

Proposals and Such

THE other day was a happening. I met a kind of latter-day "Ancient Mariner." The day was blustery, blinding eyes with the ever present grime of the Big Apple and we bumped into each other at full throttle. It was my old academic colleague and competitor, Professor... You-know-his-name from FIT.

"Hello Ichabod! What's a veteran Ship Hydromechanic like you with your briefcase fat with proposals doing here in the theater district of Manhattan when you should be making your unending rounds to those Magnificent Agencies in Washington?"

Transfixing me with his "glittering eyes" and reining in my lapel (Coleridge style) he whispered conspiratorially, "The word will be out soon—so I shall tell you. I've thrown all the integral equations, inner and outer expansions, etc., in the hand basket and have written the script for a musical comedy called "Proposals! Proposals!" All I need is that song writer, Jay What's-His-Name whom I am looking for right now.

"But how can you believe that there is a big enough audience interested in the life-long frustrations of a college-professor-proposal-peddler to support a Broadway musical?" I queried.

"That's elementary," he shot back. "A recent poll has shown that 85% of America's middle class is living one way or another on government contracts and 50% of these wretches are involved in writing, filling in "boiler plate" and xeroxing proposals year round!"

Knowing I'd regret it later (Ichabod, like most college professors, cannot say much in a few minutes) I asked "What's the story?"

"It's a hilarious total 'roast' of Washington Bureaucrats and Proposers as well. Opposing choruses of Bureaucrats and Proposers will bombard each other with bombastic songs of their diametrically opposite views of themselves and each other. The Government Chorus will chant such ditties as

"Don't Tell Us—We Know Better—Relevance is Our Thing"

"We Change our Mind—Don't Ask Why"

"Go Fast Navy! Hydrofoils Down, SES Up" (for now)

"We're Dynamic, We Organize"

"Shuffling Along with the Same Old Gang"

"Researchers Talk Only to Researchers"

"Colleges Contribute! Do it for Peanuts"

Professors will lament

"Proposals, Proposals—Get 'Em to the Post on Time!"

"Support Discontinuities—They're Nonintegrable!"

"Solutions, Solutions, Why Don't They Use 'Em?"
"Programs Up, Programs Down, Staff In, Staff Out"

Ye Gods, I thought, the old boy's flipped and wanting to move on and yet not to dampen his ardor, I asked, "What will you do with all the money you expect to make? Retire?"

"Retire, of course not. I will go back to FIT and set up a Center of Excellence for Ships and Offshore Structures." "You know full well," he continued, "that there has always been a chasm between researchers and practitioners. My new program will include biannual shirt-sleeve working meetings between designers and researchers rather than formal seminars. The research programs will be fashioned to provide hull configuration to optimize performance which will be in competition with current designs which always reflect trade-offs and compromises. In this way both groups will learn from each other—instead of ignoring one another!" "Well—got to get on with it."

As I trudged on in the opposite direction I thought that old Ichy was not so nutty after all and I hope he is able to achieve his dream—Lord knows I had tried the same proposal on one of those Magnificent Agencies years ago. If this country is going to compete effectively the dichotomy between designers and applied researchers must be overcome!

Now being well over age in rank after four terms as Editor-in-Chief, I go over the side leaving this Journal in the very capable hands of Professor Donald Layton, Naval Postgraduate School, assisted by Denny R.S. Ko of Dynamics Technology, Inc. and Michael B. Wilson of the David W. Taylor Naval Ship Research and Development Center.

It has been an enjoyable, eventful twelve years with plenty of work. I hope that most of our readers feel that the Journal has matured to a satisfying level. I regret that the coverage of the field of ocean engineering and science has not been uniform because of the preponderance of papers dealing with fluid mechanical aspects.

I wish to thank Ruth Bryans, Anne Huth (retired last year) and Marie D'Amico and Dorothy Hombach for their sustaining work and support. We all join in thanking our reviewers listed on the next page, for without their painstaking work we could not function. Last, but far from least, heartfelt thanks to the authors.

You have the Deck, Don—carry on!

John P. Breslin
Editor-in-Chief