

PENN STATE COLLEGIAN

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OF LITTLE AVAIL

Open student protest against the R. O. T. C., for some reason or other, has been rather feeble. There has been plenty of grumbling because of the irksomeness of the thing, and quite a little objection to the compulsory course on theoretical grounds. But these protests have been confined to "bull sessions" and other occasions at which very little courage is required to attack the existing set-up.

The letter of a freshman in this issue, therefore, is a welcome communication. Like any other opinion, it has points which could be questioned and proved flimsy. But it cannot be disregarded, even by those who would denounce it as "pacifistic." In substance, it represents the opinion of a good many students who have taken or are taking the two-year basic military course.

The sympathies of this paper are not with the R. O. T. C. On the whole, the time spent on the drill field and in the classroom could be used to better advantage in other courses or activities. Military training itself is usually irksome, and of little value as physical exercise. The aims and accomplishments of the R. O. T. C., as listed in the College catalogue and quoted in the letter, are exaggerated. The ultimate purpose of any course in military training is one which does not receive the sanction of those who are convinced of the futility of war and its instruments. Finally, the "obligation" of any college to require military training is open to question.

But these and other points are familiar to almost everybody. They have already been expanded at great length, often to no avail. Some change for the better was made in the R. O. T. C. set-up here this year, but it did not greatly alter the charges which can be made against military training as a whole. There are circumstances, it seems, which prevent any really great changes. There is reason to believe that some persons in responsible positions would like to make a change if they could, but the matter of expediency enters in. Because of this situation, therefore, it is difficult to see just what can be done, other than swallowing the bitter pill.

THE LETTER PUBLISHED last week regarding medical service here was published because the writer thought he had a just complaint to make. There have been other cases of a similar nature. Probably there is a good reason for the present situation. If there is, some sort of a dignified explanation should be forthcoming. At least, it would put a stop to charges which may be unfair. Silence merely encourages them.

MANAGERS AND POLITICS

The recent football managerial elections, in which a non-fraternity man was elected a first assistant, should be a set-back to those who are always howling about "politics" and "string-pulling." In this instance, at least, the men who did the work and were the most capable presumably were elected. The precedent is a good one for future managerial elections to continue.

The calibre of the present senior sports managers is of the sort that gives promise of honesty and lack of favoritism in elections. In the past, there have been a good many instances of "I'll put your man in if you put my man in." These gave rise, and justly so, to a student attitude which believed religiously that "the manager's man always made out." Consequently, there was a feeling of hopelessness on the part of a managerial candidate who didn't have anyone to "pull" for him. This then led to the suggestion early this year that men belonging to the same house as the manager be barred from competing for a managerial position in that particular sport. Obviously, such a proposal if put into effect would do little to stop favoritism, as there could be "trades" between the managers of different sports. Furthermore, the manager has only one vote in elections, and if men from his fraternity are barred from competition, then men belonging to the same houses as the other members of the elections board should be barred. These evident defects in the suggestion have led to its rejection.

In its place, however, a much better proposal has been advanced, and used in the recent football managerial elections. This plan requires that each of the three first assistant managers, in suggesting three new assistants to the elections board, submit three identical lists. If the three first assistants can agree on three men to succeed them, then the action of the executive board must be somewhat of the rubber stamp sort. If, on the other hand, three lists containing seven or eight different names are submitted, then the opportunity for "politics" at the elections board meeting is increased. This plan, coupled with a conscious desire on the part of some of the present managers to observe candidates at work and reward the best men, will remove much of the truth from the charges of "politics" on this campus.

OLD MANIA

Recently we overheard a freshman crying the aged-old grievance against the R. O. T. C. But this freshman had a constructive suggestion to make. "Why not," he wanted to know, "do away with the Army in favor of the Navy?" He said he'd much rather be a sailor than a soldier any day.

This suggestion has more merit than is apparent on first glance. Consider. Instead of being enveloped in itchy, ill-fitting uniforms the boys could wear a snappy blue ensemble which would go over big in Bellefonte and San Francisco. Instead of sitting through dull, laborious lectures the lucky students taking "Rudder-C" could be put to work building a training ship on the front campus, or they could just play that they had a ship there. The flagpoles would help the illusion along. Sailors should know how to swim; they could be taught in the College duck pond near the Evergreens which would undoubtedly be a relief to the people who try to find a use for that forlorn spot.

Or they could put sails on Old Main and sail it over to Penn State in China; they'd probably appreciate the honor.

By the way, does anyone know the identity of the lad who called up the Phi Mu house and asked the Pope if she was going steadily?

To our mind this past week-end takes an all-time prize for wetness without apparent reason. The College was flooded with beer and conviviality, voices were constantly "raised in song," the whole atmosphere was decidedly mellow.

Repeat? Well, maybe. But the bottles that were so aggressively displayed were mostly old, faithfuls filled with very, very, new "moon."

VERSE
Has Repeat of Inhibition
Slain the "Co-ed Inhibition"?

The Phi Gam house was rather crowded on Saturday night, and some of the dancers were shoved right into the noses of the band. All of which is neither unusual or funny. But it so happened that Jim Norris (Thespian, Beta, Adventurer and Man About New York) was dancing in just the right position when Emery May reached for a low note on his trombone.

We understand that although Dean Warnock really did purchase a copy of The Old Main Bell, there is absolutely no truth in the rumor that Director Bezdek tried to buy out the whole supply!

ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr. and Mrs. X. X. Fletcher announce the engagement of their daughter Nancy to "Boots" Frizzell

Well, "Boots," we just thought you might like to know.

MICKY FINNS

MacFarlane and Marge Kushke at the Phi Ep house on Friday night... Fran Turner and Phillips at the same... who said they wished Sue Hoffer would let down her hair?... such an unbraiding... all is not what it Seaman's in the "Y"... who poured The Campuseer into bed Saturday night?... Fay Christine claims to be simply ga about uniforms... and as dawn breaks over a silent, deserted, campus, your little Maniac does an "off to Buffalo" into the shadows, wishing you a merry, merry, New Year. We hope yule like it.

—THE MANIAC

'Collegian' Letter Box

To the Editor:

I am irritated by the course in "citizenship" training otherwise commonly known as R. O. T. C. Annoyed, perhaps, because I can not interpret citizenship in terms of rifles, marksmanship, close order drills, brass bands, and the practical and theoretical instruction of the soldier. My exposure to three months of drill compels me to suspect that Noah Webster, too, is unfamiliar with the term in its relation to R. O. T. C.

It arouses the suspicious nature in a student when he learns that he has been gently coerced into a movement which bears no semblance to the conception that he once treasured of it. He is disillusioned because he has accepted at full value its virtues as they have been so vividly portrayed to him. He wonders why it was necessary to use pretense to urge him to join the ranks. He has been told that R. O. T. C. has been instituted "to give training in leadership to male students... as will be of value to them in civilian, industrial, or professional careers," and then speaking of graduate students in R. O. T. C. "they become the professional associates of prominent men in their community." (Quotation from College Catalogue.)

After he becomes better acquainted with the course, he finds that he has lost "liberty and independence" which his fore-fathers tried to secure for him on the bloody fields of the Revolution, because he is not permitted to question or discuss the value and purpose of R. O. T. C. in the class room. The War Dept. prescribes that "this course shall be taught by the didactic method, without discussion and without argument." (Excerpt from the Training Manual issued by the War Dept.)

They tell him that he profits from

the disciplinary features of the course. It is only too true that discipline is the point receiving the most emphasis; but this is the discipline of obedience to the dictates of a single individual and require the order to be carried out regardless of consequence or merit. In the tradition of the soldier, "It's not for us to wonder why; it's but for us to do or die." This is not the development of individuality. This is the foundation of mob rule. Beyond all doubt, there are those who question the truthfulness of these

(Continued on page four)

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