

VALUE AND WHY:

Required ROTC

It's odd how people will react when they have to do something and when they do not have the opportunity to do something. Students particularly. Students and ROTC (that stands for Reserve Officer Training Corps) double particularly.

Recently in the DAILY NEBRASKAN editorial mail have been several letters from offended students protesting compulsory ROTC. Probably, it's just the continued reaction to the word "compulsory". Maybe not. Nevertheless, it is hard to imagine such a reaction just because a student has to take two years of ROTC.

Almost two weeks ago the Welfare Committee of the Student Council randomly selected 150 male students to answer a questionnaire about ROTC. In it was the statement, "We are not asking for a yes or no answer to the question: should we have elective basic ROTC? We feel that the answer to this question is NO! — In other words, the committee expressed an opinion and answered a question before the student even had a chance to outline his own thoughts.

Yesterday, Lt. Col. George B. Haag, Jr., assistant professor of Air Science, and Col. Elmer R. Powell, professor of Military Science, answered these two questions: What is your department's position on compulsory ROTC and what do you think of the "NO" answer provided by the Welfare Committee of the Student Council (detailed above).

Lt. Col. Haag asked to look at the first question from the standpoint of the cadets themselves. If it is a feeling of the society in which we live, he said, that compulsory ROTC is not good, then perhaps we should not have it. But, he added, the University itself and the Board of Regents, in particular, have definite reasons for maintaining it, one of which perhaps is that it feels that ROTC is a part of the educational requirement and that students, as cadets, can be rounded out somewhat and thus made better citizens. If the program accomplishes this, he said, there is a sound reason for its existence as it is.

Col. Powell explained the first this way: Compulsory ROTC is one of the ways land grant colleges responded after they had accepted Federal land. They have, though, long since paid back their debt in terms of leadership obligation. Any school can apply for a change of the system. At Wisconsin authorities responded to left-wing pressure and changed and at Iowa State a decision of the Board of Regents changed it.

He continued that Nebraska could charge the requirement. A new program could be set up similar to Iowa State where students are required to complete 5 hours of mathematics rather than ROTC. Col. Powell added that he had just finished a talk to a central Nebraska adult group. Most of them had taken ROTC in school and although only one had gone on to become an officer, most felt they had benefited from the basic program. He thought that this adult wisdom, in addition to that of the University administration, should be considered.

Col. Powell said with regard to the second question that such a questionnaire is a hard thing to achieve and the committee should be commended for not being a discredit to the state and school. He explained that legislation is in Congress now that is designed to attract the kind of student ROTC wants and who will satisfy national leadership requirements. The purpose of basic, he said, is to help a man to a level of decision where he can decide whether to enter advanced ROTC.

Lt. Col. Haag responded similarly. He said ROTC is required to provide a number of officers yearly and the core that basic provides is vital to national security.

What these men have said should be seriously considered before romping off to abolish something one has to do. ROTC, in reality, offers the student many opportunities. What better way to become an officer than while still in school? Compulsory ROTC—How can one decide to go advanced when just out of high school with no taste of the service whatsoever?

But, probably, it is a sad truth that these are not even the issues. Look deeply before criticizing and define the real reasons. It will likely be found that the gripe is that the student has to attend class two hours a week and wear a uniform another hour a week. Are three hours a week really too big a price to pay for the opportunities provided? Isn't ROTC really an integral part of education?

FIRETRUCK:

What Does It Take To Be Innocent Or Mortar Board?

By Arnie Garson

What does it take to be an Innocent or Mortar Board? I don't really know and I don't think anyone outside the sacred organizations could tell me.

The Mortar Boards claim a 6.5 overall average requirement. That's fine. But how about the Innocents? The rumors are that they require a 6.0 overall. Except they will drop the lowest semester from the records. Except a unanimous vote can overrule a low average. Except that they won't drop the first semester junior year grades.

Well, those are the rumors for what they're worth and they're not worth much. Even the Innocents themselves will admit the University exists primarily for academic achievement. In view of this, two questions: First, why won't the hooded gentlemen state exactly what their scholastic requirement is? Second, is a weak 6.0 (as the requirements rumors seem to indicate is required) really representative of superior academic achievement?

In regard to the first question, an Innocent recently told me in defense of not

publicizing the admission requirements that the past record of men selected speaks for itself, scholastically. I don't think it does. Since I have been college I have known some Innocents who carried low five averages.

If the group really wants their successors to be respected on campus as leaders, why are they afraid to set standards for themselves and their successors?

In regard to the second question, opponents of raising the average argue that good men might be eliminated from consideration simply because they are enrolled in a more difficult college. If this is a valid objection (and I'm not yet sure it is), why not consider men only in the upper third or quarter of 20 per cent of their class?

Now I can see the defense and even justification for a certain degree of mysticism surrounding both groups, but I cannot see the justification for no insuring the campus that this group of men will always deserve the degree of

(Cont. on Page 3)



View From The Right

By Dick Recker

This is the season for political prognosticating. Considering that this writer gave odds on Liston over Clay in the first round, perhaps infallibility is not one of his credentials. However, on the basis of some expert advice, I shall venture some predictions.

Recently this writer had the privilege of meeting Mr. Fulton Lewis III. This young man is a brilliant and articulate champion of Conservatism. When we talked, he had just finished a ten day campaign swing through New Hampshire. He made fifty-seven speeches during this ten day period.

Mr. Lewis, based on his first hand knowledge, gave this estimate of the New Hampshire Primary. The field is far too crowded for a decisive victory. Senator Goldwater's campaign had faltered at first but now is functioning smoothly. Barry will be the winner with nearly 40% of the vote. Rocky, with his lavish use of funds, has earned second place. Lodge will be a strong third due, primarily, to his strength in Boston. A surprise will be Senator Margaret Chase Smith who will run better than Mr. Nixon whose campaign for write-in votes will fall short of the 25,000 which he amassed as write-in candidate for vice-president in 1956.

These views are quite different from our press reports. The question, however, is whether the press is really giving us the facts. A national news magazine, for example had written: Goldwater's campaign has all the zip of a snapped rubber band." This and other reports are giving the American citizenry a false image of the campaign.

One of the most cherished myths that our liberal press likes to preserve and promote is Goldwater's allegedly poor appeal in the big industrial states. Let us look at the facts. In Illinois, Barry is virtually certain to win the primary over Senator-Smith. By virtue of this victory alone he will have that state's 58 votes in his hip pocket. Governor John Rhodes has promised Ohio's 58 votes on the second ballot in return for not running in the primary in that state. Governor Romney can hold his delegates for only the first ballot.

But what of the East which is often described as the heartland of Anti-Conservative sentiment. Senator Goldwater, in a daring move, is entering the June 2nd primary in New York. Publicly taking on a New York Governor for his own delegation is a move in political memory unparalleled for sheer audacity. The June 2nd primary is a contest to elect two delegates from each Congressional

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CAMPUS OPINION

ROTC Needs These Changes

Dear Editor:

Arnie Garson's article in last Thursday's DAILY NEBRASKAN concerning ROTC should be read and mentally digested by every person on our campus, for indeed, ROTC is a matter that concerns all of us who are interested in the improvement of our university. Ask yourself these questions. What does the current ROTC program contribute to me as a student, as a teacher, as an administrator? Does a course in military tactics (?) really belong in a university curriculum? How is ROTC beneficial to our goals of higher education?

When I first entered this university I listened in awe of what was expected of me as a student of higher learning. I would now need to budget my time intelligently such that I would receive a maximum of benefits from a limited amount of time. I set up my budget only to discover that already I had an unwarranted amount of time, allocated needlessly, to military training. In the business, an unnecessary part of a valuable budget is soon cut out. Since times have changed and this unnecessary part of the budget no longer contributes to the attainment of university goals, I feel it too should be cut out of the budget.

I submit another observation. No other department or college on this campus can draw upon over 60% of the students enrolled. With this potential, why can't ROTC command a greater return for its efforts? It is my opinion that we students do not wish to integrate two distinct and separate factors of our lives. Higher education and military training should be separate. They are separate entities. They should not be integrated unless the individual student feels that he wishes to do so.

I have been subjected to two years of ROTC and I have made an honest attempt to make a qualitative appraisal of the benefits I have received from these two years. Taking all factors into consideration, I

found that my assets had not increased. This was a sad conclusion when I reviewed the time and energy that I expended. But, when the Cuban invasion broke, I ran for my gun. I knew I could help. In ROTC I had learned that you need bullets for a gun. Not only that, but you point the gun so that the bullets go away from you. I knew I could help.

Any criticism that is to be of any value at all must be constructive in nature or it is self-defeating. It is with this thought in mind that I respectfully submit the following changes to be made in the ROTC program:

1.) Make ROTC an Elective—let the individual decide for himself whether he wishes to integrate his military training into his higher educational efforts or keep them separate. This approach will raise the standards and effectiveness of a ROTC program. Those students who then elect to take ROTC will be motivated by personal goals, not by helpless submission. 2.) Modernize the Objectives—while the past is important in planning the future, the real goal should be to familiarize one's self with the present techniques of modern warfare. The next war we have could very well be decided in a matter of hours. We will not be concerned as much with "holding a position" as we will be with total destruction, nuclear defense, and nuclear fall-out. These are the enemies of the future. 3.) Take Advantage of the Opportunities Extended by the Other Colleges in the University—courses in mechanical, electrical and civil engineering; courses in math and the sciences—courses that will give a realm to the ROTC program. Courses that will give substance to its new objectives and meaning to its new goals. With this, of course, will be courses of real value in military training, tactics, and procedures.

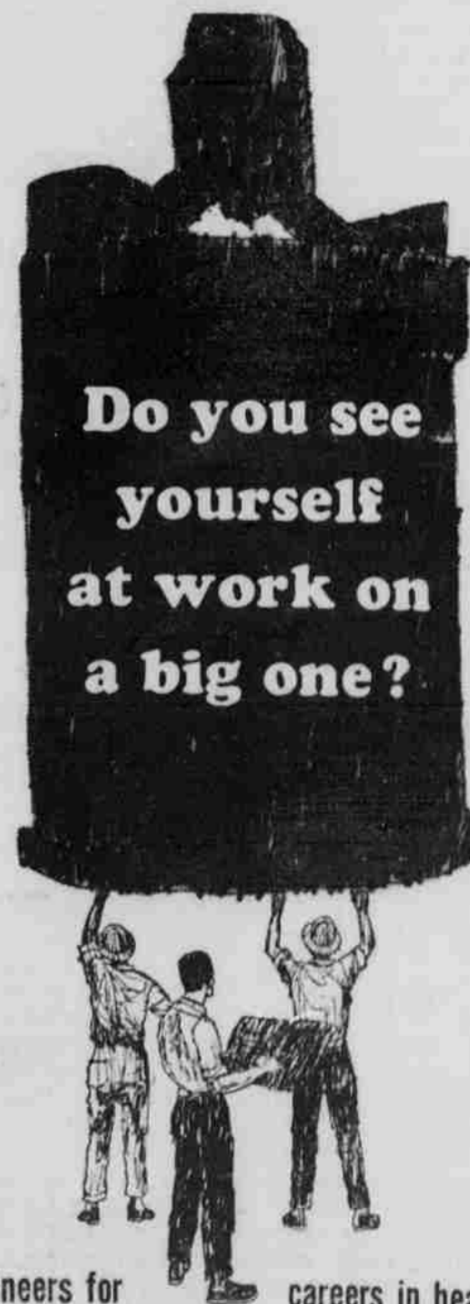
4.) Professional Instructors—filter out "spoils jobs" and replace these people with professional, sincerely interested, and adequately trained specialists in the

field of military Science. When the student feels that the instructor is sincerely concerned and familiar with what he is teaching, the student will become more alert to its importance. There are many other suggestions that could be made but I feel that these four could greatly benefit the University of Nebraska ROTC program. ROTC could then become a meaningful and proud part of our university.

A major objection to improving ROTC by making it an Elective is that this will reduce the supply of officers. This is a very poor argument for these four reasons: 1.) Advanced ROTC is not compulsory and this is the training ground for officer personnel. Compulsory ROTC does not in fact increase the supply of material, but it decreases it. When the students on campus are subjected to the first two years of ROTC it is here that the advanced material is lost. 2.) I do not feel that it is the university's responsibility to recruit material for the military service. The university's function is to "educate", not to "recruit and train". We have the responsibility of the military service (SS) to recruit officer material. This can be accomplished by improved methods and increased efforts on their part; but not by compulsory ROTC in our university. 3.) College students, males, must serve in the armed service, under our present laws, as must all other male citizens of the U.S., age 18-26, etc, etc. The point here is that college graduates will seek out officer training and use their education rather than let it lay idle for two or three years. They provide good material for officers, benefit the service, and themselves.

This brings us to the problem at hand. Should we be subjected to compulsory ROTC in our university? For the above stated reasons, I submit that we should not and that a positive change is long over due!

Thomas E. James



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