61: YEAR OF DECISION

Well sir, here we are in 1961, which shows every sign of being quite a distinguished year. First off, it is the only year since 1951 which begins and ends with the Figure 1. Of course, when it comes to Figure 1's, 1961, though distinguished, can hardly compare with 1911, which, most people agree, had not just two, but three Figure 1's! This, I'll wager, is a record that will stand for at least two hundred years!

1911 was, incidentally, notably for many other things. It was, for example, the year in which the New York Giants played the Philadelphia Athletics in the World Series. As we all know, the New York Giants have since moved to New Jersey and the Philadelphia Athletics to Kansas City. There is a movement afoot at present to move Chicago to Phoenix—the city, not the baseball team. Phoenix, in turn, would of course move to Chicago. It is felt that the change would be beneficial for residents of both cities. Many Chicago folks, for example, have never seen an iguana. Many Phoenix folks, on the other hand, have never seen a frothbite.

There are, of course, certain difficulties attending a municipal shift of this size. For instance, to move Chicago you also have to move Lake Michigan. This, in itself, presents no great problem, what with modern scientific advances like electronics and the French cuff. But if you will look at your map, you will find that Lake Michigan is connected to all the other Great Lakes, which in turn are connected to the Atlantic Ocean. You start dragging Lake Michigan to Phoenix and, willy-nilly, you'll be dragging all the other stuff too. This would make our British allies terribly cross, and I can't say I blame them. I mean, put yourself in their place. What if, for example, you were a British workman who had been saving and scrimping all year for a summer holiday at Brighton Beach, and then when you got to Brighton Beach there wasn't any ocean? There you'd be with your inner tube and snorkel and nothing to do all day but dance the Lambeth Walk. This, you may be sure, would not make you NATO-minded!

I appeal most earnestly to the residents of Chicago and Phoenix to reconsider. I know it's no bowl of cherries going to Phoenix, but at least there you'd be with your inner tube and snorkel and nothing to do all day but dance the Lambeth Walk. This, you may be sure, would not make you NATO-minded!

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The present and future MIT Man

Coming back to MIT after a vacation is rather like crawling back into a cocoon for most of us. The process of insulating oneself away from everything but quizzes, problem sets, and labs usually takes but a short while.

As MIT students, so cognizant of so many things in our own respective fields, we somehow manage at the same time to be totally unaware in a number of other, more important ways.

Technicians as a rule choose to be unaware of their standing relative to other science and engineering students in this country. They have a strong tendency to tie their entire outlook and frame of mind to the present level of their curricula, drowning themselves to a perennially unhappy existence if their grades are not what they "should" be. These men would be better advised to spend less time in the pursuit of "grades" as such, and more in the pursuit of knowledge.

MIT students tend for the most part to be unaware of the literary and intellectual world of the humanities. C. P. Snow, a British scientist and novelist who last month gave the Godkin Lectures at Harvard, discusses this problem in general in his recent publication *The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution*, a book which MIT men would be well-advised to read. The lack of communication and vague sense of distrust between us and our Harvard counterparts is mutual, we would submit that the denizens of the scientific world, in particular the MIT denizens, are somewhat better acquainted with the world of the humanities than they are with us, and an MIT man may have read and understood a Shakespearean play, but ask someone who has had a "good liberal arts education" to explain the Second Law of Thermodynamics to you. But we are not excused. Our knowledge is still trifling; the gap, abysmal.

MIT tries, in a vague, general way, to punctuate the insulation, to bring us to an awareness of the "other" world, to make us more whole men; a number of (very good) humanities courses are instituted over the years. The general aim exists, as set forth in the General Catalogue; but too frequently the policy of broad education is not implemented by the instructors who are in daily contact with the undergrantes.

The spirit of the humanities does not have a general toehold outside MIT classrooms. Indeed, this may be the key. MIT seeks to educate "whole men"; a number of (very good) humanities courses are instituted over the years. The general aim exists, as set forth in the General Catalogue; but too frequently the policy of broad education is not implemented by the instructors who are in daily contact with the undergrantes.

The world, in the midst of the Scientific Revolution, needs scientists and engineers conversant with more than the technicalities of their own fields, says Snow. They must be able to see themselves in historical context, to have some idea of the relationship of their world to the world of the humanities.

Such men are not produced by writing a "humanities requirement" of eight courses into the curriculum. This is a start, but nothing more than that. A different atmosphere from the one that now prevails outside the classroom is necessary. Somehow the man who is uninterested in a history or a philosophy course must become the odd stick, not the reverse.

As one of the most respected sources of technically and scientifically educated men, MIT will be expected to produce the sort of scientist and engineers Snow describes. It is not doing so now.

Why?

Just for the sake of completeness, we wish to note that on the Thursday before vacation, the Athletic Board passed the motion that the Intramural Council had wisely defeated the week before. Yes, you guessed it, all men on intercollegiate teams are to be denied participation in all intramural games, except with written permission of the proper coach.

We are convinced that in so doing the Athletic Board acted contrary to the best interests of the MIT student body; we have defended this point of view in print on four separate occasions in the past. Our opposition was voiced early and often. Then too, a vote, on December 5, of fraternity presidents speaking for their houses (the living groups most directly concerned) revealed a 26-2 sentiment against the measure.

In the face of this antipathy we feel that the Athletic Board owed (and still owes) the MIT Undergraduate Association, a public explanation of its reason(s) for passing the measure.

The present and future MIT man is no longer a passive actor. He is one of the active forces that are shaping the world. As a rule he is not aware of his role in this shaping; he is content to let the scientists and engineers do the thinking for him. But the present and future MIT man is one of the forces that are shaping the world. He is not content to let the scientists and engineers do the thinking for him. He is aware of his role in this shaping; he is a participant in the shaping, he is a creator of the world. He is a man of action, he is a man of thought, he is a man of vision. He is a man of the future.

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