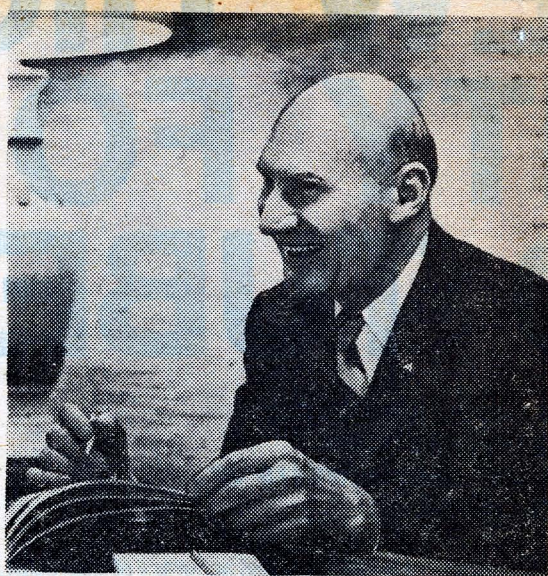


MAN BEHIND THE NEWS

MERGER MAESTRO: Combining engineering and philosophy, pedagogy and administration, should enable Dr. Ernst Weber to guide the merger of the AIEE and the IRE while conducting the affairs of the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn.



NEW YORK.—The knack of successfully combining two or more activities at a time should come in handy for Dr. Ernst Weber, president of the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn, who will become the first president of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers at the beginning of the year.

Dr. Weber will be in a position to guide the merger of the Institute of Radio Engineers and the American Institute of Electrical Engineers forming the new IEEE.

Twice before in his life, Dr. Weber has been engaged in two distinct programs at one time, and in each instance has merged these activities to help him improve his capabilities for carrying out his next project.

A dual interest in philosophy and engineering led Dr. Weber, who was born in Vienna in 1901, to pursue a double course of studies, attending both the Technical University of Vienna and the University of Vienna, neither institution knowing he was attending the other at the same time. (He laughed but was noncommittal when asked if he would approve of his present students pursuing a like course.)

After receiving his degree in electrical engineering Dr. Weber joined the Austrian Siemens-Schuckert Co. as a research engineer. He received a Ph.D. from the University of Vienna in 1926 and Doctor of Science degree in 1927 from the Technical University for studies on field theory.

In the fall of 1930, Dr. Weber accepted an invitation as visiting professor at Brooklyn Poly. A year later he was named permanent research professor of electrical engineering in charge of graduate study. He could now combine his technical and philosophical training in becoming what some of his former students have called "the most inspiring teacher they ever had."

Formed Microwave Research Group.

During World War II, Dr. Weber organized a microwave research group out of which developed the Microwave Research Institute. In 1945 he was appointed head of the department of electrical engineering and director of the Institute. Being in charge of the Institute, which became a tax-paying corporation owned by Brooklyn Poly under the name of Polytechnic Research and Development Corp., Dr. Weber now had experience in the technical, pedagogical and administrative fields.

Appointed to the new post of vice-president for research at the Polytechnic, Dr. Weber was named acting president of BPI in 1957 following the sudden death of Dr. Harry S. Rogers. He became president of the school at the end of the year.

Active in the AIEE since 1930 and the IRE since 1945, Dr. Weber was elected president of IRE for 1959. Combining the presidency of a leading technical school and 160,000-member technical society should be taken in stride by Dr. Weber.

Discussing his role as an educator, Dr. Weber says there is a lack of initiative in young people today. Not blaming this on the students only, he feels the social climate is directed toward a sense of security and a uniformity of thinking among all people. He says that in the Middle Ages, people were devoted to a greater cause than making money, and today the Soviets have made the state a cause and have been successful because of this.

Dr. Weber noted he has tried to bring to his lectures the idea "there is a fundamental system of law and order—something that permits us to formulate laws and designs—and we must always be aware of this." The soft-spoken though forceful speaker with a very slight trace of the native German in his speech, demonstrated his own deep conviction when he said, "We are here for a purpose. There is law and order in the universe. We must make good on our own terms for the benefit of all. Self betterment should be the main thought instilled in students."

Eyes Avoidance of Duplication.

Speaking of the problems associated with the merger of the two technical societies, Dr. Weber said the IRE Professional Group system has been successful, the PG growth having kept pace with the increase in total membership in the organization. He said the AIEE Technical Committee system also has been effective, but the older officers have kept control and younger members have become restless. He said he looks forward to the avoidance of duplication in having both technical committees and professional groups in the new organization.

Dr. Weber and his wife, Dr. Sonya Weber, a retired member of the faculty of the School of Medicine at Columbia University, live in suburban Mount Vernon, N. Y. They enjoy the opera and concerts and Dr. Weber is on the board of the Brooklyn Philharmonic.

—George Deuber