

Now once again free men are defending their freedom. It is imperative that whatever impact programs of health and physical education make upon the development of men who cherish this freedom must now be intensified. This intensification will require a complete mobilization of our energy, strength, and wisdom to the end that each college student will reflect in his every act sound health and an appropriate physical education as important aspects in the defense of this democracy, no matter what may be his part of it.

We must look to the quality of this physical education experience. This Nation, faced as it is with a war for survival, looks to the quality of men and their ideas to turn the tide. It has always been so, and there is no reason now to believe that free men cannot preserve their freedom by their own strength. We pride ourselves upon our democracy. We allege that we know what our democratic freedom is and how it is to be preserved. Our allegations now must be established and physical education departments must show clearly their relationship to a college education which produces an educated, informed, strong, and urbane citizen of a democracy. These programs must contribute to this democratic way of life as surely as any other aspect of the college curriculum must contribute. All such programs must be reviewed today not only to see whether they adequately prepare men for military life but whether they are good in terms of democratic purposes, whether they have outworn features of former disciplines, whether their structures are living demonstrations of equality in opportunity and whether they are educational in the fullest and best sense of that word.

Nothing has happened since Pearl Harbor was attacked to make us believe that in order to win from the totalitarian Axis we must ourselves become totalitarian. Imitation of their methods need carry no further than a matching of military might and tactics. Imitation on any other front may be looked upon with considerable skepticism for fear that in our anxiety we may sacrifice something truly essential to the very thing the Nation is fighting to preserve. As long as they remain compatible with the national wartime economy and do not jeopardize our military effort, the individual's rights to self-determination, to self-direction and to a full participation in distinctly American activities of purpose and meaning must be preserved for him.

If this point of view has merit it has great meaning to physical education in our colleges. Physical education is at a crossroads of its development. Shall it imitate the Axis by copying their systems of physical training; the heavy apparatus of the Germans of 1820, the marching tactics of Bismarck's 1870 Germany, the precision drills of the Italians, or the jiu-jitsu of the Japanese? Far better for physical education to prosecute to the utmost of its ability the typically American program of games and sports with all of their objective and satisfying values. Physical education must continue with its programs of swimming, golf, tennis, baseball, football, soccer, running, handball, squash, fencing, basketball, and other sports, including in the training of men for each sport occasional conditioning exercises so essential to efficient performance as used by our most intelligent teachers.

Through vigorous teaching of these activities will be found most of the virtues of strength, condition, and discipline which are so feverishly sought as a part of pre-induction preparation. There is no evidence to prove that physical education should forsake these games and the training they afford by the adoption of a program of robot-type, drillmaster, formal exercises of nineteenth and twentieth century Germany. Physical education departments everywhere should reaffirm their faith in the typically American program of sports and athletics. Through the intensification of these activities and the purposeful physical preparation of men engaged in them will come the certain values of individual and national wartime importance, and thus young college men of America will come to their war service conditioned mentally and physically to accept such rigors