

ARMY, NAVY READY TO USE COLLEGES FOR TRAINING MEN

Plan to Send Many in Uniform
to Classes Awaits Only the
President's Approval

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REQUISITIONING IS DENIED

Project Held Purely Voluntary
—Smaller Schools Fear They
Will Be Left Out

Many thousands of young men now in the armed services will be transferred from the barracks to the classrooms of the nation's colleges to begin intensive courses, according to a plan that has been worked out by the Army and Navy in cooperation with leading educators, and now awaits only the President's approval before going into effect.

This was announced yesterday by representatives of the Army and Navy before 1,000 educators who jammed the main ballroom of the Hotel New Yorker for the opening of the fifty-sixth annual convention of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools and Affiliated Associations.

Although the military representatives refused to divulge the details of this plan, they took special pains to deny that the government planned to take over any of the colleges to which service men would be sent for courses lasting from nine months to more than two years.

"To Be No Requisitioning"

Said the Army's representative, Lieut. Col. Harley E. West:

"Any relation between the armed services and collegiate institutions is going to be purely voluntary and there is to be no requisitioning. And I cannot say that too strongly."

And a short time later, when it seemed that some of the educators were still not certain about the position of the government's scheme to utilize colleges, the Navy's spokesman, Joseph W. Barker, special assistant to Secretary of the Navy Knox, made the following statement:

"There is no desire on the part of either the Army or the Navy to dictate to you what you must do. We are hoping to give you a maximum of leeway in the presentation of material and a maximum of academic freedom."

Earlier in the day Dr. Edmund E. Day, president of Cornell University, had announced that as many as 250,000 service men would be sent to colleges under this plan. The Army and Navy officials refused to discuss this figure. They also declined to say how many colleges had been selected for training.

"The schools selected," said Colonel West, "will be those in a position to furnish the instruction required and possessing the requisite facilities for housing and feeding. Students will be under Army discipline and receive Army pay. Military training will be subordinate to academic work. We hope the complete plan will be announced within the next two weeks. I strongly suggest that there will be no advantage to any one to write, wire, and least of all, to come to Washington."

Small Colleges Alarmed

The announcement brought a sharp reaction from heads of small colleges who felt that the Army and Navy would ignore them in this scheme. This, coupled with the depletion of student bodies because of the 'teen-age draft law would, they said, virtually force them to close their doors.

A typical expression of the attitude among heads of small colleges was that of Dr. Fred P. Corson, president of Dickinson College in Pennsylvania.

"If we small colleges, who remained small because we felt that was the best way to a good education, are not included in this plan, it will strike at the very roots of educational procedure on which our democracy is built. It may be the end of independent higher education in the United States."

It was the general feeling among the educators at the convention that this plan would accelerate the trend toward the abandonment of liberal arts courses in colleges during the war in favor of pure sciences, mathematics, medicine, dentistry, engineering and kindred professions.

Liberal Arts Dead for a Time

In his address Dr. Day said: "The Army and Navy people feel that a liberal arts education is not relevant to combat forces. They don't make killers by going the liberal arts way. I am rather persuaded that is true. Liberal education is substantially out for the duration. It is one of the war casualties. The Army and Navy are persuaded that what they need from colleges is technical and professional training in very large quantities. And that's what they will be sending their service men to school for."

James Marshall, a member of the New York Board of Education, spoke out against the increasing power of the military over education, while expressing admiration for its skill at warfare.

"There is no more reason," he declared, "for military men to think they know which boys will profit by schooling, what courses will prepare them and how the aims of the war and peace can be taught better than teachers than there is for teachers to think they can conduct the fight in Tunis or New Guinea better than military men. I believe that the most important function of the public schools today is to fight and maintain local civilian control over education."

The growing seriousness of the situation in colleges today led to some frank self-criticism by speakers. The tone for this was set by Mr. Marshall's declaration that "college entrance requirements... have set education topsy turvy because they have caused it to build education down from the colleges instead of up from the kindergarten or nursery school."

He deplored the "verbalistic tendency" among teachers, and accused educators of having "fostered the fantasy of the white man's burden as a sort of moral slip-cover to hide the shabby texture of the patronizing attitude which we have shown towards others. Such attitudes cannot truly be the attitudes, the aims or the ends of a democratic people."

Marshall Lashes at Tradition

He lashed out at musty traditions that stressed courses without regard for the needs of students. The war, he continued, has shown college men that students' needs are more important than academic tradition.

"For the duration, at least in colleges as in high schools," he pointed out, "the aimless liberal arts course which was neither liberal nor art is being modified by finding specific motivations in the war effort. This does not mean that vocational education is the only education worth while, but education should lead to the students' finding a vocation."

In defense of liberal arts courses

Virginia C. Gildersleeve, dean of Barnard College, reminded the educators that although "the machinery of education is in for a thorough shake-up, those values which grow from the humanities will be preserved. For those are the things we are fighting for."

Another speaker was Claude M. Fuess, headmaster at Phillips Academy, Andover. The chairman of the convention was William E. Weld of Wells College, who is president of the association.