

INTER-OFFICE LETTERS ONLY

DATE February 27, 1968

TO Dr. Coggeshall

FROM N S Hibshman

SUBJECT TOWN MEETING AND STUFF

Many thanks for your characteristicly thorough search and analysis of the case of the "distinguished Past-President of AIEE". I will accept your assumption that the tape landed in my office and was probably lost from there. I don't think it will be found in my five boxes of files in storage, but I will know when I go through them during the Convention Week.

Of the two candidates eligible for consideration on the record, I would favor LeClair. Again, there might have been an old timer there who neglected to turn in a card. I think of Charlesworth, who used to turn up at meetings. I believe the record would show that he was then our oldest living past-president. He was a communications man and more likely to have been in contact with IRE people than either LeClair or Hickernell. His 39 years could refer, not to membership in AIEE, but to the beginning of his holding office. He was on the Board of Directors as early as 1923.

I agree that Hickernell was capable of supporting actions with which he disagreed, once they were taken. He did not oppose merger, but he did have reservations about the way it was being put together as set forth in some of the documents then still under consideration. His presence on some of the committees you mention would have been most helpful, and he was willing to serve.

At any rate, Hooven and LeClair are still available and can be questioned. I've appealed to Morris for help in this project. His 1952 paper at the Centennial of Engineering is valuable. His History of the New York Section is also useful.

I've been through the AIEE Board minutes since 1940. The earliest use of the word "merger" I find there was April 1952 when, "Mr. Barrett said the ultimate desirable outcome is a complete merger". The Board then went on as follows:

VOTED that AIEE wants to cooperate with IRE in all areas of joint interest and at all levels, in the interest of those individual engineers who are active in both fields; when and if this leads to a situation in which the two organizations can be merged, such merger will be favored by AIEE.

Barrett was then representing AIEE on a Joint Coordinating Committee and finding the going rough.

I have written to all of the members of the Eight-Man Committee for clues as to what was happening behind the scenes before the October Board meeting of 1961 when the Resolution popped up already well developed. No answers yet.

Notice that my Pennsylvania Dutch habits are still strongly in control. I won't invest in stationery until I've used up every scrap on hand.

*Nelson*

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