

1.3.47

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

901 Hamilton St.
Allentown, Penna.
March 28, 1956

Mr. L. F. Hickernell, Chairman
Committee on Planning & Coordination
Anaconda Wire & Cable Co.
Hastings on Hudson, N. Y.

Dear Hick:

I read with considerable interest your letter of March 22 to the Committee discussing additional suggestions for consideration in our study of Institute organization.

Ever since my first year on the Board in 1940, I have felt that our National organization has been basically wrong. I strongly favor a form of organization such as we developed in our March 15 meeting, which is basically founded on:

- (a) A Board that comprises members from various segments of our operations to insure complete coverage of all phases of the organization. This insures against the unfamiliarity of the Board with problems that arise in AIEE management that often blocks progress in obtaining Board action on items vital to our development and progress.
- (b) The practical plan of allocating responsibility for major functions to Board members who can represent the interest of these functions in Board deliberations.
- (c) Delegation of minor responsibilities to heads of functions, who are members of the Board, thus relieving the Board of wasting time on matters best handled by lower AIEE echelons.
- (d) Elimination of the present absurdity of having "Directors at Large" who have no responsibility or specific duties, who are therefore not familiar with any phase of our operations in

March 28, 1956

detail and who despite our pious claims of "unbiased representation of the entire membership" are as devoted and loyal to the special interests of their districts responsible for their election as the Vice President.

- (e) Combining functions in correlated groups which has been found to be so satisfactory in our setup of the technical committees.

I think we are unnecessarily concerned over the possibility of politics or "gang rule". Despite the glib claims that you and I, and others, make to our membership, we know that our present system is as exposed to political manipulation as any system anyone can devise. District 3 can at any time (and sometimes does) dictate who shall be President of the Institute. The political power of Districts 3 and 5 can at any time easily control the elections of the Institute. The unsound practice of perpetuating the incumbent in the office of Treasurer is certainly contrary to all concepts of democratic operation of a professional society and adds to the political power of the district to which he is loyal.

I believe the outline of an approved organization (with an executive vice president) as you outlined, is far superior to what we now have, and what has ever been proposed in the past. I see no necessity whatever for an additional 6 "Directors at Large" which perpetuates the present unsatisfactory situation. If the "turnover" resulting from this setup is not completely satisfactory, then some lower percentage could be accomplished by extending the term of office of certain directors. For example, we might set it up somewhat as follows:

<u>Office</u>	<u>Term of Office</u>	<u>Years on Board</u>
President	1 yr	* at least 5
Executive V.P.	2 yrs	* at least 4
Treasurer	4 yrs	*** 4 yrs
Vice Pres. (11)	2 yrs	** 2 or more
Director (6 technical)	2 yrs	at least 2 yrs
Director (7 other)	3 yrs	at least 3 yrs

With such a setup, three Board members would have 4 or 5 years' service, seven would have at least 3 years' service, and the remaining seventeen would have at least 2 years' service, and many would have well in excess of 2 years perhaps as much as 6. I believe this would be satisfactory turnover for efficient operation. I would be strongly in favor of eliminating the "Directors at Large", and the present pretense of "representing all of the membership."

* If required to be Past Vice Pres. or Director.

** A large percentage of Vice Presidents are Past Directors.

*** Should be limited to 4 yrs.

Mr. L. F. Hickernell, Chairman

-3-

March 28, 1956

I believe that we now have a grand opportunity to render the Institute a great service by instituting a much needed reorganization in its top management and I hope you will continue to push for an acceptable plan.

In any organization plan, we should strive to eliminate the present major deterrent to placement of our most competent members in responsible assignments, our pernicious worship of "rotation." From district to national levels, "rotation" is keeping many of our most able potential from election to high office. Imagine a successful industrial firm selecting its executives on the basis of rotation!

Hope we can review this some time, just the four of us.

WEM:BAW

Sincerely,

cc-Messrs.
N.S.Hibbsman
M.D.Hooven

Walter B. Morton, Member
P&C Committee

P.S. Hope you are continuing as Chairman another year.

W.B.M.