Letters to The Tech

by Brent parker and Johnny hort

The Wizard of ID

I WANT TO KNOW

WHAT HAPPENED TO DURHAM?

She didn't return in Women's Lib!

WHAT HAPPENED TO ALKALI?

I have no idea.

What it comes down to are questions like this: the Commis- sion proceeded in an education firmly grounded in the assumption of tradition, but sufficiently, briskly and "humanistically," to the responsibility for the social con- sequences of its work that does this imply, and consider this scenario:

"Well, boys, it's time to start planning for the annual model change." I forget it, B.D. We've voted to forego the annual model change because it's wasteful in terms of retooling, unless advertising to artificially stimulate demand, and in terms of the junk left over when people trade in perfectly good, older cars for new ones. Instead, we've decided to spend our time improving the longevity of the vehicle's various systems." General. There are plenty of straightsheads at State West who won't give me that much credit, though.

You may protest that MIT graduates get up to all that kind of work; then again, DOD wouldn't fund Stark C-15 research if he'd decided to do weapons research. The prospect of assigning MIT graduates and thousands of technically humanized engineers who do try to take responsibility for the work is almost laughable, when you look at it that way. But it is one possible outcome of the Commission's suggestions, and I predict a lack only begins to suggest the unexplored re- gions toward which the document goes. Which leads me to one who thinks that students should be the main stewards of the Institute's role ought to be, and what sort of society it ought to shape.

It is only at this level that the Commission can make any sense at all. The questions are: assuming that a university called MIT shall lead the one who thinks that students are to do what it should do and how about in what ways, the question is: Should it train engineers for General Motors, General Elec- tric, and General Management or Concentrate on research or gen- eral (liberal?) education? Con- cerned about training in our engineering, humanized technocrat, humanistic tech-jack-of all-trades, managers, social critics, what? For whom? For what? How? Why? And on and on.

The Commission recognizes the existence of a crisis in mod- ern society. (cf. Slater, Roszak, Mundell, or the ordinariness of your own perceptions) The crisis is in national, social, cultural, political - a convergence of crisis, so to speak. The question is: apparently belongs to a misused sense at all. The questions are: assuming that a university called MIT shall lead the one who thinks that students are to do what it should do and how about in what ways, the question is: Should it train engineers for General Motors, General Elec- tric, and General Management or Concentrate on research or gen- eral (liberal?) education? Con- cerned about training in our engineering, humanized technocrat, humanistic tech-jack-of all-trades, managers, social critics, what? For whom? For what? How? Why? And on and on.

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