



AMERICAN INSTITUTE of ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS

345 EAST FORTY-SEVENTH STREET, NEW YORK 17, N. Y.

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April 23, 1962

Mr. C. H. Linder
General Electric Co.
570 Lexington Avenue
New York 22, New York

Dear Mr. Linder:

You asked for a summary of thoughts that might be used in responding to Mr. Brownlee's letter to the Editor published in the April 16, 1962 issue of ELECTRICAL WORLD.

Enclosed are several letters prepared for that purpose. Only that of President Chase is presently scheduled to appear in ELECTRICAL WORLD. That was submitted for the April 30 issue. Others are merely drafts which may be used as suggestions for anyone who may feel impelled to offer something for publication.

As a matter of public relations policy, it has been decided not to attempt a detailed or specific rebuttal and thereby attract unwarranted attention to the original contribution. It was considered wiser to take whatever opportunity is afforded to emphasize the positive advantages and opportunities anticipated in the merger. Mr. Haraden Pratt's letter to Mr. Chase, however, does point out several errors in Mr. Brownlee's facts and conclusions which may be useful wherever, as in a forum discussion, direct response is required.

In what follows I will attempt to note some of the thoughts that have occurred to me, or have appeared in what has been written about the merger, as they are suggested by Mr. Brownlee's letter.

The King's Coat - Maybe the more mature of the king's subjects were not so much indoctrinated or "brain washed" as they were understanding of the fact that the gold robe of state was in hock as security for borrowed welfare funds, and appreciative of the king's willingness to march in his underwear. "Perfection is often the enemy of progress and its pursuit will usually hold up the parade".

I don't know why there have been so few thoughtful letters of opposition and doubt from AIEE members. Maybe it is because AIEE has for at least six years made no secret of its willingness to consider merger, while IRE has been unresponsive until the current conversations began. Maybe IRE isn't yet used to being a majority party and still reacts with something of the psychology of an underprivileged minority. I once heard it described as "suffering from the biggest institutional inferiority complex west of the iron curtain." Anyway, it must be conceded that Mr. Brownlee's claim to an almost unique position is valid.

(was at the time of his writing)

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I. "National Technical Committees, as we know them, will be abandoned. In their place will be 'Technical Groups'."

As Mr. Chase's letter says in effect, "So what?" The functions are the important consideration, not the labels. There is plenty of evidence that "Professional Groups" are not universally preferred in IRE. In any event, the AIEE Board on October 16, 1959, approved for AIEE "National Technical Groups ... (in which) the Technical Committee in the corresponding area would act as the Executive Committee of the corresponding groups responsible for the programs and activities of the groups as a whole". What is needed is for the TOD to come up with, and vigorously promote, a positive plan for integration of their technical committees into the leadership of the PTG's. Part of what troubles some of our Power Division people is the prospect of expanded responsibility and competition for leadership in the bigger and more democratic arena of the Professional Groups. An AIEE technical committee can be a very tight self-perpetuating little group with a vested interest in a quota of Transactions pages and other prerogatives and controls. It is hoped that Mr. Kinghorn, the present V-P of the Power Division, who does not agree with Mr. Brownlee, can come up with a statement of the greater opportunities for the power and industrial people in the merger. Afterall, it is our electronic people who will have to scramble for a place in the merged bodies. The power and industry people can move in and take charge of their new quarters without competition.

II. "Publications will be destroyed by a hodgepodge".

As Mr. Pratt points out, we have something of a hodgepodge right now with Conference Papers preprinted and otherwise, District Papers, Transactions, Bimonthlies, Special Publications, STC Proceedings, ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING Articles, etc. There is no denying the terrific problem involved in setting up a new publication program. We might wish that the Principles had been less specific in the earlier editions. There is real danger in losing advertising to the large number of hungry "controlled circulation" commercial publications.

III. Vital Steps (1) to (4)

Our time-honored procedure of solicitation, review, acceptance, preprinting, presentation, discussion, and publication, tying our basic literature to meetings needs objective scrutiny. It goes back to the mutton-chop-whiskers-days when it was felt nothing could be published without being exposed for discussion by the recognized authorities - Steinmetz, Lamme, Pupin, Jewett, etc. The quantity and quality of discussion has fallen off markedly in the last 20 years.

"The proposed agreement A slender straw ... The results to-date"

- 1) Obviously the only remaining constitution is the one that must be amended.

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2. "Technical Committees are scheduled for extinction"

In name perhaps, but not in function. Dr. Haggerty pours oil on the fire rather than on troubled waters with his reply to Heller (PROCEEDINGS PART II April 1962) "Once all of the old AIEE Technical Committees have had their publications and technical meeting functions taken by PTG's....".
^{over}

3. "IRE methods of operation have been retained and AIEE methods terminated".

Dr. Haggerty agrees in his February 24, 1962 letter to J.V.N. Granger (PROCEEDINGS PART II April 1962 page 37) when he says, "This overall managerial mechanism is exactly that of IRE, and I see no reason to assume it will not work just as well for the IRE".

4. "The self-perpetuating Board of IRE which is in fact the nominating committee is retained in contrast to the AIEE system"

The average term of office on the IRE Board does not indicate abuse of the opportunities of its Board in this respect. Self-perpetuation can be concentrated or decentralized. The opportunity exists in the Districts, Divisions, and Departments of AIEE to pass these Board nominations along in the controlling group without effective review by an overall Institute Nominating Committee. True, tenure in AIEE is limited so far as the individual is concerned to six years plus three, if the presidency is ultimately attained. But "self-perpetuation" may be a corporate, regional, or even technical-interest phenomenon .

5. "Publications of IRE are retained AIEE abandoned".

We rather hope a whole new deal will evolve. It is time. I doubt either should be retained. There is wide-spread dissatisfaction with the PROCEEDINGS. This is a point on which firmness is needed.

6. "Basic items such as membership qualifications, terms of office for Directors, Members-for-Life, and details of nominations are relegated to the Bylaws which can be changed by the Board at any time".

AIEE has been moving in this direction.

C20.080 - "Age, experience, and other qualifications for any grade of member are prescribed in the Bylaws. " C20.090 - "The Board of Directors may establish in the Bylaws alternate, but at least equivalent, qualifications for all grades of membership except Fellow."

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Terms of Directors elected by members, as Mr. Pratt points out, are specified in the Constitution of IEEE. That leaves the seven or eight chosen by the Assembly on a year-to-year basis in the Bylaws and so far available for very long terms.

Members-for-Life must be settled. I've had several letters lately asking about this. AIEE says 35 years membership or 30 years at age 70. In IRE it is 35 years with minimum age 65. I think the minimum age is good. The numbers are going to increase rapidly from now on. Less than 10% of AIEE Members-for-Life continue to donate dues. The question is what to do with the AIEE members who have qualified, and will qualify, before age 65? Those who joined right out of college come due at about 56 or 57 and have eight or nine active years at top salaries left. The present 3,000 (total) cost us around \$60,000 in dues each year and have \$120,000 worth of service available. This uncertainty may cost us some votes from potential and present Members-for-Life.

Details of nominating procedures need some improvement as the Bylaws are developed. Many AIEE members don't like leaving so much of this to the Board.

Unity and its advancement

(a) In its present frame of mind, with respect to EJC at that time, I suspect AIEE also would have declined to join. It darned near did anyway. However, EJC dues are included in the proposed IEEE budget.

(b) Activities other than technical are not looked on with favor by AIEE recently either. As long ago as June 1950 the AIEE Board voted "to recognize that the Institute finds its chief reason for existence in the technical field."

(c) Space in the UEC - This is badly distorted by the use of the word "prohibits". However, you will be the first to know what the true situation is. Why it is taking so long to produce the required letter in the IRE Counsel's office I can't imagine.

Conclusions

A. On the record there might be some basis for this statement. I don't know whether "conciliatory" might be a better word than "cooperative". Only members of the Eight-Man Committee are qualified to comment on this one.

B. We can only wait and see.

Let me suggest two quotes from Ben Franklin, I think, in a similar situation: "I doubt, too, whether any of ~~the~~ Convention we can obtain may be able to make a better constitution. For when you assemble a number of men to have the advantage of their joint wisdom, you inevitably assemble with those men all of their prejudices, their passions, their errors of opinion, their local interests and selfish views. From such an assembly can a perfect production be expected? It, therefore, astonishes me, sir, to find this system approaching so near to perfection as it does."

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If "convention" were changed to "committee", it might serve very well as one of those interesting things that a speaker sometimes says and lets the audience in on the fact that he is quoting rather than expressing his own opinion only after he has completed the quotation. Franklin also commented further on the constitution:

"I confess that there are several parts of this constitution which I do not at present approve, but I am not sure I shall never approve them. For having lived long, I have experienced many instances of being obliged by better information, or fuller consideration, to change opinions which I once thought right, therefore, the older I grow, the more apt I am to doubt my own judgment, and to pay more respect to the judgment of others.

"In these sentiments, sir, I agree to this constitution, with all its faults, if they are such; ~~but~~ I think a General Government necessary for us."

↑
because

Cordially yours,

Nelson

N. S. Hibshman
Executive Secretary

NSH:amd

cc: Mr. W. H. Chase

Encl.