Killian advisor to Presidents

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so they echo to science, technology and related education.

James Killian has class. He belongs to that social class Mills tagged "the power elite" and he conducts himself in a manner suggesting a man who is used to commanding respect. His is a dignified and authoritative presence, and he directed the course of the interview.

Trinity College (now Duke U.) 1921-1923; transferred to MIT, 1923. Class of '26; majored in business and engineering administration.

And was editor-in-chief of Volume 45 of The Tech, spoke first of Dr. Killian's undergraduate days, which he described as tough, but "very happy"; The Tech in 1926 was a lively publication, but not nearly so caught up with issues outside MIT as the present production, which he feels is today more vital than then.

His interest in communications has apparently never waned, for he described as "one of the most rewarding and fascinating experiences I've ever had," his work as Chairman of the Carnegie Commission on Educational Television, which was instrumental in the establishment of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting by Congress in 1967. He pointed to commercial TV as an example of technology misused, but stated that PTV was never intended as a replacement but as complement to the networks. His description of the process by which PTV was established threw a great deal of light on how one gets things done in America.

The Commission studied the problems of educational TV for two years, concluded that a federally-established and funded corporation should be set up, and then lobbied for it. Dr. Killian, Dr. Edwin Land (President of Polaroid), Dr. Leo Dibridge (then president of Cal Tech, now Nikon's science advisor) and 3 or 4 other people testified before Senator John Pastore's committee and within a year Congress had passed action setting up CPT. Lyndon Johnson appointed Dr. Killian a director of the Corporation in March, 1968, for a six-year term. One of CPT's first accomplishments has been "Seasmite Street," a widely acclaimed children's educational program.)

Jim Killian got his start as a journalist. After graduation he became assistant managing editor of the Alumni Association magazine, Technology Review. He became managing editor, 1927, editor in 1930, and there he stayed until 1939 when then-President Karl Taylor Compton made him executive assistant. The war brought sweeping transformations to MIT. It was a time lived under the shadow of necessity. The Institute became one of the nation's largest centers for weapons research and development, a district it has never lost since. MIT's famed Radiation Lab developed radar; Charles Stark Draper formulated the nucleus of the Instrumentation Lab—their first task, homingbats. The war effort took first priority, and President Compton charged him with all. The burden of administering the educational offices of the Institute fell to Dr. Killian. He became executive vice-president in 1943; was elected third member and member of the Corporation in 1945. In April 1949, Dr. Compton became chairman of the Corporation. Jim Killian became President.

Under his administration MIT began its transformation toward a university. The Faculty Committee on Educational Survey (Lewis Commission), formed at his suggestion in 1947, reported its 1949. One of its suggestions had been the establishment of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences. This was in 1952, with the aid of great men from Alfred P. Sloan, 39, chairman of General Motors, the Sloan School of Management was established. Reflecting the fact that MIT never really de-militarized (a cold war was on) was the establishment with CTA funding of the Center for International Studies (its crowning purpose to stem the spread of communism) and the Lincoln Laboratory. And it was Dr. Killian who coined the legendary phrase, "university polarized around science."

The presidency of any college or university is the key anchoring position of positions of power. It is a place where the buck stops. There are no lower levels. Craziness and misused, but stated that PTV was never intended as a replacement but as complement to the networks. His description of the process by which PTV was established threw a great deal of light on how one gets things done in America.

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