

CAREER INFO

Submitted by Mr. James White

The following is a quote from the Scrantonian, Sunday, August 11, 1974. The headline read as follows: "PSPE President Cites Shortage of Engineers and Engineering Technicians."

Newly elected president of the Northeast Chapter of the Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers, Robert Donovan, PE, stated today, "More Engineers and Engineering Technicians are needed, but in general there are not enough of them to go around, nor will there be enough in the foreseeable future."

"Locally, the need for drafting and design engineering technology and mechanical engineering technology graduates cannot be met. The problem is further compounded by the lack of students who are entering such programs. Industrial recruitment efforts have been less than satisfactory which indicates that the problem is widespread," Donovan said.

George Reach, regional engineering manager of Babcock & Wilcox, reiterates the pressing need for the two-year associate degree graduate in mechanical engineering technology. "We even hired some of Penn State's Electrical Engineering Technology students when we could not get enough of their Mechanical Engineering Tech students," he said.

Reach continued, "In general, the need is for junior designers, detail and layout draftsmen in such fields as machine design, structural and piping layout, and tool and die design in manufacturing industries as well as those engaged in installation and erection work. Those who enter engineering technology programs should ideally have an interest and aptitude in algebra and geometry. Such persons should enter this challenging profession immediately to help meet the critical shortage."

"Further, students in junior and senior high school would do well to master mathe-

matics (as well as other scientific subjects) in anticipation of entry into any engineering field."

LIBERAL ARTS GRADS

At a recent conference of the Middle Atlantic Placement Organization, the Liberal Arts graduate was discussed with regard to today's job market and that of the future. The opening panel discussion was composed of the following individuals:

Dr. Gail Thain Parker-President, Bennington College
Harold S. Mohler-President, Hershey Foods Corp.

Dr. Kenneth B. Hayt-Associate Commissioner for Career Education, Professor of Education-University of Maryland.

Dr. Parker viewed higher education as an experience that should be justified in terms of personal development. She said personal development was whatever the individual thought it should be.

Mr. Mohler spoke directly to the question of employing the Liberal Arts graduate. His remarks indicated that traditional areas of employment for Liberal Arts students are being filled by Business majors with Bachelors and Masters degrees. Mr. Mohler's point was why train a Liberal Arts graduate at company expense and time when the Business graduate has, for the most part, been exposed to industries during undergraduate and graduate studies.

Dr. Hayt summed up his opinions about Liberal Arts graduates with the following statement: "By qualifying them for everything, they become qualified for nothing." Those are very pointed words, and Dr. Hayt certainly does not mean nothing in the absolute sense, but rather in a sense of warning.

The general consensus of the panel was that the Liberal Arts graduate faces a difficult challenge in the labor market of the future,

& a labor market that will require specific skills produced by specialized training.

The results of a 1974 survey encompassing 1,002 firms from various industries concerning their prospects of employing Liberal Arts graduates was distributed at the conference. Two hundred and twenty five firms responded. Sixty three firms have employed Liberal Arts graduates. When the same sixty three firms were asked about future job openings for Liberal Arts graduates, forty-two firms responded that openings would be available.

A final comment on Liberal Arts courses: No individual at the conference related a desire to eliminate Liberal Arts courses from curriculum studies. The need for man to understand his fellow man, social structures, and history is recognized as a necessary part of the education process. It was the extent to which generalized education can be carried and the resulting effect of uncertain employability that was challenged, not the need for Liberal Arts courses and their broadening educational value.

The conference discussion and the survey referred to the above point to the need for all students to be aware of their career and academic goals. The labor market is a dynamic process reflecting vast changes in our social and economic culture. The manner in which each individual fits into such a dynamic process requires personal and environmental information. In other words, personal abilities, interests and values and the characteristics pertinent to career and academic goals must be periodically monitored. Changes, when they occur, should reflect personal action that will modify goals or the means to attain goals. To ignore or not be aware of the changes that affect one's goals is poor planning that ultimately leads to personal frustration. Be aware of what is happening to you and around you. Your future is truly within your own ability to care enough about yourself to ask "Where am I going? How am I going to get there?"