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CITIZENSHIP

Time was when the engineer was considered as one apart from the current political life of his country. The field of engineering and the field of government were thought to be the two most separated. An engineer who admitted playing with politics was considered by his brothers as something less than an engineer.

Today we face changing conditions. The aim of our engineering schools is to produce men, not only expert in bringing perfection from material, but expert in controlling the greatest force in production, the men who produce. As the engineer becomes a manager, he sees more clearly his relation to the outside world. He sees the vital effect of economic conditions on his project. He must recognize the importance to industry of a sound social structure in his country. So, tho no engineer likes the word *politics*, he must interest himself in the science of government.

The responsibility of citizenship is very definite. First it means *knowing*; second, it means *acting*.

Not long ago I talked to a classmate who said that the newspapers and current periodicals were the principal joy of his existence. — The man is an A student — Recognizing, of course, the classics of literature, where could one better spend his time than with the current prints? In knowing well the topics of the day comes the power to shape the structure of our government. Extensive, intelligent, critical reading of current literature is the one way to the understanding of the events going on around us.

We have heard much about voting, and perhaps all of us are just a wee bit bored as each barrage of get out the vote slogans falls about our ears. To vote is, of course, a duty which no intelligent citizen shuns, but that is passive citizenship. Active citizenship means more than voting; it means taking part. While in school it may be activity in your student society or in the affairs of your class. Later perhaps the city, state, or nation may have need for men trained in accurate reasoning. Today, we have an engineer mentioned for the highest office of government. The day of active citizenship for engineers is here.

NICARAGUA

The other evening the debate team of The Ohio State University met Purdue University to discuss the proposition: "Resolved that the present policy of the United States government toward Nicaragua should be condemned". Here is a topic which should interest engineers in particular, because of the development work going on and planned in the Central and South American republics.

Ohio State presenting the affirmative clearly won the debate. In rough their case was as follows. The United States is violating international law by interfering in the internal affairs of a sovereign state. The motive in our present action is not one of "big brotherhood" toward Nicaragua, but simply the protection and assurance of profits to American bankers who are seeking to exploit Nicaragua by means of "unscrupulous" loans and financial agreements. The affair is an economic blunder since it costs the government more per year to protect these loans and investments than the entire amount of the investments. We are incurring the distrust of all South America by our actions in Nicaragua. This affirmative case was left almost intact by the negative. Indeed, if the proposition is considered from a purely disinterested standpoint of what is just and absolutely fair it would seem that the government is jumping in where it has no right, and is blundering in our friendly protection policy toward the Central American states.

We must remember, however, that we are forced to look upon the case from a selfish as well as disinterested view point. What goes on in Central America is of vital interest to us. Some of these small republics are certainly not able to take care of themselves.

This brings up the question, "Why should the United States be the nation to step in and settle the difficulties of another sovereign state?"

The key to the whole situation and the answer to this question seems to be in reference to two international policies of the United States which are almost axiomatic in their correctness and universal in their acceptance. First, the Monroe Doctrine which means that we will not look with favor on European aggression or interference in

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NICARAGUA

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the Latin American republics. Second, the recognized point in international relations that a nation may demand or enforce protection for the lives and properties of its citizens abroad.

Now, in assuming for ourselves the right to protect the lives and properties of our citizens abroad we must grant that right to other nations. The interests and citizens of many nations beside the United States are represented in Nicaragua, but we will not allow them to offer military protection, so in all fairness we must assume the burden of protection. Such protection is our international duty if we are to continue under the Monroe Doctrine.

Regarding again the second of the two points mentioned above, we must either offer protection to our own citizens in Nicaragua or abandon any interest in a citizen after he steps out of the United States. Consistency in this second policy demands protection in Nicaragua.

Much more could be said on both sides of the question. It is true that the intervention is costly in lives and money. Every day we hear of more marines killed or more rebels killed. All in all it is a nasty mess. No one likes it, and everyone desires the return of our armed forces as soon as possible.

However, since we have set certain policies in our international relations let us continue under these policies until they are proved wrong. We should not be too quick to condemn an administration for making the best of an unpleasant circumstance, and applying recognized principles to its solution.

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