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## ANTI-COMPULSORY MILITARY DRILL LEAGUE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Contrary to general opinion, the Morrill Land Grant Act requires only that military drill be offered; it need not be compulsory.

### ENTIRE CAMPUS TALKING OPTIONAL DRILL

\* The past week as never before, students have been discussing and analyzing the question of military drill. For the first time, the issue has been squarely raised in their minds: Is it desirable to make military drill universally compulsory? Will not the R. O. T. C. itself be benefited if only those interested in it take it? The quotation from Major Wood of the University of Wisconsin has made a decided impression.

"Voluntary Drill has eliminated those students who have an intense inward hatred of drill. Our corps is better off because of it."

Letters, notes, and contributions have come to us from faculty members, students, ex-service men, ministers, and people throughout the state. The Liberal Discussion Club wants to put on a public debate on the question. The National Council for the Prevention of War is a federation of 29 national peace associations, among whose supporters are such public spirited and patriotic American citizens as William Allen White, President A. Lawrence Lowell of Harvard, President Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia, John H. Clarke, Ex-Justice of the U. S. Supreme Court, Dwight Morrow of J. P. Morgan & Company, Jane Addams, and many others. The National Council writes us that they are planning a drive throughout the country to make military drill optional in all American Universities.

**All men and women interested in making military drill optional at the University of Minnesota should meet with us in the Fireplace Room of the Minnesota Union, Monday, May 11th, 4:30. Be out for this meeting! Let's Put This Over!**

P. S. As this goes to press, six hours after our petitions have started, the campaign is going like wild-fire. Faculty members are enthusiastically endorsing the movement and 1441 signatures have been secured the first six hours. The entire campus—students and faculty—whole-heartedly wants Optional Drill! Attend our meeting, Monday (today) at 4:30 P. M. in the Fireplace Room, Minnesota Union.

### HENRIETTA SPILLS THE BEANS

The president of the United States may be satirized; congress may be caricatured; but the R. O. T. C.—ah, then 'tis lese majeste! About a month ago, the Associated Press carried a despatch that Miss Henrietta Perkins, managing editor and the only woman editor of the Boston University Beanpot, had been forced to resign under threat of expulsion. We quote below the innocent humor which compelled Miss Perkins' resignation and caused an entire issue of the Beanpot to be suppressed after printing. Read the following that she wrote, and then make your own comments.

The Rover Boys were discussing patriotism and military drill; in walked Captain Strong, who had been peeping through the transom:

"In exactly five minutes by my timepiece," he announced, "there will be a lecture on Protecting Our Foreign Markets With Poison Gas, by Major Dumb. This lecture will be purely voluntary, but"—and here his brow was wrinkled with something like a frown—"every one hundred per cent American boy will be there or I'll know the reason why." So saying, he resumed his former position at the transom.

"Oh, goody, goody," cried Tom, just jumping up and down in his excitement. "Hurrah for poison gas! I hope he'll give us some to play with after class."

Sample questions are offered from R. O. T. C. examinations:

What rank did General Grant hold? Was Alexander the Great? Who shot Cock Robin?

What nations fought in the Russian-Japanese war?

State briefly your opinion of second lieutenants. You are limited to 898,375 words.

What was the date of the War of 1812? What was the name of the "War of the Roses"?

If you can answer the above questions with a grade above ½ of 1 per cent you have sufficient intelligence to be a second lieutenant in the R. O. T. C.

The mother who didn't raise her boy to be a soldier carries out her original intention by having him join the R. O. T. C.

You get thirty cents a day for the privilege of belonging to the R. O. T. C. And you feel like thirty cents too.

**MEN AND WOMEN—SIGN THE PETITION. PERSUADE OTHERS TO SIGN.**

## IS IT PRACTICAL?

It is an open question whether our military training course can be justified even for war-preparedness, a reason advanced by militarists themselves. Here we are given close order drill and rifle marksmanship, the old-fashioned type of training that was given seventy-five years ago. In this age, wars are fought with tanks, aeroplanes, submarines, electric machinery, poisonous gases, long-ranged guns, and deadly bombs. Germany's strength during the past war was not in the number of men she had trained at close order drill. England alone could have furnished enough men to have defeated her in hand to hand battles with rifles and bayonets as men fought seventy-five years ago. But it took practically all the military experts, military science, the best chemists and inventors, and the rest of the world to defeat this one nation with her poisonous gases, her superior aeroplanes, her submarines which threatened every allied boat that put out to sea, and her other modern fighting equipment. And five years from now, wars if there are any, will be fought with electricity, chemical compounds, and complicated machinery, under the water and in the air, and an army of men on the ground with rifles and bayonets will be out of date, useless, and helpless. Therefore if it is true that we are not prepared for future wars, the proper thing to do is to put a few more experts into the field where they will be most effective, and stop squandering the people's money and wasting the students' time requiring all of them—interested or not—to take this course in old-fashioned drill.

Optional Drill, on the other hand, attracts those students who are interested in and fitted for the technical divisions which may be of some value in the next war.

### MILITARY "GLORY" IN THE COLLEGES

*Reprinted from The Nation for February 18, 1925*

By PAUL BLANSHARD

IT is "compet day" at the drill field of the University of Nebraska. Twelve hundred rifles on the shoulders of twelve hundred student cadets glint in the sun. The companies march and pivot. Clapping and a few shrill cheers come from the spectators. The bright colors of hundreds of co-eds mingle with the drabs of the men-folk.

The companies line up for inspection. The officers, tense and self-conscious, begin the round of inspection. When they have finished a little band of university girls marches on the field. They carry ribbons. They are good to look upon. They pin the ribbons upon the chests of the members of the three winning companies. Cheers. A charming girl who is president of something or other makes an inaudible speech. We do not know what she says. We do not know what a girl ought to say on such an occasion. We look up an old file of the *Daily Nebraskan* and find what one girl wrote last year.

A nifty blue uniform, an alert stride, an expression of courage, purpose, and endurance—young officer, you command our attention. Indeed you do. We girls may not appreciate the drilling, the military skill, and the rigid discipline involved in your training, but we do recognize the results, your courtesy, your loyalty, your commandship. R. O. T. C., we are proud to have you occupy your position of prominence on the campus.

So the military idea is "sold" to the University of Nebraska and to scores of other American colleges where compulsory military training is saddled upon the students. In the midst of a non-militarist nation that is opposed to conscription in time of peace our War Department by manipulating State legislatures and boards of regents has developed in our universities a conscript army of perhaps 50,000 men. No man at Nebraska can escape the military game unless he is physically unfit or a bona fide conscientious objector. Every student who attends the university is compelled to take two years of military training. The Nebraska unit has been given the rank of "distinguished rating." In recent years the protesting voice has been almost as rare as it was in the German universities before the war. At Coe College, Iowa, Major C. B. Robbins, member of the Coe board of trustees, declared in his Armistice Day loyalty address to the students: "The college or university professor that preaches a doctrine that we should not prepare for war in time of peace is the lowest possible form of animal life." Coe is a Presbyterian college that compels all its students to take two years of compulsory Bible and two years of compulsory military training!

Why do American students submit with such docility to conscription in our universities? Chiefly because the propaganda of the militarists in our colleges has been more persistent and skilful than the propaganda of the anti-militarists. The student himself has no particular love of military training. That has been revealed by the relatively small number of students who enter the R. O. T. C. when the service is voluntary and not rewarded with special credit. But military propaganda holds the universities in its grip by the same devices of rivalry, myth, social ostracism, group repression, and rhythm that made America a conformists' paradise during the war. The propaganda which sustains military training in the colleges is one part genuine desire for national safety and five parts bunk.

*Legal bunk.* The big agricultural colleges in the United States receive financial aid from the federal government under the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862. This act stipulates that they must offer agriculture, mechanics, and military training to their students in order to be eligible for the grant. Under this law the University of Nebraska receives \$50,000 a year. The law does not demand that military training shall be compulsory for the students; it only requires that the college shall offer military training to its students along with agriculture. But this deficiency in the law does not embarrass the army officers in these colleges. They deliberately tell the students that the university would lose \$50,000 if compulsory military training were withdrawn. Their effrontery would scarcely be credible if the memory of the legal myth of Defense Day were not fresh in our minds. These are the same officers who told the public that Defense Day was provided for by the Defense Act of 1920. An analysis of the act reveals not a single line in justification of their claim.

The Morrill Land Grant Act is so clear that no one can mistake its meaning. It provides that all moneys derived from the sale of the lands aforesaid by the State to which the lands are apportioned . . . and the interest of which shall be inviolably appreciated by each State which may take and claim the benefit of this act to the endowment, support, and maintenance of at least one college where the leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies, and including military tactics, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts . . . in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions of life.

*There is not a line in the act which makes it obligatory upon any State legislature or board of regents to demand that all students at the land-grant institutions shall take any one course of study.* The State of Wisconsin has accepted this obvious interpretation of the law and has made military training voluntary instead of compulsory at the State university.

*Physical training bunk.* Defenders of the system of conscription in the colleges maintain that military training is sound physical training. At Nebraska all women must take gymnastic training: the men take military training and are excused from gymnasium.

What physical value has military training? If you ask that question of an average student he is likely to reply: "Physically the whole thing is a joke." Even the more intelligent army officers will admit that military training is not first-class physical training and that the primary purpose is to teach men to lead troops. But among laymen the fiction of physical preparedness is widely believed. "Military training," says the former football captain of Nebraska to the students, "develops something of selling value for later years. Businesses are looking for men who are in good physical condition."

At Nebraska the students take military training once a week for a three-hour stretch. They dress in ordinary hot uniforms and do most of their work indoors. In fact, from December to March there is virtually no outdoor work and only a small amount of armory marching. From one-half to two-thirds of their time, depending upon the weather, is spent sitting down listening to lectures on nomenclature of the rifle, military courtesy, map drawing, the military history of the United States, and the like. Perhaps fifteen minutes a week is spent in physical exercise that is scientifically calculated to build up the body.

Contrast this training with the same number of hours of gymnastic training at the University of Nebraska. The gymnasium student exercises in a track suit. He aims to "get up a sweat." Instead of working three hours on a Saturday morning, he spends one hour three days a week getting fit for the next day's study. Each hour is scientifically divided into three periods, twenty minutes for setting-up exercises under a director, twenty minutes for apparatus work on parallel bars, swinging rings, and frame horses, and twenty minutes for games such as handball and basketball. After that comes a hot and cold shower.

*Historical bunk.* The military instructors in our colleges are ardent propagandists for the military point of view. The respectability of their profession is at stake. Their teaching bristles with military dogmas which excite a good deal of ridicule among the more intelligent students. The R. O. T. C. Manual for advanced students which was written by a colonel, two majors, a captain, and a lieutenant calmly announces: "The important lessons of the World War were that force is the ultimate power, in spite of all the arguments of the pacifists, and that reasonable preparation for the exercise of force in accordance with the law of the balance of power is the surest means of preserving the peace of the world." It bitterly attacks the high wages of manual workers during the war, failing to point out that the wages would buy no more than the low wages of pre-war days. It condemns the soldier bonus and blames the bonus spirit on the "indulgence of the man who stayed at home and received a huge bonus for doing so—in the form of inflated wages." It condemns our present military policy as "a little too consistent" with our national traditions. It demands a military policy for the United States which shall include universal compulsory military training, a regular army of 320,000 (more than double the present strength), and an organized reserve of 500,000 to 1,000,000.

*Sex bunk.* The female worshipping her protector. Each company of the R. O. T. C. has a co-ed sponsor. At Nebraska the sponsors are chosen by the captains of the companies; in Iowa universities the sponsors are elected by the members of the companies. The whole student body elects each year an honorary colonel. She is described as the most popular girl in college. At the military ball which opens the formal social season at Lincoln the dancers pause a moment in the midst of festivities and a spotlight is thrown on a curtain at one end of the hall. The curtain parts. The honorary colonel steps forth to lead the grand march. Cheers.

The practice of sex glamor varies from school to school; the principle is the same everywhere. Sometimes it is a ribbon and sometimes a gold cup that the girls present to the prize companies. Always the nattily dressed cadet officer has a prior claim on the hungry feminine heart. The military leaders do all in their power to use the ancient appetite for their ends.

*Success bunk.* This is the most subtle and successful form of military propaganda in our colleges. The American college student loves above all else the big man on the campus. He yearns to be a big man himself. The big-man myth is just as dominant at Harvard and Spokane Christian College as it is in Zenith and Gopher Prairie. The big man is the man who "makes" the most teams and honor societies and fraternities. The military authorities have carefully manipulated this competitive habit in behalf of military training. At Nebraska they have made military training a prominent student activity. There are two honorary military fraternities. The officers of the regiment are chosen from the prominent campus leaders. The college paper prints their pictures. The clippings are sent home to proud parents. The men who cannot make the football team find in military training their chief secondary field of distinction. The fraternities pride themselves on getting the highest percentage of officers. The university prides itself on getting "distinguished rating" over Wisconsin or Illinois. "It is up to the regiment," says the *Daily Nebraskan* on the morning of compet day, "to so perform before the inspection officers that they report it as being one of the finest units in the country . . . keep Nebraska among the leaders." "It is interesting to note," says the athletic director naively, "that so far this year all major sport managerships have been won by students who are officers in the R. O. T. C."

The only individual award given to any Nebraska student at commencement is the Pershing medal for distinction in the military course.

At Northwestern, when considerable opposition to the R. O. T. C. developed, a president of the Y. M. C. A. with practically no collegiate military training was skyrocketed into a captaincy to influence student opinion. This is a common practice with football heroes.

That the War Department has recognized the importance of creating student support for military training is revealed by the official basis for the "distinguished rating" of college units. Forty per cent of the credit is based upon effective propaganda, described euphemistically on the report sheets as "student support" and "faculty support." Twenty-eight points are given for efficiency in theoretical instruction and thirty-two points for efficiency in practical instruction.

The movement for the abolition of conscription in the colleges waits upon the action of parents, alumni, and State legislatures. The students who lead such a movement are likely to be promptly expelled or otherwise disciplined unless they have the active support of influential outsiders. In spite of this possibility of punishment a student revolt against conscription is beginning. There are rumblings in California, Washington, and even Nebraska. "There would not be a hundred men in Nebraska who would drill voluntarily if the work were not surrounded by other inducements," a student told me. The opposition which is beginning to develop is not based upon pacifism in most cases. It is based upon the student's conviction that he is an adult mind capable of choosing his college curriculum for himself. He is an American and he wants the same choice that every American citizen has traditionally possessed of accepting or rejecting military service in time of peace.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Are you giving all the assistance you can to this campaign for Optional Military Drill? Check over the following points and ask yourself how much help you can give.

1. Have you written an article for the "Campus Comment" column of the Minnesota Daily? Remember that at the top of the column Salter says he will be glad to publish student opinions, if signed and limited to 200 words.
2. Are you expressing your desire for a public debate on this question? Many students would like to hear the military department answer the points put forth in our "indictment."
3. *Keep this bulletin travelling.* Many faculty members and students are not getting it. Have you sent your home town paper any news or opinions?
4. Why not write a 500-word essay for the \$15 prize we are offering? See last week's "Indictment" for the rules.
5. Have you signed one of the petitions we are circulating? Have you brought up the subject at your clubs? Have you suggested to them the passing of a resolution to the Board of Regents requesting Optional Drill?

The fate of this Optional Drill Movement depends upon your ACTIVE support. How much have you done? More important, how much will you do—beginning today?

## Will you help Make Drill Optional?

Attend our meeting this [Monday] afternoon at 4:30 P. M. in  
Fireplace Room, Minnesota Union. Do your bit!

1441 students signed the petition the first six hours.

When do you sign?