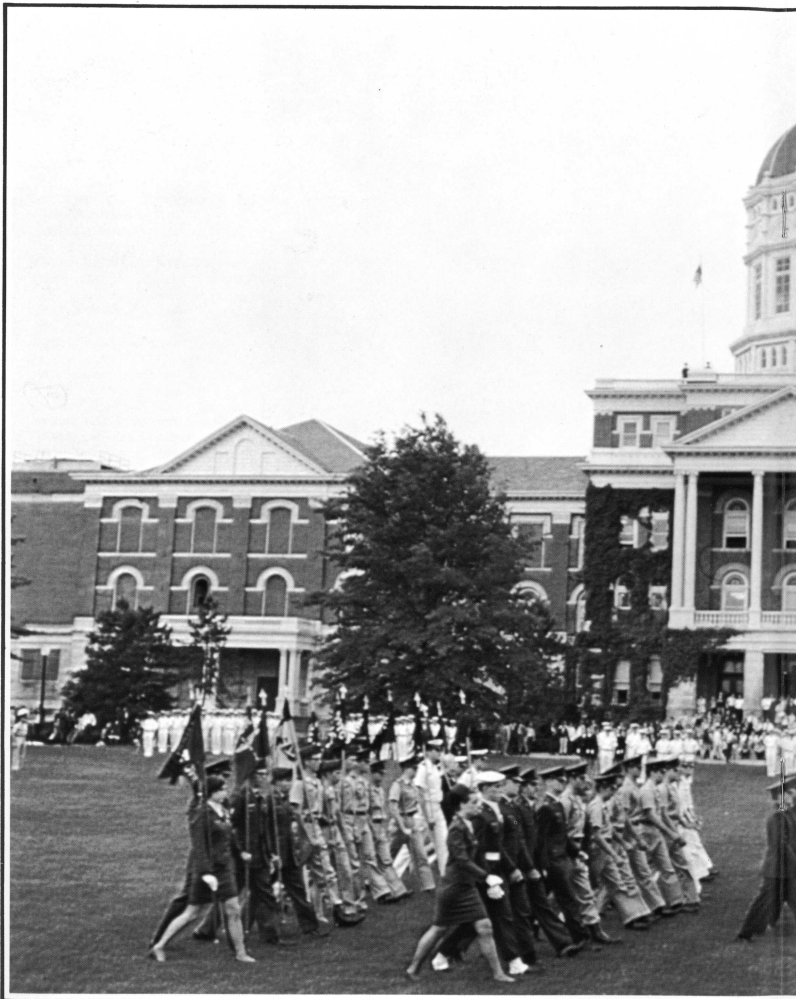




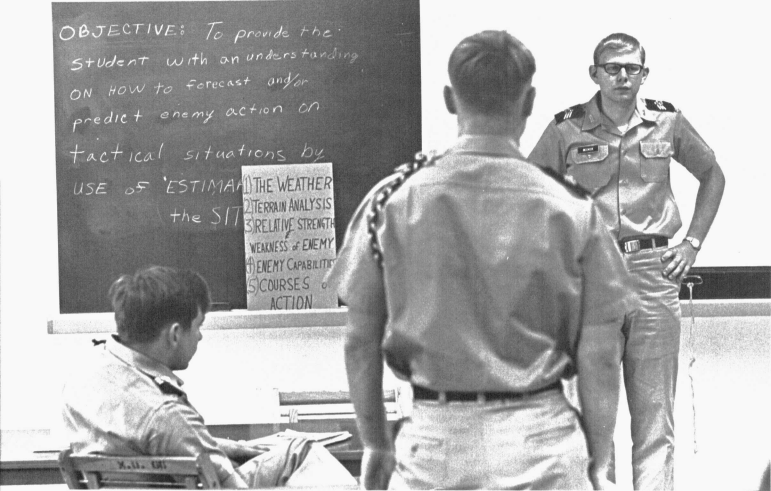
★ ★ ★  
★ ROTC ★  
★ AT ★  
★ MISSOURI ★  
★ By ★  
★ David Fortney ★  
★ ★ ★

Some nervous Naval cadets went to class braced for a blow-up. It was Wednesday, the first day their freshmen would wear uniforms on the University of Missouri's Columbia campus. It was also October 15 — day of the Moratorium. ★ Several students felt that anti-war sympathy connected with the day might trigger the same kind of anti-ROTC sentiment which has flared up recently on a number of other campuses. If so, the Navy cadets, uniformed as they are each Wednesday, would have been natural targets for trouble-makers.

★ But for ROTC things went well. When cadets and protestors happened to cross paths, the only thing that really clashed was their uniforms. That day, as usual, the corps caused little controversy on the Columbia campus. ★ There was occasional sniping, of course, but that has existed since campus critics began to take issue with ROTC across the country. A few cadets say they have been called "Fascist Pigs," but most say they have not been harassed. ★ The







In an Army ROTC class taught by the students themselves, cadets discuss war tactics.



Air Force officer leads seminar for freshmen, sophomores.

University of Missouri has provided military training with a friendlier climate than is found on many campuses. At Dartmouth and Harvard, for instance, the faculty voted to end the ROTC programs. Student demonstrators at the University of Oregon have burned military recruiting booths and man-handled recruiters. On many campuses ROTC is up against the wall.

But at the University in Columbia, one of the few educational institutions which offers programs in all three military services, ROTC has encountered little in the way of organized opposition. The biggest confrontation so far came last May when about 120 members of the University Committee of Concerned Students gathered on the steps of Jesse Hall while ROTC cadets held their spring parade about 100 yards away.

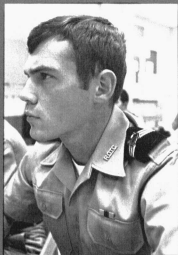
Protestors read the names of Americans killed in Vietnam in peaceful protest. Among the speakers was Rory Ellinger, a graduate student at the University, who explained the rally's aims as these:

"First, to educate our community about the war in Vietnam and, second, to end ROTC on the campus. We have to make sure there are no more Vietnams and we will do this by dismantling the machinery — ROTC — that furthers such wars."

Now, five months later, ROTC still seems in no danger of being dismantled on this campus. Actually,



Navy instructors include Marine Clayton Beeson, Midshipman Barry Hudspeth.



a master's thesis written this summer by graduate student Thomas J. Turner III indicates that it has widespread support. Interviewing a sample of young, male students in Columbia — those eligible to take ROTC — he found that most of his subjects fell into seven basic patterns of thought.

He reports:

"Nearly all types . . . view ROTC as necessary, much as they consider the military. They feel that academic credit is justified, and (all groups but one) have the conviction that anyone who feels he's capable of being an officer should be one."

Other factors also indicate that ROTC has a strong base of support here. When the Brigadiers, a co-ed auxiliary for Army cadets, petitioned for sophomore and junior members this fall, 120 girls signed up for the 22 positions available. ROTC membership hardly seemed to hinder Cadet Captain James Heeter in last spring's student government election — he was elected president. Many faculty members participate in awards ceremonies, too, handing out awards and pinning on bars of students in their departments. University Chancellor John W. Schwada has called ROTC "an integral part of the University's total educational effort." Its roots here are traditional, dating back more than 100 years.

Military training began on the Columbia campus in 1868, six years after the Morrill Act opened many

campus doors to military training. The act provided land for colleges and universities in exchange for a promise that the schools would offer courses in military instruction. At first, these classes did not lead to commissions for the students.

ROTC as we know it these days began with the National Defense Act of 1916. This enabled college-trained cadets to earn commissions while they fulfilled academic requirements for a degree. For many years after that all able-bodied, eligible men in their first two years at the University had to take ROTC. This, in turn, meant that there were several unhappy freshman and sophomore men.

Many students objected to the compulsory training. In 1961 petitioners collected more than 1000 signatures of those who wanted mandatory training ended, but Dr. Elmer Ellis, 13th president of the University, refused to consider changing the program. Conditions changed, though, in 1964 when Congress passed the ROTC Vitalization Act. It authorized scholarships for some cadets and monthly pay for all of them. It also eliminated the need to make ROTC training required.

With the end of required training, ROTC enrollment in the three military programs dropped to an average of 507 students, a loss of nearly 68 percent of their former size. Yet while the number of young men entering ROTC here has dropped, Turner

says in his thesis, the number of graduates earning commissions "has remained about the same."

The Air Force reports about 250 cadets in their program here this year, a drop of some 50 from last year's enrollment. The Navy and Army speak of similar slumps, with the Navy going from 220 in 1968 to 196 this year, and the Army dropping in enrollment from 418 to 320.

Enrollment has dropped, ROTC department spokesmen say, but they do not seem disheartened by the results so far. All say that the average cadet they work with now is better motivated, and they still commission about the same number of officers. "We used to get 10 or 12 cadets for each officer we graduated," explains Colonel Claude Barton, head of Army ROTC. "But now it's only about two or three students in for every officer we put out. It's much more efficient now that we don't have to work with those who aren't really interested in our program."

Most ROTC faculty members attribute the enrollment drop to feelings of disenchantment with the military because of the unpopularity of the Vietnam war, talk of a "military-industrial complex," and dissatisfaction with ROTC on other campuses. Peace talks figure in, too, they say, as well as proposals for an all-volunteer army. Such moves would cut back or eliminate the need for the draft.

And the draft, some ROTC spokesmen admit, is one thing that has drawn a number of cadets to the programs. Enrollment in Naval ROTC, for instance, grew from 137 in 1966 to 200 the next year. Captain Earl B. Johnson, head of the Naval ROTC department explains the sudden growth as a reaction to

the build-up in Vietnam. Cadets are draft-exempt while enrolled in ROTC, and they earn small, monthly salaries for their participation. Some have ROTC scholarships.

ROTC has run into little organized resistance here, but it does have problems. Within the framework of one campus cadets find that their military classes earn them varying degrees of academic credit. One college may give 12 hours credit for some courses while another school gives only three for the same work. Some cadets feel that this is unfair — that it discriminates against some because of their majors.

The engineering college is probably the academic field here which has the tightest restrictions in giving credit for ROTC courses. A member of the College's curriculum committee explained their feelings like this:

"In the opinion of this faculty, as expressed by our action of some decades ago, the (ROTC) courses do not duplicate any of the courses we require of our graduates. They do not contain the technical material, nor can they satisfy our humanistic or social science requirements."

One of the complaints directed against ROTC across the nation is that its course content is not up to par with that of the other university departments. ROTC instructors here dispute this, pointing out that they constantly are revising the courses along those lines.

Some students, especially those outside the program are not so sure. The Missouri Students Association Senate has established a committee to investigate the role of ROTC programs here. "Every now and then bombs go off at other places where students don't like ROTC," one investigation-backer said. "This seems like a more mature way to handle the question."

Questionnaires have been mailed to the heads of all three ROTC departments, probing into the needs for such programs on campus, their costs and objectives, and academic standards. They hope to find the facts on which they can make sensible evaluations, if ROTC ever does become an issue here.

"That's fine," said one ROTC instructor. "Because then they'll see why it's important to keep us on campus. It's a cheap way for the military to get officers, especially in the numbers we need. And it's important to keep the military under the influence of some civilian-trained products." □



The 1969 ROTC Camp Commander's trophy won by Columbia campus cadets this summer at Fort Riley is presented to Chancellor John W. Schwada. Cadets, from the left are Eric Lowder, James Heeter, Charles Mueller, and George Purdy.