

Bars or Stripes in Texas

Elective ROTC: Blessing or What?

BY RALPH OLIVE
Of the Register-Guard

Back to the Army again, sergeant
Back to the Army again.
Out o' the cold and the rain.—Kipling

Military life has its advantages, there is no doubt about it. But for some reason, the sound of the bugle and the manual of arms, smartly executed, never have appealed widely to American youth.

But in recent years it has become increasingly difficult to escape at least a short hitch. If the young man avoids the National Guard and the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC), there is still his draft board. It takes real ingenuity to keep from exchanging an Ivy League suit for Army green, shade 41.

This year, freshmen entering the University of Oregon and Oregon State University found one part time military obligation that had been shouldered by students in the past was no longer a worry. Compulsory ROTC for freshmen and sophomores had been abolished, by order of the Oregon State Board of Higher Education.

But was this really a blessing? And is a young man wise to take advantage of this new freedom? Does this mean he is really bypassing an opportunity that will not come his way again?

Officers assigned to ROTC units at Oregon and Oregon State agree the smart freshman is the one who voluntarily takes pen in hand and registers for ROTC.

And many students feel the same way—enough to keep the program strong, although considerably smaller than in the past. The UO Army program has 185 freshmen this year, compared to 800 last year. The Air Force enrolled 186 freshmen, compared to 382 in 1961.

If the student completes four years of ROTC, he will go on active duty as a second lieutenant, or ensign. Otherwise, he has to take his chances with the draft board. And if he gets caught, his service will be as an enlisted man, not an officer.

One cynic put it this way: "If you don't take ROTC, you'll find yourself in a few years walking around some dusty Army camp in Texas with a Pfc stripe on your arm. If you take ROTC, and study hard, you'll find yourself in a few years walking around some dusty Army camp in Texas with a gold bar on your shoulder."

Several of the officers in charge of ROTC instruction feel the program will be stronger under the voluntary plan. One of these is Lt. Col. John W. Kocher, professor of air science at the University of Oregon.

"I'm quite pleased with the switch from the compulsory to the voluntary program," Kocher said. "To me, it had become apparent that we would be better off with an elective than with a compulsory program."

Col. Louis D. Farnsworth, professor of military aid air science at Oregon, believes it will take two or three years to get the program into full swing under the voluntary system.

"We've had excellent support from the university administration," he said.

President Arthur S. Flemming has encouraged advisers to inform all freshmen of the details of the ROTC program, so the student will know what his choices are.

Army Capt. Wellington J. Gotschall, assistant professor of military science at the University of Oregon, feels freshmen and sophomores who enrolled this year are in ROTC because they are really interested. Officers don't have to work with hundreds who are in the classroom only because they have to be, he said.

And now there won't be such a sharp difference in enrollment between the sophomore and junior classes. This was the big dropout point before, when sophomores had finished their compulsory service. Men must qualify for the advanced program, however, so there will be a drop, even under the voluntary plan.

"About one-fourth of the freshman class will graduate with commissions," Gotschall predicted.

Army Col. Donald C. Landon, professor of military science at Oregon State, is less optimistic about the voluntary system.

"Under the old program," he said, "you had a lot of people on campus in uniform. Now, students may feel somewhat hesitant about going in ROTC, since not everyone is doing it."

His experience has been, Landon said, that many students entered ROTC with the idea they wouldn't like it. Then, after a few months, they became interested, and went on into the advanced program, often becoming honor students.

Air Force Col. William E. Boyd, professor of air science at OSU, thinks the voluntary program will have many advantages.

"This year we got 35 to 40 per cent of the number we had before," he said.

OSU has an advantage for the Air Force, Boyd said, because "We have the type of engineering students here we want."

He added, "I'm not concerned about how many we're going to put in the pipeline at the end. I think it will be at least as many as before, and it may double."

Both Colonel Boyd and Colonel Kocher noted that the entire Air Force ROTC program may soon be revised to a two-year scholarship plan. All cadets admitted would receive substantial financial aid. The program would begin in the junior year.

Oregon State has Naval ROTC, but the Navy was not as strongly affected as the Army and Air Force by the change from compulsory to voluntary ROTC.

Cmdr. A. V. H. Bacon, acting commanding officer of the OSU Naval program, said there were fewer applicants for the Navy's contract program this year, which differs from the regular program. The regular program is for a limited number of qualified students, who have their expenses paid, and who go into the Navy as regular officers. The contract program is roughly equivalent to the Army and Air Force programs, and produces reserve officers.

This year, Bacon said, the contract program quota was 70, and there were 80 applicants. Of these, 37 were enrolled. The quota is seldom filled, he said, but last year, when all male students had to take some form of ROTC, the Navy had 122 applicants—which meant a wider choice.

The officers agree that a great deal will depend on the campus atmosphere. If ROTC is successful in creating a positive image, the program should continue to produce well qualified officers for the Army, Air Force and Navy.

Cadets Say ROTC Good Training

John D. Jamieson, student Brigade commander for the University of Oregon Army ROTC, is now thinking of becoming a career Army officer.

But when he was a freshman, the military life was far from his mind.

Jamieson, 21-year-old senior from Mt. Vernon, Wash., said last week, "I don't think I would have gone into it if it had not been compulsory. It didn't enter my mind."

Another student, Raleigh Darr, 19, a freshman from Springfield, is in a different position. He entered ROTC this year because he wanted to—this is the first year that men freshmen and sophomores have not been required to take the course.

"I have to go into the service anyway," Darr said. "As an officer, I will have that much more pay, and that much more rating."

Darr said he was favorably

impressed with the ROTC training he had received—even the drill periods.

"Drill is all right," he said. "You learn quite a little."

Although Darr himself is military conscious, he doesn't think this attitude is widespread among men of his age.

"I don't believe most of them have thought too much about it," he said.

Jamieson, although he went into ROTC because it was compulsory, soon became interested in military subjects. When he was a sophomore, he decided to enter the advanced program. And his interest grew as he continued to study.

"After going to summer camp," he said, "I got a new outlook on military life. Now

I'm considering it as a career."

As a student officer, Jamieson likes the voluntary program. He has been favorably impressed with the new students entering the program.

"They're better quality," he said. "They want to learn. When it was compulsory, many of them had no desire to learn."

Unions Authorized

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia (AP)—Ethiopians for the first time will be permitted to organize trade unions under an order of Emperor Haile Selassie published in the official gazette. It bars worker and employer groups from all political activity.



Darr

Jamieson



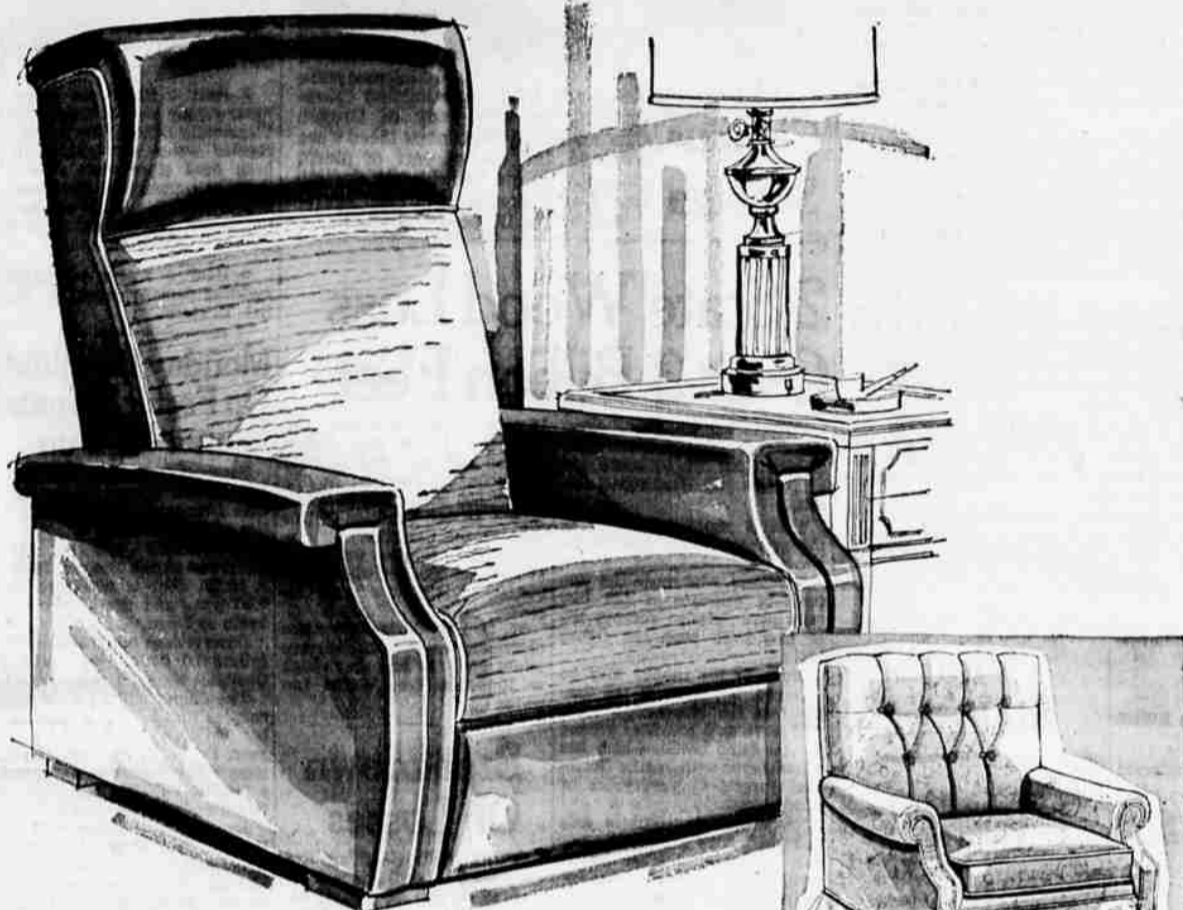
Great Pumpkin

No, an engineer is just examining a giant pump-up structure resembling a jack-o'-lantern at Chertsey, England. It actually is a highly buoyant vessel which is utilized to transport military vehicles over water.

Rubenstein's

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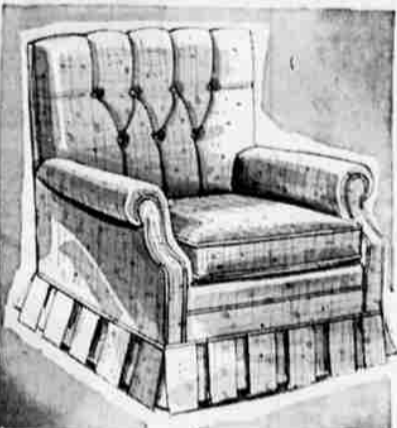
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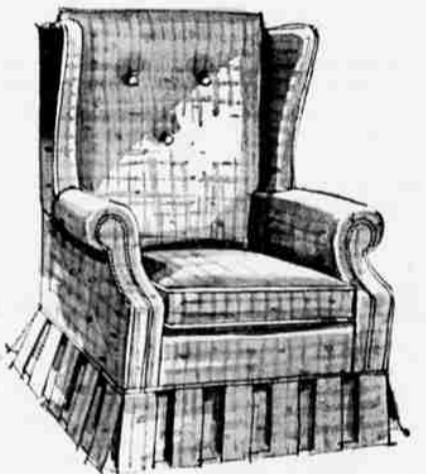
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ABOVE
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LEFT
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ABOVE
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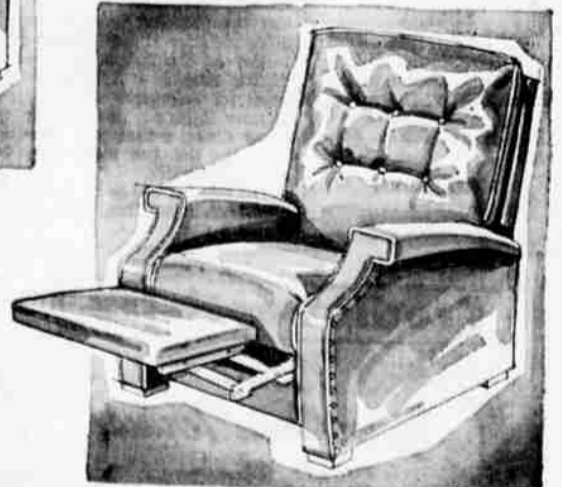


RIGHT
Contemporary modern lounge chair with tapered legs, foam rubber cushions. 79.88



79.88

RIGHT
Traditional barrel chair with knuckle arms, wood wing and base trim, mbg. finish, cloud foam. 79.88



ABOVE
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LEFT
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