Baker Memorial

Certainly there could be no more fitting tribute to the late Dean Baker, who devoted so much of his energy to the welfare of Technology, than a student movement to establish the Baker Memorial Foundation. The magnitude of the plan and the enthusiasm with which it has been taken up by the students could not be better to illustrate the great sense of loss felt by so many of Technology's students.

We must not forget for a moment that this loss is a very real one. Dean Baker's tireless efforts constituted a most vital and positive force exerted unfailingly for the betterment of the student's welfare and the environment of the Institute. One has only to recount his long list of achievements in this direction to realize the extent to which he accomplished his purposes in the years that he was here. We think that the students here are universally aware that in losing the late Dean we have lost a great teacher and a powerful and generous benefactor.

The Baker Memorial Foundation, as conceived by the organization which will serve as a committee to handle the management of the ideals which Dean Baker brought to the Institute, is a kind of memorial which is in tune with the very spirit of these ideals, and we can imagine zones that would more please the late Dean himself.

Despite all this, there have been criticisms of the idea and of the way in which it is being brought into being. These seem to arise from a misunderstanding of the proposed functions of the foundation. As the feeling at the moment is that establishment of the memorial has been tacitly with commercialism in the present fund drive.

The misunderstanding of the purpose of the foundation is brought out when people express the opinion that the committee should be more specific about what's to be done with the money, when they ask for a "list of projects." The people who ask these questions must feel that the Memorial is to be a kind of special endowment fund established for the purpose of providing funds for beautifying the campus and providing additional recreational and cultural facilities. When viewed in this light, it is possible to make many criticisms of the plan. (I.e., that the interest from the proposed capital fund will not provide for very many significant projects.) But it must be borne in mind that the greatest service that the Foundation will perform will be that of a group of students acting as a vigorous advocate of Dean Baker's ideals. A great many desirable goals can be realized indirectly by the existence of such a group, just as many significant ends were achieved simply because Dean Baker was here to work toward their accomplishment. The fund drive which will have available will in fact serve mainly as an important corollary to these other modes of action at its disposal.

Success in the drive for funds will enhance the value of the Foundation both by extending its powers of accomplishment and by providing evidence of the determination of the student body. The objection that the fund drive has bowed to commercialism is ridiculous; on the contrary, the magnitude and the vigor of the campaign reflect a commendable seriousness of purpose on the part of those conducting it. Certainly this is a thing which deserves the complete and wholehearted support of every one of us.