

Mr. Hilshman

PERSONAL

1.3.54

May 7, 1956

Mr. M. D. Hooven, President
American Institute of Electrical Engineers
80 Park Place
Newark 1, New Jersey

Dear Morris:

I appreciate your prompt reply to my letter of April 24 concerning our position with IRE. I am still concerned however with your continued feeling that I have "not made up my mind whether we are in a state of cold war with IRE or whether we look upon ourselves as closely allied with it".

I have stated my position so often both in informal session with our Presidents and in the Coordination Committee meetings with IRE that I am puzzled as to how it could be misconstrued. However, we will again state this position in the following simple statements:

1. The AIEE is the only electrical engineering society that serves all electrical engineers regardless of specialization. It is the only electrical engineering society that is dedicated not only to the advancement of the arts and sciences, but also for the advancement of the electrical engineer professionally. No other electrical engineering society spends its time and resources on purely professional matters such as ECPD, EJC, etc.
2. The IRE is doing a very fine job within its technical field. While we urge every electrical engineering student to belong to AIEE first, we concede that if he is specializing in the electronics field he can gain a great deal by joining IRE also.
3. It is the opinion of most people in AIEE who have been close to Student Branch work that the establishment of joint branches has hurt AIEE and that we would be better off if we had no joint branches. However, as I have stated often there should be no attempt on our part to abandon the joint branch idea because at least 75% of our schools prefer the joint branch operation because of its reduction in effort of faculty and others in the operation of the branch idea. Therefore, our position has been in the Coordination Committee and elsewhere that we should cooperate to the fullest degree with IRE in making the joint branches work where we have joint branches, but not to specifically encourage our separate branches to adopt the joint branch idea. I have repeatedly pointed out that the

May 7, 1956

same results can be accomplished with separate branches operating with joint program committees and joint activities. This is borne out by the success of many such setups at Pitt, the University of Nebraska and other places.

4. We believe that we should have a line of communication from the officers of the Institute down to the Student Branch members which means that the Chairman of a joint branch should be a member of AIEE (and presumably IRE also) and this thinking seems to me to be basically sound and somewhat obvious.

5. Many of us think it is unethical for a professional society to solicit the membership list on a mass basis for prospects to join that society, whether it is a student list or a corporate member list. We would not think it ethical for us to appear before a section meeting of IRE and exploit the advantages of AIEE membership.

6. I believe in complete cooperation with IRE in every way, except adopting a hypocritical attitude that there is no competition between IRE and AIEE. Of course there is competition and each group wants to enlist as many members as possible. There is nothing dirty about the word "competition". All of us in our daily lives are in competition with something or somebody and in many cases our competitors may be our closest friends. Let's stop this hypocrisy of no competition and conduct our competition in a dignified professional way and still maintain full cooperation with our competitors, exchange information that would be helpful to him and where possible adopt any bilateral moves for the good of the profession the good of each society, but not to adopt such measures if they are to the disadvantage of AIEE.

All of the foregoing I have stated to our own officers and have stated it in the Coordination Committee meetings. I have kept IRE fully informed of our thinking at all times, notifying them in advance of any plan that is even in the formative stage. I have given them complete information on all of our costs for Student operation, I have given them figures on Student enrollment as rapidly as we have received them. Although they have promised me similar figures for several months, they have not been forthcoming. I firmly believe that we have been far more cooperative in this Coordination Committee than has IRE. Despite this, I am making every effort to keep them advised of every move we make, every plan we have in mind and have freely given them any statistics that would be of interest to them.

My only recommendation to our President and the Board of Directors is that we have a frank discussion of our relationships with IRE, lay all the cards on the table, admit the facts and then as a society proceed somewhat on the basis that I have tried to perform as an individual and as a representative of the society.

Mr. M. D. Hooven:

- 3 -

May 7, 1956

It all boils down to one fact which is in summary that we are in competition with IRE, there is nothing whatever wrong with admitting the competition, we should conduct our competition with dignity and professionalism, and we should cooperate to the fullest extent with our competitors in giving them any information about our operations they wish, and have joint activities of any nature whatsoever that are beneficial to both societies, but harmful to neither.

Does all this rambling dissertation clear up the questions in your mind.

Sincerely yours,

WALTER B. MORTON

Walter B. Morton
Chairman

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