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April 16, 1962 1.0

To the Editor of Electrical World

Favorable aspects of the proposed AIEE-IRE merger have been emphasized. Unfavorable comments have emanated largely from IRE members. Therefore I say to my fellow AIEE members:

LET'S TAKE A LONG, CAREFUL LOOK BEFORE WE LEAP.

I would remind those who may marvel at my willingness to take this negative and seemingly unpopular position that an unindoctrinated boy was the only one at the royal parade who was willing to say aloud that he saw no gold robe on the king.<sup>1</sup>

For a number of years my AIEE responsibilities involved knowledge of and cooperation with steps designed to facilitate a merger with IRE -- but not this one, -- because:

- I. National Technical Committees as we know them will be abandoned.<sup>2</sup> In their place will be "Technical Groups."<sup>3</sup>
- II. National Transactions (and Proceedings) will be destroyed by a hodgepodge<sup>4</sup> of local or narrow-field publications, so scattered as to be even less authoritative than our present "District Papers."<sup>5</sup>

Substitutes for these basic foundations have been found useful for certain segments of the AIEE but are practically of no value for Power, Industry, Transportation, and Utilization. This merger does not preserve the strong points of both Institutes but is, in effect, a merger of IRE and certain segments of AIEE which were designed to satisfy the needs of electronic-minded members.

AIEE members in at least the Power, Industry, Transportation, and Utilization fields can appreciate the pivotal position of the AIEE National Technical Committees. They enjoy direct access to the Board of Directors. They have a key role in the initiation of the study of problems, formation of working groups, surveys of the status of the art, promotion and coordination of Technical Sessions, securing suitable papers for permanent (National) reference so that the resulting engineering knowledge may be available in a central record and duplication of effort may be minimized. All this is to be dropped, most probably for all time, leaving only standardization activities for the technical committees.

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- (3) Presentation at a National Meeting, followed by prepared discussions and closures, of approved Technical Papers.
- (4) Publication of the papers, discussions, and closures in one place in a National permanent record.

The proposed agreement gives interim recognition to AIEE Technical Committees<sup>6</sup> and the corresponding Transactions (Proceedings)<sup>4</sup> until these can be liquidated. This is a slender straw on which to base hope for ultimate reinstatement of these important foundations. Is it honorable to vote "yes" on the merger while planning to work afterward to reverse two of its key provisions? In spite of the fact that recent negotiations have been conducted by some of our most able and loyal members, the results to date are:

1. The IRE constitution has been preserved almost intact, and the AIEE constitution is scrapped. The merger agreement requires that AIEE -- not IRE -- amend its constitution.<sup>8</sup>
2. Technical Committees are scheduled for extinction but Professional Groups are retained.<sup>2</sup>
3. IRE methods of operation, including geographic divisions, international operation, administrative year, meetings and exhibits, etc., have been retained and AIEE methods terminated.
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Let no one think the proposed merger will advance unity of the engineering profession. AIEE has worked towards unity whereas IRE has opposed such steps:

- (a) In declining to join Engineers Joint Council, IRE stated refusal to consider activities other than purely technical.<sup>17</sup>
- (b) The proposed merger agreement prohibits<sup>9</sup> activities other than technical whereas the present AIEE constitution does not.
- (c) The agreement also prohibits expansion of IEEE in space available in the United Engineering Center,<sup>10</sup> apparently leaving expansion to be made at the present IRE Headquarters.



Two conclusions are recommended for consideration:

- A. A genuine merger can be accomplished within two or three years if IRE will be as cooperative as AIEE.
- B. Whether or not item A can be achieved, it is in the best interest of most AIEE members that the merger as now proposed be disapproved.

*Wm. R. Brownlee*

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Fellow, AIEE

WRB/pam  
4/16/62

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3. Ibid, VI a, b.
4. Ibid, XIV d.
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9. Ibid, Section 2 VI b, c.
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11. Electrical Engineering, April 1962 Supplement, Constitution XII 1, 2.
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## LETTERS

### Urges 'Careful Look' at AIEE-IRE Merger

To the Editor

Favorable aspects of the proposed AIEE-IRE merger have been emphasized. Unfavorable comments have emanated largely from IRE members. Therefore I say to my fellow AIEE members:

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## LETTERS (Continued from page 5)

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid, IX 1, 5  
<sup>15</sup>Ibid, IV  
<sup>16</sup>Ibid, II  
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