in these non-profitable courses before the V. A. clamped down. But before the officials caught up with this defect, hundreds of thousands of veterans wasted their benefits. Some 400,000 veterans entered flight-training courses.

The veterans were entitled from one to four years of free schooling, depending upon their length of service. Some service men found to their dismay that they had lost their benefits on gilded promises.

But, fortunately, this was a defect that was soon corrected. In the main, the veterans did a tremendously valuable and serious job in school and college. They crowded the engineering colleges. In 1950, when the veterans flooded the campuses, the colleges graduated 50,000 engineers. Today it has dropped to less than half that number—some 23,500.

The largest number, 33 per

TRAINING TAKEN BY 7,800,000 EX G.I.'S



The New York Times. July 22, 1956.

cent, went into craft, trade and industrial courses. Business administration and managerial courses accounted for a substantial number. So did agriculture and related programs.

Many in Professions

But the humanities were not overlooked. Many veterans entered upon a teaching profession; others became doctors, lawyers, scientists, artists. Hardly a field of training did not attract its quota of veterans.

The men who came out of the war damaged in body or mind got help, too. The vocational rehabilitation program served the ex-soldiers well.

New hope came to the handicapped. The disabled veterans proved that you could lead a productive, independent life if you got the chance to overcome your handicaps. And the V. A. gave the men and women that opportunity.

A recent follow-up study by the Veterans Administration showed that ninety-five out of every 100 rehabilitated veterans were employed. Most, of them like the work they are doing.

It was found that the salary of the trainee had been doubled since his V. A. training.

Some 35 per cent of the disabled veterans trained for professional, semi-professional, and managerial occupations. Only 23 per cent of the labor force in the nation holds such jobs. Another 38 per cent trained for skilled trade and industrial occupations, 14 per cent studied farming, and 11 per cent sought clerical and sales positions.

"The morale of these retrained vets has never been higher," one of the V. A. officials declared. "It's remarkable how well they adjust."

The veterans brought much to the campuses. They did a better academic job than their civilian classmates. They became the editors, the club presidents, the athletic heroes. Even the college officials were surprised at this turn of events.

Affected American Life

The G. I. Bill had a profound effect upon American life. It helped create a reservoir of trained manpower so urgently needed today.

"It helped raise the educational level of an entire generation," said Harvey V. Higley, Administrator of Veteran Affairs. "It has been a living symbol that America does not

forget her veterans. And in their accomplishments, veterans have more than justified the remembrance."

Many illustrations could be cited of the way veterans overcame all kinds of handicaps to land on top. A blinded Korean veteran was graduated cum laude from Boston College last month. He plans to continue for his master's degree and then enter the field of personnel work. A paralyzed veteran took a journalism course and is editing a specialty journal.

One veteran got a job as a lion tamer after completing his G. I. program. Another is working at Brookhaven National Laboratories. When he got home from the Army he worked in a laundry, sold soap, became a clerk, learned to repair television sets and finally wandered into the V. A. vocational counseling office. He was found to be scientific minded. With this encouragement he enrolled at Columbia University, where he received an M. A. and a Ph. D. in physical chemistry.

This must be balanced with the case of the G. I. who practiced making counterfeit money as part of his vocational training. He had completed a G. I. course in engraving. He got ten years of free government subsistence as a post-graduate course.

The average veteran was 27 years old when he entered the G. I. program. Ninety-eight per cent of all trainees were male; two thirds of all veterans in college had dependents. It cost Uncle Sam \$1,800 to train an average veteran. If he went to college the cost was \$2,500; below college, \$1,500; for farm training, \$3,000 and on-the-job, \$1,000.

Average Trained 19 Months

The average veteran trained for nineteen months, but he was eligible for forty. The college student attended classes for twenty-three months, and below college level, for fifteen months.

Congress took the first steps to eliminate play-time training in V. A.'s appropriations in 1948. It banned avocational or recreational courses, unless the veterans could show that the courses were to be used in connection with their present or contemplated businesses or occupations. Congress shortly thereafter cracked down on the fly-by-night schools that were set up to fleece the veterans.

Thus ends a saga of American life, The World War II veterans will no longer dominate the campuses. But a new group, the Korean service man, has replaced them to a smaller extent.

The Korean veterans must complete their training by Jan. 31, 1963. Those under the vocational rehabilitation act have until Jan. 31, 1964. Other veterans must take advantage of their rights within eight years after the date of discharge.

For the next eight years some veterans will be found on the campuses and in the classrooms. But their number will diminish.

But the campuses will not be deserted. A crop of civilians, exceeding in number the post-war veterans, are crowding the nation's campuses.