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RIFLES OR SLIDERULES?

There is little doubt that at long last there has started a swing of the opinions of government officials and business executives toward a more sensible outlook on the drafting of men with engineering and technical training. Harvey N. Davis, Pres. of Stevens Institute of Technology gave the pendulum a mighty shove when, in his address at the "All Engineers" dinner during the Power Conference, he said, "the general public must realize that, at least at present, production is far more important to national defense than is combat training" and added, "my own belief is that, at least for the present, no engineering trained man, no matter how young or inexperienced he may be, should be drafted from industry."

That sounds like good sense to us. When, as President Heald pointed out in a recent address, the country's immediate need for fifty thousand more trained engineers is being met by technical institutions with graduating classes totaling about twelve thousand, it's no time to start substituting rifles for slipsticks. The attitude of the Selective Service System on this matter has not been made particularly clear. Regulations governing the administration of the Selective Service Act provide that a registrant shall be placed in class II-A if the local board finds that he is a necessary man in any industry, business employment, agricultural pursuit, governmental service, or any other service or endeavor, or in the training or preparation therefore, the maintenance of which is necessary to the national health, safety, or interest. How the phrase "necessary to the national health, safety, or interest" is to be construed, especially in regard to technically trained men, is certainly not definite; and it is common knowledge that, at the present time, no two draft boards are handling deferments of any type in the same way. What engineer's service is there that cannot be used eventually for production in national defense? Why should there be any qualification at all? Why should there be allowed the risk of losing valuable time and money by yanking technically trained men out of school or industry and putting them through military training, when the dire shortage of engineers points to a necessary absorption of all such men as quickly as possible into national defense production channels? Would we be matching the celebrated Nazi efficiency in giving Army training to thousands of men who will probably be called back later in industry?

The United States is arming as never before in its history. What the individual opinion of each is on that, is beside the question. Knowingly or unwittingly the American people are willing that this nation become an armed camp, and the sooner that we realize this, the sooner we realize what it means to us, and start preparing in the most intelligent way possible, the fewer the headaches there will be when and if the "day" comes.

Across the water now, the struggling human figures on the shell-torn battle plains are merely an echo in the valley of war. The technique of military strategy has not changed so much, despite what you will be told. But the stark truth is that this is a batle of the factories. The industrial giant of the world will emerge the victor.

If we must cast our lot with the pathetic idiots slugging away at each other in Europe, Asia, and Africa, let us not forget that fact. Let us never forget that there is no turning back, and that when our factories start producing fewer tanks and airplains, and our shipyards fewer destroyers and submarines, and of poorer quality, we can start kissing the Kentucky Derby, Christmas, and baths on Saturday nights goodbye, but fast.

All this is just another way of saying that the fellows who run the factories are just as important as the generals, which is where the engineers come in. They can be set to digging ditches if it's thought more democratic. But production quotas are the thing, by far the more important than nomenclature. Let's hope they know it on Capitol Hill.

T.B.

CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM . . .

Evidently as far as some people are concerned, student activities are only for criticism. It has come to our attention several times that this or that professor has been given precedence over another. This may be true, yet how can a publication of this sort that is fairly new at Lewis, function properly if full cooperation is not given by the same people who so readily make complaints? Recently when the faculty was requested to read a notice to the classes, the response could not be called perfect. Some considered it too unimportant to read; others just could not be bothered.

The students participating in student activities are doing it on their own time and purely on their own initiative, for certainly the encouragement received thus far from both faculty and non-participating students has not been conducive to strengthening the Lewis foothold in IIT activities. Yet these same people say PLENTY when their particular publicity does not receive the attention they feel it deserves. It is about time that some of the people around Lewis awoke from the lethargy and settled down to brass tacks.

For some reason or other, Technology News seems to be between the devil and the deep blue sea in regards to publicity of various activities at Lewis. The relative importance of stories is somethng which must be determined by the editors. The editors, in turn, must depend upon the unqualified cooperation of the faculty and students. Yet, how often we hear the reporters say that they can scarcely drag the information from the professors and heads of the extra-curricular activities, or worse yet they are given a ready written story not adaptable to newspaper style or with incomplete information. We are then asked why the article was not printed or, in the latter case, why it was not printed as submitted. Well, we ask you.

Constructive criticism, made by a responsible person, is welcome, but a remark made to a class carries no weight at all. It merely casts reflection on the individual making the remark. Truly the old phrase, "Consider the source," is apropos.

We do not wish to infer that the cooperation from the faculty and student body has bogged down entirely. However, there is certainly ample room for improvement. If we were able to add other dependable persons to the ranks of those now working, we should surely have no cause for further uneasiness in regard to the part Lewis will play at IIT.

P.A.

QUOTE & UNQUOTE

Dear Editor:

It is always easy to throw dirt at our school, to point out its weaknesses, and to exaggerate its faults; but in the eyes of scrutinizing students there will appear many superior qualities.

We take too many improvements for granted, and we seldom stop to think how they came about. Not so many years ago the Armour campus was a desolate place. School officials were contemplating the closing of the institution, and it is a wonder how the administrators finally managed to get the school through. There were no green lawns; dirty papers and refuse were accumulating in Ogden field, and Chapin Hall was a row of torn-down flats where the ghosts met at midnight.

Look at it now! every room in every building is utilized. The basements have been cleaned out and changed into laboratories. New equipment has been installed. The Student Union building has been completely remodeled, and instead of many small dark "holes" there is a spacious lunch room now. The Research Foundation has grown rapidly and has attracted famous scholars and scientists. A foundry and a laboratory building have been recently built for the Research Foundation. The offices of the main building have been completely modernized, and the toilets have been sanitized. And only last week, a 12 million dollar building program has been approved by the board of trustees.

Spring is here, the lawns are getting greener, and the ivy is growing in the buildings. Soon, when it will be warmer outside, many students will rest on Ogden Field. They will watch the ball games or eat their lunch, or they might take a short nap between classes. The grass is very nice and green and soft now, not dry and strawy like it used to be years ago.

It is definitely very healthy for us hard-working Armourites to be in the open air, but sometimes the grass is rather wet, and it would not be advisable to sit down on the ground. Many other students feel that even though they would like to be outside, they have homework to do and it is too uncomfortable for them to study while lying on the grass.

So, may it be humbly suggested at this timely moment that the student body would appreciate very highly if some benches were installed on Ogden Field. The Chicago Park District has some very nice and comfortable benches in the public parks, and if similar benches could be put up on our campus, it would certainly be a boon to the fresh-air fiends in the school.

However, we should not forget that the pleasant changes in environment are not the only changes that have taken place during the last few years. Due to experiences of the past, there has been a steady improvement in the methods of instruction. New courses have been established and old ones revised. Each year a senior advisory committee has recommended changes to keep the curriculum flexible and up-to-date.

Let us therefore thank the administration and the board of trustees for all these great improvements and for their ever-lasting efforts to better the facilities of the school. **Herman Tachau.**

Research Foundation

Linked inseparably with our national defense, an extremely important part of the Armour Research Foundation is its Metallurgy Division. The character of its work naturally connects it directly or indirectly with many phases of manufacturing.

Dr. Thomas C. Poulter, scientific director of the Research Foundation, heads the work of this division. The staff includes F. F. Shoemaker, G. Johnson, W. C. Wick, H. W. Wick and George Evans.

The divisional laboratories at the Research Foundation itself are three. Largest of these is the experimental foundry, an entire building on Federal street at 34th street. This building is situated so that it can be served by a railroad spur. The utility metallurgical laboratory is located on the basement level of the main Research Foundation building, and houses certain general equipment which varies from time to time according to the specific research in progress. The third laboratory is now being installed, and for its completion now awaits delivery of special equipment, including as one item the finest metallographic unit obtainable. This laboratory, when fully equipped, will provide the last word in metallographic facilities.

Together with the X-ray, spectrographic, electrical, ceramic, chemical and other special laboratories for auxiliary services, these metallurgical laboratories handle that part of the work which can be done in the Research Foundation buildings. A great deal of this division's research is most conveniently conducted "on location" at industrial plants, especially where large tonnages and huge equipment are involved. In such cases the operating studies are made at the plants, while the finer measurements and microscopic examinations and tests are brought back to the laboratories.

Current metallurgical investigations and recently completed projects include studies of tin plate, galvanizing, viscosities of molten metals, foundry practices, corrosion, stresses, open hearth processes, metal interpenetration, cavitation erosion, and the countergravity pressure die-casting of ferrous metals. The last named began as a development of the Wetherill process in the fall of 1939, with a completely mechanized pilot plant producing about a ton of grey iron castings per hour in the experimental foundry building.

PI TAU SIGMAS DINE AND DANCE

Fourteen active members of Pi Tau Sigma, national honorary mechanical engineering fraternity, and their ladies dined and danced at the Continental Room of the Stevens last Friday night. The occasion was the annual spring dinner dance. To say that the boys had a good time, is putting it mildly. The enthusiastic spirit developed at the Detroit conference held over nicely with the result that there was no end of chatter and excitement (Mr. Del Courtney's music contributed to this latter with his sudden deafening crescendoes every so often).

Arrangements were made by President Bill Anthony and Leo Stoolman. A meeting of the fraternity will take place later this week for the purpose of considering and electing new men.