

Pacifism in the Colleges

SHALL WE SINK THE *CONSTITUTION*?

That is the question recently broached before a body of students.

While the historic old frigate was swinging on her anchor in San Francisco Harbor, a breeze from the west singing through her shrouds, a resolution proposing that she be sent out to sea and sunk was put before the Inter-Collegiate Conference.

The resolution was lost, 56 to 12, but the same conference, a student group representing seven San Francisco Bay region universities and colleges, did adopt a resolution pledging refusal "to be conscripted into any war service whatsoever." The vote was 44 to 19, with sixteen students not voting. The group also passed a resolution praising a similar pledge not to bear arms adopted by the Oxford Union, undergraduate organization of Oxford University. Eighty students attended the San Francisco meeting. Stanford University, the University of California, St. Mary's College, Mills College, San Mateo Junior College, and the San José and San Francisco State Teachers Colleges

are represented in the organization.

This action by the students of the West coast preceded by a few weeks a nation-wide college poll conducted by the Inter-collegiate Disarmament Council, the National Student Federation, and the *Brown Daily Herald*. It shows that a large number of students are tinged with the pale hues of pacifism.

The total number of students who had voted at the time of the first official announcement of the results was 21,725. Of this number, 8,415 take an uncompromisingly pacifist stand, 6,089 say they would fight in a war of any character involving the United States, and 7,221 say they would bear arms only in case of invasion of this country.

THE sixty-five institutions which have sent in their final votes are situated in twenty-seven States. They comprise eight State colleges, nineteen universities, and thirteen women's colleges. Almost all the remaining number are coeducational.

The poll has created deep interest in the college press, and may be expected to be received with equal interest elsewhere.

"There is a deep significance in the student poll," says *The Maroon*, Colgate University, where the vote was of a particularly pacifist trend:

"Such a wide-spread sentiment against war is a very recent development and one indicative of tremendous progress in thinking.

"No poll taken just before or after the World War could possibly have shown similar results. The few pacifists, if not openly condemned, would have been thought just a little bit queer. To-day these same pacifists constitute a majority in the colleges of the country, and an even greater majority in England, where the questionnaire arose. No test such as the Great War has yet been given this new pacifism, but without doubt, in the event of another war, its adherents would form a powerful minority."

"By the very beginning and existence of such a movement," says *The Maroon* of the University of Chicago, where the pacifists were in the majority, "we firmly believe that the possibilities of world peace are nearer to realization than they ever were during the years when generation after generation defined patriotism as

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willingness to kill the citizens of another country, rather than as willingness to decide international issues in the best interests of so many mutually interdependent nations."

Altho it was not asked to participate in the poll, the Oregon State *Daily Barometer* editorially indorses the pacifist movement, and says "each student of this institution is asked to support in word and deed this attempt to save the world from destruction."

BUT Wheaton College, Illinois, refused to participate in the poll. For sixty-five years, it stated, the college has "stood stanchly for only the highest principles, sending its sons into the Civil War to fight for the emancipation of the slaves, participating actively in the fight against alcohol, doing its utmost duty during the World War, and is even now ready to back the good of the United States of America through thick or thin, believing that the only true and living God is watching over our—yes, *Our* good old Stars and Stripes—long may it wave o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!"

Every one of the 233 students at Norwich University, the so-called "Military College of New England," signed a pledge to support the Government in any war, and, according to the *Norwich Guidon*, the results were telegraphed to Congress by the president of the university in the hope "that this result will help Norwich in its fight to retain government support of the R. O. T. C."

From an outstanding Eastern college came the statement, it is said, that one student who had signed the pacifist pledge was forced to withdraw his name from the list because of the pressure which has been brought to bear by the State Legislature on students holding State scholarships.

A poll of the students of the University of Nebraska was not permitted, it is announced.

At Wells College, Aurora, New York, says the statement, it was discovered that thirty-seven of the thirty-eight students who voted to fight in any war whatever are daughters of Army officers or of men in government service.

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