

Sensing one's own power and having the desire to wield it—that's a characteristic human trait. It's a trait that stimulates groups of two, or two million people to exert their influence in the community, attempting to make their desires a reality.

Like congressmen, newspapers, and millionaires, *Technology News* is beset by these pressure groups. That is one way we learn a part of the prevailing campus opinion. When a concerned group of students sees fit to call on the editors to present "their side of the picture," they are more than welcome.

Not all groups act in this direct way, however. There have been attempts to apply pressure "from the rear," intended to force the Managing board into submission. Some persons still do not realize that *Technology News* is NOT CENSORED BY FACULTY.

We believe that criticism, to be effective, must come straight from its source. This is the only "pressure" that can be exerted on *Technology News*.

### Spring Has Cub

Heralds of spring are numerous and varied. Some people point to the appearance of the first robin as the welcome sign. Some doff their red flannels when John L.'s miners leave the pit. But most Techawks use the following criterion: When Odgen field turns from a frozen waste into a shoe-dripping morass, spring is nigh.

For a good many years now, Odgen field has been a source of misery to the athletic department. A swamp in the rainy season, a desert in the dry season, rough and uneven at all times, it can hardly be honored with the term "athletic field."

Nobody quite seems to know what to do with Odgen field. Its days are numbered. In the plans for the Illinois Tech of the future, it is a small part: a new athletic field is planned for a different location.

The athletic department says that at a minimum, the field must be resurfaced and leveled. Gilbert A. Force, business manager of the Institute, says that preliminary to any development of the field, students must learn not to use it as a path to the Chemistry building; nothing can survive under that trampling. Since the students can apparently be kept off only with a ten foot wall, repairs seem far away.

The situation is deplorable for a school which boasts baseball and track teams. Field events of any sort are practically impossible with the field in its present condition.

Something should be done—now!

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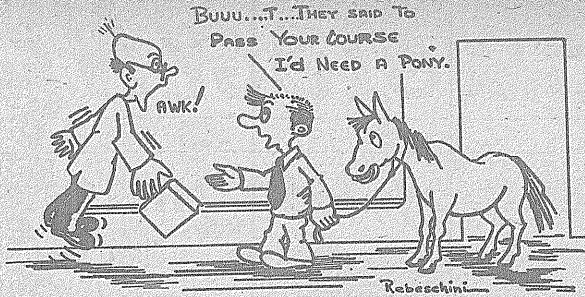
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### GUEST EDITORIAL

## House Un-American Committee Called 'Threat To Basic Political Rights'

By Donald W. Smithburg

The freedom to assemble and to associate with others in the accomplishment of political purposes is considered a basic American political right. It is one of the things we cite when we criticize totalitarian regimes.

The House Un-American Activities Committee, by startegem rather than by legislation, threatens this right. Through the use of the device of "investigation," this committee seeks to intimidate persons in the exercise of their political prerogatives.

Last fall, the Committee held a public investigation of "Red" influences in Hollywood. Ten screen writers were jailed for contempt of Congress when they refused to answer questions as to whether or not they were Communists. Their case is now pending in the Federal Courts.

As explained in this space last week, the Power of Congress to investigate is a part of its legislative power. It is necessary to get information in order to legislate intelligently. But this committee is not interested in legislation. It has been "investigating" for nearly twelve years, and it has yet to propose a piece of legislation.

Its aim would seem to be the intimidation of dissident political opinions. The Hollywood case is a good example.

In the United States it is not against the law to be a Communist. Perhaps it should be. J. Edgar Hoover, however, believes that outlawing the Communist party would not be wise. Congress, since it has not passed such legislation, apparently agrees.

Yet this Committee, by its investigation, has tried to discourage the holding of such views. The technique is interesting. By holding persons up to scorn and ridicule, it hopes to punish them. By the same technique, it hopes to frighten the movie makers.

Such punishment, it should be noted, is as effective as any legal sanction. Several of the writers indicated for contempt of Congress have been fired from their jobs. The movie industry has reportedly shelved a number of films which, following the pioneering of "Crossfire" and "Gentleman's Agreement," were scheduled to tackle ideas. Apparently the industry is reconciled to the endless and essentially stupid boy meets girl formula which is plaguing it with falling box-office receipts.

Both the industry and the writers have, in effect, been prosecuted for, in the one case, beliefs, and in the other, for hiring persons holding such beliefs. Insofar as they are damaged, they have been convicted as surely as if they were fined in a Court of Law.

Perhaps Communists are dangerous. If so, the party and membership in it should be prohibited by legislative act. If Communists are not dangerous they should be allowed to live in peace. Legal, rather than political, prosecution of disloyal persons has worked in the last 50 years. It could work in this instance.

Donald W. Smithburg, assistant professor of political science, came to IT after spending a year as a Social Science research fellow at Harvard university. During the war he was an administrative analyst with the OPA and OWI, and later head of a planning and procedures section of OPA.

## Slipstick

I'm smoking a pipe with an 11 3/4 inch stem. My doctor told me to stay away from tobacco.

Papa Robin: "How did that speckled egg get into our nest?"  
Mama Robin: "I did it for a lark."

A crystal gazer was addressing one of his clients: "You will be poor and unhappy until you are 40."

"And after that?"  
"You'll get used to it."

A word of advice for our feminine readers: "Never let a fool kiss you and never let a kiss fool you."

"I'm looking for the captain of this boat."  
"He's forward, miss."  
"Oh, I don't mind. This is a pleasure trip."

Discussing the coming Junior Prom two students were overheard:  
Jerry: "My girl is going to wear a biblical gown to the formal."  
Larry: "What do you mean, biblical gown?"  
Jerry: "Oh, you know. Sort of 'low and behold'."

A farmer, noticing the hired man with a lantern, asked where he was going.  
"Courtin'."  
"Courtin'?' With a lantern? I never took one when I was courtin'."  
"Yeah, and look what you got."

Senior: Hello, are you leaving school?  
Freshman: Yeah, the doctor's advice.  
Senior: Which one?  
Freshman: Dr. Gibson.

Tourist Guide: We are now passing the oldest rum house in England.  
American: Why?

Carbolic Guss



### SCHOOL'S OUT

All classes will be excused for the spring recess which begins tomorrow and ends Saturday. Classes will be resumed again on Monday.

## as I see IT

By Sherwood Benson  
Editor-in-Chief

WHETHER OR NOT A LETTER to the Editor agrees with the viewpoint of the Managing board has nothing to do with the likelihood of its getting into print. This is best illustrated by the attack of J. R. Brough on last week's editorial, "Just An Old Southern Custom." (See page three, column two).

Mr. Brough objects to our statement that, "Two per cent of Mississippi's eligible voting population go to the polls." After extensive research I have come to the conclusion that our stated two per cent figure was not representative of average-eligible voter participation in Mississippi.—The per cent of participation in general elections vary, however, depending upon the source of information used and the elections considered.

Although Mr. Brough's 14.4% figure taken from the World Almanac is correct, it does not change the picture. For this same reference shows that 78.8% of the eligible voting population of Illinois participated in the last presidential election. This contrast is more than enough to make anyone question the functioning of democracy in the state of Mississippi.

IN HIS THIRD PARAGRAPH, Mr. Brough claims that "In southern states which do not have a poll tax the percentage of the people voting is no greater than in states which do have a poll tax." — This is not true.

Using Information Please Almanac as a reference guide, it was found that all bordering non-poll tax states have a higher eligible voter participation figure. The only exception to this was Louisiana, which has a slightly lower figure than its bordering non-poll tax state, Texas. However, Louisiana voters must pass comparatively rigid residential requirements, plus a literacy test, which does not apply in Texas.

MR. BROUGH ASKS, "In regard to the fair Employment Practices Act do you propose to tell an employer whom he may hire and upon what basis he may select prospective employees?"

Federal FEPC legislation would not require an employer to hire any specified number of Negroes, Jews, Italians, or Aztecs, but would merely give them all an equal chance at job opportunities where available.

To some skeptics this plan sounds idealistic and impractical—but it can work, as illustrated by the progress made by the New York Commission Against Discrimination after two years of activity. Further details can be found in "Tolerance By Law" in Harper's magazine, November 1947.

THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE on Civil Rights has reported that available statistics show that, decade by decade, lynchings have decreased; however, in the year 1947 lynching remained one of the most serious threats to the civil rights of Americans.

Mr. Brough writes, "The United States Constitution grants each state the right to enact and enforce its own criminal code." But he seems to ignore the fact that the decade from 1936 to 1946 saw at least 43 lynchings, to say nothing of the many attempts. No person received the death penalty, and the majority of the guilty persons were not even prosecuted. Individual states have had the opportunity to enforce their own antilynching laws and have failed.

Although any federal antilynching law would be hampered by a prejudiced local jury, strong federal legislation in this direction would be a step toward the removal of the threat of lynching that hangs over the head of southern Negroes.

THE MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE opposed to President Truman's civil rights program have put their objections in the form of a "states rights" argument. In discussing antipoll tax legislation, Ogg and Ray, pointed this out in their book Introduction to American Government. They write, "For purposes of public discussion, Southern opponents place most stress upon constitutional considerations associated with states' rights. Everyone understands, however, that the actual objective is the maintenance of 'white supremacy'."

In the words of President Truman: "We cannot be content with a civil liberties program which emphasizes only the need of protection against the possibility of tyranny by the Government. . . . We must keep moving forward, with new concepts of civil rights to safeguard our heritage. The extension of civil rights today means not the protection of the people against the Government, but protection of the people by the Government."