Reorganization of Honor Court Is Carried Out

In a recent major change in the student government structure of the Corps of Cadets, the Honor Court has been separated from the class organization and the General Committee with which it has been intimately associated for many years.

With the objective of distributing the work load and responsibility in connection with the administration of student government, the reorganization excludes class officers and members of the General Committee from membership on the Honor Court.

Reorganization of the Honor Court has not been a sudden move. It has been discussed many times before, and has come about only after careful thought by leaders in the Corps. Members of the faculty and the Corps in the past suggested some change similar to that which has been made, but not until this year did the president of the first class take definite action to bring about this reorganization.

Work Load Increased

Enlargement of the Corps brought an increase in the time which must be devoted to student government functions. During the orientation period for new cadets last fall it became apparent to Cadet Peyton J. Marshall, Jr., president of the first class, that there was need for at least studying a revision plan for student government. The new class was the biggest ever admitted to V. M. I. and the cadets in the processing detail were finding their hands full in making cadets out of these men in the few days alloted for the indoctrination.

With supervision of that task immediately upon him, Cadet Marshall was confronted further with the staggering load that promised to be his as first captain of the corps, president of the Honor Court, president of the General Committee and president of the first class in the largest corps ever at V. M. I.

To Cadet Marshall's credit and to the gain of the Corps is his willingness to relinquish some of the authority that had been placed upon him by his election to class office and by selection for military rank, and his foresight in initiating the action that resulted in the reorganization.

Corps Made Move

Suggestions may have come from the alumni and the faculty, but it should be emphasized that the change was the action of the cadets. It was not urged upon them, but they saw the inevi-

tability of some redistribution of responsibilities for student government and brought the change about after careful thought instead of having to make a hasty reorganization resulting from irresistible pressure.

No alumnus who remembers a Corps of six or seven hundred can fail to see that the expansion of the corps to nine hundred or a thousand has multiplied the problems of student government. In this connection, a statement which



Minor Lee Rogers Honor Court President

appeared in *The V. M. I. Cadet* of January 14 is pertinent:

"The Institute has grown to contain over 900 students, and the strain on the various governing organs of the Corps has increased to monumental proportions. The Honor Court, the General Committee, and the individual classes each offers more than enough work for one man and his assistants, and it is not only unfair to the Corps, but unfair to any individual to load all of the responsibility onto the shoulders of one person. It is not fair to the Corps because it is virtually impossible for any man to carry out all of these jobs efficiently along with his academic work, and by the same token, it is equally inequitable to an individual to expect him to maintain all of this responsibility as well as a good school record."

New Membership

**The new organization of the Honor Court calls for nine representatives from the first class, three from the second class, three from the third class selected in February of their third class year

who will not be entitled to vote, and no fourth classmen. The court will select its own president and vice president. It will be seen that this places the major burden and responsibility upon the first class where, because of more mature judgment, it properly belongs.

Yet continuity and indoctrination are provided by seating on the court, members of the lower classes.

Membership on the Honor Court by either class officers or members of the General Committee is expressly forbidden. This means that the Honor Court is selected for the sole purpose of administering the honor system and the purposes and aims of that are no different from what every alumnus remembers.

Gradual Changeover

In order to make the changeover not too abrupt, the Honor Court membership will contain first class officers for the remainder of this year. This is an interim step to provide a measure of continuity until new members of the court become familiar with their duties. The new court has selected as its first president, Cadet Minor Lee Rogers, historian of the first class, who came to V. M. I. from London, England.

The General Committee will continue to function as a body composed of class officers with the principal responsibility of maintaining the reputation of the Corps in matters which are not questions of honor. It also will exercise the traditional function of safeguarding class privileges.

Officers on G. C.

Class officers will continue to represent their classes in dealing with administration and will compose the membership of the General Committee. Cadet officers of the regiment selected by the Commandant will continue to exercise authority as military leaders of the cadet regiment. There may appear to be areas of overlapping responsibility, but in practice the obligations of the various agencies of student government and of the individuals who occupy offices are carefully delineated.

The change seems to have met with the whole-hearted support of the Corps, indicating that the change was brought about in the interest of the more effective functioning and continuation of the V. M. I. honor system in its traditional role of fundamental importance.

^{**}Formerly the Membership of the Honor Court was: First class officers and three members from the first class at large, serond class officers, and the president and vice president of the third class.