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Letters to the editor, The College Eye, September 26, 1952

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Story Of 'Coaldirt Crick'

Flowing serenely through the center of Sunset Village housing area, a filthy black, little stream quietly wends its way to a stagnant halt in the swampy lower side.

A number of families living in the Village have become quite concerned over this little stream. Although it is black and appears to be almost oily, they feel it is a breeding place for the many mosquitoes which bother them during a large part of the year.

But even more concerned are the parents living in the area. This stream, they say, is a favorite recreation spot for their children; they find it almost impossible to keep them away from it.

These parents are not so much bothered by the possibility of their children getting wet or catching colds by playing in and around the water. But they are nearly up in arms over the fact that every time the children go near the place they ruin their clothes and shoes.

They find the black, insidious substance deposited by the dirty water will not wash out. And therein lies their problem.

The subject of this stream has been discussed several times by the Sunset Village council, but nothing has ever come of the discussions.

Recently a small, unofficial investigation was made to discover the beginning of the stream and find out what the water contained. The search finally led to the college heating plant, and there, in the basement, the source was found.

During the complicated process of providing heat and power for the college, coal is brought into the plant by way of a large conveyor. It goes down through a pit, is ground up, and then is conveyed up to



HERE'S THE SOURCE—College fireman Mac McDowell points to the coal conveyor coming out of the pit which is believed to be the source of the dirty water flowing through Sunset Village.

the point where it is automatically dumped into the furnaces.

It is apparently in this pit where the washday headaches begin for the mothers of Sunset Village. The dust from the coal settles in the pit and mixes with seepage and cleaning water. It then drains into silt and emerges across the highway on the west side of the annex.

What can be done to correct this matter? Charles Adger, assistant professor in the science department and a former member of the Sunset Village council thinks tiling the area would probably be the only solution, but he says the expense of this would probably be too great for a temporary housing area.

Bill Chase, of the department of teaching, feels that if the water is sanitary enough to drain into the housing area it should be sanitary enough to go into the sewers also.

Mervyn Haugen, a senior social science major, says he just doesn't know, but wishes something would be done.

These are the sentiments of most parents living in the area. And these are also the sentiments of the COLLEGE EYE.

We feel the matter should be investigated and something should be done. Unfortunately, we are not technicians, so we cannot propose a solution.

The suggestion to tile the area and make it into a playground would probably be out of the question if Sunset Village is truly a temporary housing area. The word "temporary" in this case, however, seems to need defining, since the Village was set up for a temporary period of five years in 1946.

Just last spring the muddy walk under the highway was surfaced, much to the surprise and joy of residents of the area. We believe "Coaldirt Crick" should be next on the agenda.

Although none of us of the staff is directly involved in this matter, we are concerned with affairs affecting all students. Therefore we call this to your attention.

Bill Williamson

How About 'Maybe'?

Typical question in statistics: "What is the age in years and months of the youngest child whose age could be entered in Table V?" Answer: "Yes or No." You don't believe it? See page 18 of *Statistics for Teachers* by M. J. Nelson and E. C. Denny.

Letters To The Editor
Faculty Members Correct Editorial Views

To the Editor:

We believe that Mr. Pettit's editorial in last week's COLLEGE EYE misinterprets the events which led to the elimination of *The Communist Manifesto* from the Humanities reading list. The editorial implies that Dr. Mauecker is responsible for the elimination of the book. This is incorrect. Dr. Mauecker never had the opportunity to act on the matter, and it is unfair to assume that he would have suppressed the book if the question had ever come before him for action. The responsibility for the elimination of the book belongs to the Humanities staff.

When the original reading list was drawn up, *The Communist Manifesto* was included because it is a significant statement of a political and economic faith which has changed the history of the world. At that time, no considerations of political expediency entered into the deliberations.

Later, the question of expediency was brought up by a member of the group, and the staff was confronted with the necessity of deciding whether—in the light of such considerations—the book should be retained. The staff recognized that, in the present climate of opinion, there might be some very unpleasant political con-

sequences if the students were required to buy a book which could so easily be labeled subversive. One half of the staff felt that we should not risk incurring these unpleasantness; the other half felt that the risk had to be run in the interests of freedom.

At or about this point in the proceedings, the wishes of the administration with regard to the matter were made known to the staff. It was clearly indicated that the administration preferred that the book should be eliminated, but the administration did not order the removal of the book. Some—not all—of the staff felt that the administration acted improperly in making its wishes known on the grounds that expressed wish of the administration is always more than a mere wish or opinion, that it inevitably carries some of the weight of a command even when, as in this case, the administration expressly disavowed any intention of commanding. In reply to this, the administration claimed the right to make its wishes known and, in further discussion, claimed the legal right to veto staff decisions on textbook matters. In response to this last claim some staff members argued that the exercise of this right—even if it did exist—would

be in violation of the best traditions of academic freedom.

At this point in the deliberations, a new vote on the basic question was taken, and it was discovered that opinion within the staff had changed. A majority of the group now favored elimination of the controversial book. Since the staff had, in three or four previous votes, consistently maintained its earlier stand, the reversal at this point seemed to be a compromise with the administration rather than the administration's wish. If so, the expression of these wishes clearly constituted pressure—however tactful, indirect, or even unintentional.

Nevertheless, this does not shift the final responsibility for the action taken. The ultimate responsibility for this action remains where it has always been, not with the administration but with the staff. It should be recognized that the administration used no tactics in this case except to make its wishes known and to argue the merits of its point of view. While we feel that there was a certain impropriety in these tactics, we cannot subscribe to Mr. Pettit's implication that academic freedom was thereby violated. Such violation would have existed if the staff had voted to retain the book and if the administration had then ordered its removal from the list.

As for the staff action, we feel that it was wrong and that Mr. Pettit's sentiments about such action are just. When teachers allow abandonment of individual responsibility to influence their choice of textbooks, they have themselves abandoned the very ground upon which academic freedom itself rests. The loss of academic freedom here at IITC has been much more serious than Mr. Pettit suspects. A suppressive act of the administration could have been fought and perhaps eventually set aside; the abandonment of the ideal by the people who should be its champions leaves very little room for hope. It is the symbolic tragedy of our times: freedom is not being taken away from us, we are choosing it away.

Josef W. Fox
Louise Forest

Student Criticizes 'Freedom' Editorial

To the Editor:

In the well-written editorial of last week, Mr. Pettit wielded his trusty pen in the same manner as those that he feared, namely the witch-hunters.

One point which he undoubtedly overlooked, however, was that the alleged suppression of academic freedom was in fact an example of wise judgment based on experience. The Humanities courses, if you will remember, are at the Freshman and sophomore levels and thus must be taught both in books and lectures that the student will be able to comprehend.

The ability to discriminate intellectually in freshmen and sophomores has not yet risen to the place where sound judgment and wise discretion are used in reading of controversial issues. They are perhaps, too easily swayed by the Utopian ideas of able writers.

Surely, M. Pettit, you do not believe that the decision not to select *The Communist Manifesto* as a text represents a breach of professional ethics. It seems rather to have been a matter of sound pedagogical judgment.

Robert E. Fee

Lecture-Concert Series Called 'Uninspiring'

To the Editor:

"It is vain to expect pleasure-seekers to patronize second-rate performances here, when wind-rotate, distant, superior attractions are offered . . ." Walt Whitman said that in a Brooklyn Daily Times editorial November 10, 1858. Apparently vanity is abundant on TC's campus. By any standard the concert-lecture series recently announced is "second-rate." About all that can be said for it is that there is variety.

Dr. Mauecker has said that one of the aims of this college was generally to serve the communities in which it is located, specifically for education beyond the secondary level and "without imparting its primary function of educating teachers." Certainly a unit of education is giving the educated at least an opportunity to explore the arts.

Collins is a good dancer. Manly may be a good sculptor. The Vienna Choir Boys are unique and "cute," but they're not Martha Graubau, or Jo Davidson, or the Robert Shaw Chorus.

I don't know what criteria the committee used in selecting the arts for the series. The publicity blitzed the fact that the student tickets are cheap. They are that—you couldn't see a second-rate movie for that twenty-five cents. Anyway, it is regrettable that the committee was not guided by principles similar to those stated in the announcement of Wartburg's coming series. That committee "hopied of inculcating an appreciation for the finer things in life and satisfying the craving

for the best in music and literature on the part of the people in this area, has attempted to bring the very best to its lecture and concert platform . . . We are concerned that both the adults and the youth who are privileged to hear and see these renowned artists in person will never forget these experiences. Some we hope will be inspired to greater heights in their lives" (*Underlining mine*). These aren't just words. They go on to announce the appearance of Eleanor Steber, Heifetz, The Hungarian String Quartet and The Boston Pops.

And the Vienna Choir Boys may be unique and "cute," I can't imagine them inspiring to greater heights.

Perhaps if a series such as TC's cannot one is necessary, it would be wise to offer two series: one variety show and one cultural series—otherwise this is carrying over General Education too far.

Bob Phelps

Eye Asks Reporter At Faculty Meetings

THE COLLEGE EYE has made a written request to the Teachers College faculty for permission to have a reporter present to cover all faculty meetings.

The first faculty meeting was held Monday, but a final decision was delayed until the October meeting, according to a statement received from Dean M. J. Nelson.

The College Eye

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