

### Tech Mourns the Passing Away Of Dr. Samuel J. Plimpton

#### Had Contributed Much To The Advancement Of Science

Most notices on the radio and in the newspapers ran simply, "Doctor Samuel J. Plimpton, Worcester Polytechnic Institute's famed 'Flying Instructor' died on December 28, 1948," and then went on to give a summary of his educational and teaching background. Probably many of the students and faculty at Tech knew little more about Doctor Plimpton than just that. Poor health had caused him to give up teaching at the beginning of the present school year. His quiet, unassuming air gave little indication of his several accomplishments.

In fact, however, his experiments in the realm of physics merit recognition, especially from those associated with Tech. After receiving his Ph.D. at Yale's Sheffield School of Science in 1912, he taught at Johns Hopkins University for another year and then came to Tech in 1914. His first notable experiments involved work with X-rays in England. Obtaining a leave of absence from Tech in 1919, he became a visiting professor at the University of London. There, he studied under Sir William Bragg, an international authority on X-rays. After further study in the United States, Doctor Plimpton published in the *London Philosophical Magazine* two articles entitled "Recognition of Ions in Gases" and "Scattering of Rays in X-ray Diffraction."

Not much later, he collaborated in a successful experimental search in an entirely different field. Together with Professors Sterup and Newell, he perfected the first loudspeaker with a wide frequency range without resonance peaks. However, this loudspeaker, called the SPN speaker after its originators, was soon replaced by the dynamic loudspeaker, but some of them are still in service in private homes.

A few years later he worked with Professors Newell and Lawton on the verification of the inverse square law. Together they showed experimentally that the exponent 2 in Coulomb's law of electrostatics is correct to within one part in one billion in space far removed from matter.

The measurement of the speed of sound without any estimation or comparison of intensity was Doctor Plimpton's next accomplishment. His method is now in use in Tech's Sophomore physics laboratory ("howling" telephone, experiment 30). Later he suggested an extension of the method for the measurement of the speed of light. This work is still in progress

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### Mr. Harold Narcus Talks Before ACS Sigma Xi Meeting

#### Honor Society Initiates Two Full Members and 21 Associate Members

On Wednesday, January 12, at 8:00 P.M., Salisbury Laboratories was the scene of a meeting and initiation of the Worcester Chapter of the Society of the Sigma Xi in conjunction with the Central Massachusetts Section of the American Chemical Society. The speaker for the meeting was Mr. Harold Narcus, President and Technical Director of Electrochemical Industries Inc., Leominster, Mass., and his topic was "The Metalization of Non-conductive Surfaces."

Mr. Narcus has specialized in the production of metallic coatings on plastic or other non-conducting surfaces and holds two patents in this field as well as having others pending. In his talk he described processes involving chemical desposition, electroplating, and condensation of vapors and showed examples of commercial products. Mr. Narcus was graduated from W. P. I. in 1934

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### STUDENT TELLS OF CAPTURE BY REDS IN GREECE

The third regular meeting of the school year was held by the Cosmopolitan Club on January 10, 1949 in the Janet Earle Room of Alden. The meeting was called to order by President Tsu-Yen Mei at 7:00 o'clock P.M. The speaker for the evening was Andreas E. Devletoglou, a student in the Junior class, whose theme was "Communism in Greece." Mr. Devletoglou told of his personal experiences with the communists in his native land and how their struggle was one strictly for the achievement of power and not of patriotism. As he had been arrested by the communists and freed only through an exchange of prisoners, an accurate first hand account on the subject was heard by those present. A good attendance of thirty people including members of the faculty was had.

The next meeting of the club will be held in the early part of the new term and will have as its speaker Mr. F. W. Killian, professor of Sociology at Clark University. A general invitation is extended to all as everyone is welcome to attend this and all meetings of the club. Information concerning meetings will be posted on most bulletin boards.

## Student Center Officially Opens President Dedicates Riley House

### Pres. Cluverius Gives Center To Students

#### Lounge, Snack Bar, Hostesses and Pool Room Are Featured

Dreams are a dime a dozen. So says a popular tune. But here on the Hill, no one bothers to buy or sell since Techmen have always been dreamers. Dreaming not of far away places or strawberry blondes, but of what the future would produce on the campus. And now, what has probably been the foremost dream has become a reality.

Wednesday, January 12, the official opening and dedication of Riley House was held with our prexy, Admiral Cluverius, dedicating the Center to the welfare of the student body with especial interest in the non-fraternity and city men. Realizing the long existent need for such a Center, the Executive Committee of the board of trustees, in conjunction with the Admiral, decided upon a course of action that would provide a student center in the shortest possible time.

Riley House now serves the student body. From seven-thirty to five its doors are open to accommodate the weary and befuddled engineers. The Coffee Shop and Canteen have been rolled into one, the Sanford-Riley pool room added, a generous sprinkling of lounging chairs stirred in, and beautiful hostesses providing the icing to the cake. The grateful appreciation of the students is indicated by the constant use to which they put the Center.

Yet the future holds more promise. A piano, record player and radio, an improved snack bar, and dozens

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STEVE SPANEAS AND ADMIRAL CLUVERIUS LOOK OVER NEW STUDENT CENTER

Tek-News Photo By O'Connor.

### Glee Club To Give Concert With Becker

A REPORT ON the potentialities of 21 January 1949 for a last outburst of social activity prior to the forthcoming final examinations.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this report is to examine carefully the extracurricular merits of the aforementioned weekend, particularly with respect to the Glee Club concert on Friday evening, 21 Jan. '49.

**APPARATUS:** A small amount of flexible currency and coin-of-the-realm is desirable. Fifty cents will be required by each student entering onto the teak decks of beautiful Alden Memorial, and "grownups" (to quote Cliff Green) will pay seventy-five cents a head.

**THEORY:** The fundamental concept to be gained is that this concert will furnish an excellent evening of entertainment. The Tech Glee Club's numbers will include Oklahoma, Just a Song at Twilight, The Winter Song, and many others. The Becker Glee Club will sing a group of pieces, and the combined clubs will sing six numbers. The octet, now down to around eight men, will present a program of barber-shop and other small-group arrangements. Afterwards the Boyntonians will play dance-type music at no extra charge and you can push a few chairs aside and tromp about on the teak 'till all hours (approximately midnight).

**CONCLUSIONS:** Everyone will enjoy the concert of the combined WPI and Becker Glee Clubs on the night of Friday 21 January at 8:15, and the dance following.

### Newman Club, ASME, AIEE, Hold Meetings

The Newman Club held their monthly meeting at 7:15 o'clock on Tuesday night in the Janet Earle Room. The Club was addressed by Father Mears from Holy Cross College on the subject, "Catholics and Art". Plans were made for a Communion Breakfast which will be held on February 13th. The exact time and place of the breakfast will be announced at a later date.

Last Wednesday evening, the Worcester section of the AIEE invited the student branch to their meeting which was held in the Janet Earle Room. The speaker for the meeting was Mr. Robinson from WNAC in Boston. Mr. Robinson gave a very interesting talk on the problems of modern television.

The student branch of the AIEE held their meeting on Tuesday evening in the Commons of Sanford Riley Hall. The guest speaker was Mr. Bertil Harmarstrom who spoke on the topic "High Frequency Applications" with special consideration of machine tools.

At the last meeting of the ASME, which was held at Chaffin's Hydraulic Laboratory in Holden, Professor Hooper spoke on the use of Edgerton Flash Equipment and showed a group of very interesting slides.

The ASME is sponsoring a contest open to all Tech students who compose a paper on some Engineering subject and enter it in the competition. The prizes consist of a first prize of ten dollars and a second prize of five dollars.

### Chapel Notice

The fourth CHAPEL SERVICE of the 1948-1949 College Year will be held Wednesday, January 19, at 11:00 A.M., in the Alden Auditorium.

The speaker will be the Reverend Kenneth E. Bath, Minister of the Greendale People's Church. Mr. Bath spent last summer in Europe and tells an interesting and vigorous story of his observations.

Subject: "What Do We Mean By Our Way Of Life?"

All students and faculty are invited to attend.

# TECH NEWS

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## Editorial

1948 was a year which produced many changes in the TECH NEWS. Among the more important changes were a completely redesigned masthead and a return to weekly issues. Improvement was achieved in news coverage, style, and feature stories. Each staff attempts to outdo the other, and the present staff, which terminates its duties with the next issue of the TECH NEWS, hopes that it has far excelled all previous staffs in the matter of improving the TECH NEWS.

Any improvement whatsoever is a feather in our hat. Our readers should not overlook the fact that an engineering curriculum provides very little spare time for such activities as the TECH NEWS. Also the staff receives no remuneration for its efforts. Most schools reward their staffs financially.

Putting out a weekly issue was quite a task, which we hope we have fulfilled. As a result of the change to a weekly issue, we recommend to the President's Award Committee that they again revise the TECH NEWS point schedule.

## Fraternity News Bits

By NORM BROWN

While the Christmas recess is but a dim, fond memory, a quick look around the hill shows abundant evidence to indicate that the resourceful engineers are making the best of their return to hard labor. A.E.Pi started the ball rolling in a big way by continuing their policy of playing host to a different fraternity each week. Sig Eps were their guests January 8 at a house party that really got the new year off to a running start. As a result of recent elections, Stan Friedman is president; Al Willis, vice-president; Phil Michelman, scribe; Marty Nisenoff, exchequer; E. Cramer, house manager; and Sumner Herman, I.F. delegate.

The first indication of life at Sig Ep was cigar smoke forcing its way through every possible crevice as a result of the engagements of Dick Allen and Bud Foss. Jim Marston left the ranks of the foot-loose and fancy free when Flora Mae Cameron changed her name to his; Don Jordan was best man. Recent improvements, including painting and the installation of a new water heater have put the house in tip-top shape. Homer McNuff, a senior pledge, has been inducted.

Lambda Chi concentrated on the sports angle with its first basketball game scheduled against Clark chapter, followed by open house there. Worcester chapter reciprocated by playing host to Clark chapter after our tiff with Boston University. New officers at L.C.A. are as follows: Stuart Leonard, president; G. Willard King, vice-president; Robert Smith, secretary; and H. Arthur Nied, treasurer.

Harvey Howell's excellent house party planning technique brightened up the B. U. and Trinity games for the guys and gals at S.A.E. The new year will see S.A.E. headed by Bruce Baily, president; Everett Child, vice-president; and Bob Atherton, treasurer.

A.T.O. is out for basketball in a big way, too, with 20 fellows in the first practice. They've also arranged games with several Worcester County high school teams. Frank Pease  
(Continued on Page 4, Col. 3)

## THOSE WERE THE DAYS . . .

By ROLAND BEDARD

A familiar sight to all of us at Tech, the mysterious structure known as Skull Tomb has been a member of our venerable campus group for over sixty years. Its location at the foot of Boynton Hill near the entrance to the Institute grounds gives the building a guardian-like aspect, looking much like a miniature medieval castle with its stone masonry and conical roof. The Tomb, used exclusively today by Skull, has a colorful and varied history.

Constructed in 1887 from the plans of Stephen C. Earle, it filled the needs of the Electrical Engineering department and was named the Magnetic Laboratory. The purpose of the new laboratory was to enable students to conduct delicate electrical experiments, and the architect's plans were drawn with this specialized aim in mind. No iron was used in building the laboratory, and Mr. Earle considered the importance of freedom from vibrations in choosing the present site.

The axis of the main part of the structure coincides with the magnetic meridian, and the north-south meridian passes through opposite windows in the tower. The interior consisted of a large room measuring 15 by 20 feet, equipped with standard measuring instruments for physics and electrical engineering work. For some time the building afforded excellent surroundings for the technical work.

However, its usefulness was un-

expectedly short-lived. In 1888 a trolley car line appeared on Boynton Street, and the track vibrations interfered with the accuracy of delicate instruments. Three years later, when this railway line became electrified the disturbances increased so greatly that the Magnetic Laboratory was rendered useless for experiments.

The laboratory stood completely abandoned for several years, until the E.E. department started using it as a container for a huge oil tank employed in experiments in high potential work. It served this purpose until 1907 when the new Electrical Engineering building became completed and the high potential work was transferred there. Again the laboratory lay idle until 1911; it then became the headquarters of TECH NEWS. The editors of the paper used it as an editorial office for some time. Subsequently, the building was again used as an experimental lab.

In 1921 the Institute, through the cooperation of President Hollis, granted to the Skull Society the use of the former Magnetic Laboratory. At that time Skull was ten years old, and a growing power on the campus. This society of leaders, membership in which had become the highest undergraduate achievement, now owned a long-needed campus meeting place. Thus, the old Magnetic Laboratory turned into the mysterious Tomb of the Skull.

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# SPORTS

January 19, 1949

TECH NEWS

Page Three

## SPORTS BEFORE MY EYES

By Mr. "X"

At this time last year, I wrote in this article a criticism of the athletic department. In it was stated the fact that I would revoke my criticism whenever the conditions were changed to warrant such a revoke. Now is the time.

During the time of my critical article and this one, many changes and improvements have been made which have shown the honest intentions of the athletic department and faculty to help the athletic situation. The installation of the lighting system for practice is in itself one of the biggest aids, for it now enables the so much needed practice sessions. The purchase of new uniforms and equipment, the camera, and screen, and the whirlpool bath, are some of the other purchases which go into the making of better teams.

The athletic banquet, although it may seem unimportant to some, is also a very important step towards better athletics at Tech. Any of those who went to it must admit that it was indeed very inspiring to see such a gathering of people to celebrate the occasion, and don't think for a moment that the athletes don't appreciate it. I must compliment the person who chose the guest speakers. They were beyond

a doubt the best group of banquet speakers I have ever heard at one gathering.

Perhaps the most striking improvement has come from the faculty itself. The cooperation and even enthusiasm of some of them has been very commendable. The smaller number of Saturday exams before games has been perhaps the biggest improvement on their part, and to those who have rearranged their schedule to make this possible, I know that the thoughtfulness on your part has been greatly appreciated.

We must also thank the alumni for the part that they have played in this improvement. They have become more interested in sports and have been helpful in many ways.

Yes, at last we are on the upward trail, but it is still a long way to the top. Like every other task, however, cooperation can make the job much easier. The future looks bright once again, and the days of continual defeat will soon be a forgotten nightmare if faculty and students continue to cooperate. Together, hand in hand, we can climb quickly to the peak and once again be proud of our school.

## Favored B. U. Hands Tech 51-36 Defeat Despite Rally

Engineers Bow to Devens 39-34 For Second Time As Ucich Scores 10

Boston University

The favored B. U. Terriers found little trouble in handing Tech its worst defeat of the season. The Techmen were rushed off the floor in the first half as the Terriers racked up a 31-11 lead. At the start of the second half Coach McNulty inserted his second five. The reserves kept pace with the invaders until the starting five returned with some ten minutes remaining on the clock. It was at this point that the engineers, trailing by 26 points, showed a complete reversal of form as they hit with amazing consistency. Out of the last ten shots attempted by the engineers eight were converted. Tech's last basket was a hair raiser. With some 40 seconds remaining in the fray, Russ Bradlaw threw a half floor push shot which connected for the final marker. Before the final buzzer had sounded, Tech had reduced the lead to 15 points.

The Terriers "Biff" Daly topped all scorers with 15 markers to his credit. Tech's scoring was evenly distributed among Freeland, Ucich, Howard and Bradlaw.

Devens

The Engineers again got off on the wrong foot as they ended up on the wrong end of the score. This loss was administered by Devens. The veterans, playing on their own court, made it two in a row over the Techmen for the season. It was a slam bang affair up until the final whistle. The lead changed hands several times during the last half with the veterans taking a six point lead with some eight minutes remaining on the clock. It was Bill Martineau who paced the Devens' men in their final surge. He contributed three successive hoops in the final period.

Cassidy and Martineau shared scoring honors for the victors as they each tallied eleven points. Captain Steve Ucich was high for the Techmen as his one-handers connected five times for 10 points.

The McNulty men have still to regain their pre-Christmas form. They are missing a large percentage of their shots both from the floor and from the foul line.

## Tech's Height and Rallies Fall Short As Trinity Wins 50-42

Bradlaw Hoops 13 For Engineers As Reserves Shine

Tech J.V.'s Lose Prelim To Trinity J.V.'s 54-44 As Althen, Juinnis Star

By "SCOOP" ATKINSON

Tech's intrepid band of Diogenes are still searching, not for an honest man, but rather for their first post-Christmas victory and the third of the present campaign. But although the boys are looking far and wide and trying very hard, it's a long time coming. Perhaps the reason is that the Boynton Bombers, who are very much the accomplished team over three-quarters of the polished court, are instantly afflicted with acute astigmatism and St. Vitus' dance when they cross the Rubicon into the charmed scoring zone. In any event it is one of the factors that sent Trinity whooping back home with a one-victory edge in the twenty-three game series which dates back to the dim year 1909.

When the boys stepped into the ring, it was obvious that the Connecticut cagers sported a dangerous height advantage, and before the final claxon sounded, this height advantage had been converted into more tangible form in the scoring column. The altitudinous duo of Ron Watson, six-five, and Bill Pitkin, six-three, had flipped nineteen and sixteen points respectively in pacing the Trinity drive. The dwarf of the visitors' forward wall, "Moon" Curtis, six-one, followed with six checks in the score book.

Trinity's deliberate style of play in the opening moments of the game with the emphasis on control and finding an opening in the Tech defense was deceptive, for the explosion soon occurred. From a situation in which the Nutmeggers were a whisker in front at 4-3, a crisis developed as Trinity spurted ahead 21-5, as the local quintet tried everything short of a human ladder to dunk the ball in the basket and wipe that ominous "5" from the scoreboard. At this juncture the Engineers' hopes were revived with the introduction of a fresh squad by Coach McNulty, one of which, George Barna, was destined to be a standout by his sheer drive and aggressiveness throughout the remainder of the contest. The new arrivals blunted the sharp point of Trinity's attack and began at last to zero in the range of the rim. With Russ Bradlaw carrying the mail in the first canto to the melodious tune of nine points, the Hill-toppers had gained valuable ground and trailed 27-18 at halftime. The loyal fans sat back and drew a deep breath, even smiled; perhaps victory had been snatched from the cruel jaws of defeat. The second half would tell the tale.

At the resumption of hostilities, it appeared that the Tech courtiers would continue their meteoric rise as they carved the visitors' margin to six points, but unfortunately this was the boys' peak effort. It was at this time that Trinity's height edge became stunningly apparent. The defenses had contracted into very tight rings before the baskets, and from the midst of the tangle one of the skyscrapers would launch himself into the air, wrench himself into the clear, and out of the reach of ordinary mortals, flip the ball into the twine. Meanwhile, Trinity's umbrella of overhanging arms was smothering our efforts to hit for a deuce. With the end of the game but scant minutes away and Tech at the low water mark, trailing by seventeen points, 50-33, the indefinable happened. The old magic returned to the finger-tips of Richie and Steve and Bill and the scoreboard began to gyrate wildly . . . 50-36 . . . 50-40 . . . 50-42 . . . but, alas, the time at last ran out and the game was just history, with Trinity the victor 50-42.

Tech's Junior Varsity representatives also received a setback at the hands of the Trinity Freshmen, 54-44. The visiting quintet, spearheaded by the precision passwork of their play-setter, Sam Nakaso, employed a devastating fast break to maintain the lead throughout the game. At half time the Jayvees trailed 25-18. During the second stanza, the play was wild and woolly as Trinity's tight defense resulted in a bumper crop of lost and stolen balls. Tech, forced to strike from the outside, was unable to close the gap, and at the climax they were off the pace by ten points. Goralski of the Trinity five pitched thirteen markers for all-round scoring honors. Juinnis and Althen netted twelve points apiece for the young Tech hopefuls.

TRINITY

	f.g.	f.t.	pts.
Curtis	3	0	6
Brainard	0	0	0
Watson	6	7	19
Van Lanen	0	1	1
Pitkin	6	4	16
Boyko	0	0	0
Ponsalle	2	0	4
Leahy	0	3	3
Mahon	0	1	1
Elliot	0	0	0
Dudley	0	0	0
	17	16	50

TECH VARSITY

	f.g.	f.t.	pts.
Collings	0	0	0
Barna	0	0	0
Howard	4	2	10
Ucich	2	1	5
Mehalick	4	2	10
Bradlaw	6	1	13
Norris	0	0	0
Freeland	1	0	2
Chapman	0	0	0
Kolodne	1	0	2
	18	6	42

## TECH FINMEN OUTDO B. U. DUCKS IN AQUA MEET, 52-22

On Saturday, January 8, the Tech swimming team traveled to Boston to take on Boston University. The mermen brought a victory home, beating B. U. 52-22. The medley relay team of Lacey, Kahn and Johnson had no trouble taking the race by half a length of the pool. Butch Brown steadily pulled away from everyone to win the 220 free style with no difficulty. Bill Bowen made a valiant attempt to overtake Corning of B. U. but he just fell short and came in third. The sixty yard freestyle was nip and tuck but Conroy of B. U. managed to beat out Sid Madwed and Dick Olson who came in second and third. The

diving was close but Howell came in second when he misinterpreted a set dive and got no points for it. The hundred yard free style was anybody's until Madwed and Johnson pulled out in the last lap. Sid took first by a hand touch. Tech continued monopolizing first place as Pete Lancey and Bill Bowen took first and second in the 150 yard backstroke. Pete Kahn did not have to exert himself to capture first place in the 200 yard breast stroke. Tom Hodgett's try for second failed by inches. Butch Brown took his second first as he lead the Beantown swimmers all the way in the 440. B. U. fought hard to end the meet with a win, but Ev Johnson held the Tech lead as we won the 400 yard freestyle relay. This was the tankmen's first victory since the 1940-41 season. In celebration, the team threw Coach Frank Grant into the pool.

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### Prof. Plimpton

(Continued from Page 1, Col. 1)  
in the Electrical Engineering Department under the supervision of Professors Howe and Wadsworth. It has possibilities of accuracy well in excess of any method previously used.

Meanwhile, Doctor Plimpton had remained active in the field of writing. In 1927 he edited Professor Arthur Gordon Webster's *Partial Differential Equations of Mathematical Physics*. In another instance he was co-author with Professor A. Wilmer Duff of *Elements of Electromagnetic Theory*, a textbook of intermediate grade of difficulty. Along a slightly different line, Doctor Plimpton produced a paper on Einsteinian corrections to basic physical laws for the 1936 *Physical Review*.

Still, in spite of all these accomplishments in his chosen line, it was something far different that attracted the most attention from the general public. When Doctor Plimpton died, he was referred to everywhere as the "Flying Professor". It requires little explanation to understand the wide interest shown in his experiences in flying, however. It is difficult to picture this quiet little man known to Tech students only in his role as a professor taking an active interest in such a hazardous sport as flying. But he did, and at the age of 55 he bought his own plane, a Taylorcraft, and soloed

after only 9 hours of instruction. during the war, he patrolled the coast in the search for submarines, and he towed practice targets for aviation cadets.

Surely, Worcester Tech has benefited by his association with its name. All Tech mourns the passing of Doctor Samuel J. Plimpton, experimenter, teacher, writer and aviator.

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### Fraternity News

(Continued from Page 2, Col. 3)  
dropped in to say hello, and immediately became the nucleus of a bull session about the army. A "hangover" party designed to make life happier in '49 will be staged on January 15; maybe they'll try not waking up until 1950.

T.K.P. has been officially presented with the T.K.P. National Efficiency Award for 1948 by National Executive Secretary George V Uhlein. Theta Kap's basketball squad scrimmaged Trade High School last Friday.

Dick Olson and Bill Collings represented Phi Sig in the matrimonial parade.

### Sigma Xi - ACS

(Continued from Page 1, Col. 2)

with a B.S. in Chemistry and at present is taking graduate work in the Chemistry Department.

Those admitted to full membership were Walter G. Dahlstrom and

Harold Narcus. Also admitted to associate membership were the following: Charles C. Allen, John H. Beckwith, Jr., Lawrence B. Borst, Walter J. Charow, George Crompton, III, Wellen G. Davison, Robert L. Doughty, Franklin P. Emerson, Malcolm E. Ferson, Leonard W. Fish, Charles F. Gerber, Charles W. Heath, Peter Kalil, Robert S. Lawrence, John W. Luoma, Tsu-Yen Mei, Robert P. Nugent, Harvey L. Pastan, Mac J. Prince, Charles M. Selwitz and Wallace B. Thompson, Jr.

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### Student Union

(Continued from Page 1, Col. 5)

of hostesses are just ahead. But at present the snack bar and soda fountain, the pool room and lounges, and the two lovely ladies behind the counter will suffice. For once the old adage "You can't have your cake and eat it too" is in error. We have and we can.

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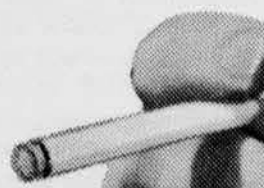
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