

NEWSLETTER of the WISCONSIN HIGH SCHOOL FORENSIC ASSOCIATION

AFFILIATED WITH
BUREAU OF INFORMATION AND PROGRAM SERVICES
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN EXTENSION DIVISION
1827 University Avenue, Madison 5, Wis.
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Coming Dates

Invitational High School Debate Tournament (Milwaukee)	Dec. 8
State Drama Contest (Madison)	Dec. 8
Speech Ass'n of America Convention (Chicago)	Dec. 27-29
Mid-Winter Music Clinic (Madison)	Jan. 10-12
High School Debate Tournament (Eau Claire State College)	Jan. 11-12
High School Student United Nations (Whitewater State College)	Feb. 14
Speech Meet (Eau Claire State College)	Feb. 15-16
State Debate Contest (Madison)	Feb. 23
Invitational College Debate Tournament (Milwaukee)	Mar. 1
Inter-Center Forensic Tournament (Racine)	Mar. 1
Delta Sigma Rho Discussion and Debate Tournament (Madison)	Mar. 7-8
State Speech Contest (Madison)	April 19
State Music Festival (Madison)	May 10
High School Band Clinic (Madison)	July 7 - 26
Band Directors Conference (Madison)	July 14 - 18
Orchestra and Chorus Clinic (Madison)	July 27-Aug 16
Orchestra & Chorus Directors' Conference (Madison)	Aug. 4-8

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NO. 2

Latest Dates for Contests

	<u>Drama</u>	<u>Debate</u>	<u>Speech</u>
League Contests-----	Nov. 9	-----	March 22
District Contests---	Nov. 17	Feb. 2	April 5
Sectional Contests--	Dec. 1	Feb. 9	-----
State -----	Dec. 8	Feb. 23	April 19

Please try to avoid scheduling school activities which conflict with the above dates.

See back cover for additional dates of interest to speech and drama teachers.

Remember to send in your annual dues on or before December 15th.

BOARD OF CONTROL

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Wisconsin High School Forensic Association

1951 Election Results

We are happy to announce the reelection of Mr. E. J. Hill as Chairman of the Platteville District, and Mr. A. C. Jones as Chairman of the White-water District. Mr. Jones was also re-elected Chairman of the Board of Control at the November meeting of the Board.

We welcome the following new board members and chairmen:

Arnold Wicklund, Chairman of Stevens Point District
E. A. Moede, Chairman of Oshkosh District
E. C. Marquardt, Chairman of Central Section

Our sincere thanks go to the retiring board members for their unselfish service to high-school forensics in Wisconsin. They are:

H. H. Helble, Chairman of Oshkosh District
Harry Bender, Chairman of Stevens Point District
W. G. Schmidt, Chairman of Central Section

Wisconsin Humor

Wisconsin tall-tales, pranks, and humorists are the subjects of a new booklet "Early Wisconsin Through the Comic Looking Glass" by Jonathan W. Curvin, formerly a research assistant with the Wisconsin Idea Theatre. Mr. Curvin is now Associate Professor of Speech at the University of Wisconsin. The booklet is rich with anecdotes and reminiscences of humor on Wisconsin's early frontier, and will prove invaluable to program leaders who are seeking unusual stories about early Badger social life and customs. Teachers in secondary and elementary schools will find it an excellent source for story-hour use as well as reference material, since the book is carefully annotated. It is 60¢ per copy. Order from Wisconsin Idea Theatre, 3026 Stadium, Madison 5, Wis.

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Minutes of the 25th Annual Meeting
Prister Hotel, Milwaukee, Nov. 2, 1951

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman A. C. Jones at 4:20 with forty-one persons present, including nine members of the Board of Control.
2. The reading of the minutes of the last Association meeting were dispensed with.
3. The Chairman reported the results of the election and introduced the new members of the board.
New Members:
A. D. Wicklund, Chairman of Stevens Point District
E. A. Neede, Chairman of Oshkosh District
E. C. Marquardt, Chairman of Central Section
Re-elected:
A. C. Jones, Chairman of Whitewater District
E. J. Hill, Chairman of Platteville District.
4. The Chairman reviewed the highlights of the March Board meeting and the changes in contest registration fees and third place awards which were made at that time. (See May News Letter.)
5. The Chairman asked the Secretary-Treasurer to review the highlights of the November Board meeting. The Secretary-Treasurer reported that:
 - a. Mr. Jones was re-elected chairman of the Board of Control.
 - b. Mr. Colby is to replace Mr. Schmidt as our representative on the Wisconsin-Illinois Theatre Assembly.
 - c. The Board voted that \$10 be contributed to the Cortrude E. Johnson Scholarship Fund.

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- d. The Wisconsin Idea Theatre will again prepare the one-act play list. Send your ideas!
 - e. The Board discussed changing the first place award in drama and debate from a banner to a plaque or cup. What do you think about it?
 - f. The Board voted to continue the structure of the Spring-Speech contest as it now exists.
 - g. The Board voted to go on record as opposing any publicity indicating that any one school wins a district or the state spring-speech contest. This is a contest of individual events?
 - h. The Board discussed the speech institutes held this fall—their pattern, attendance, and evaluation. The Board wants to know How Speech Institutes Can Be Made More Valuable to You and Your Students?
 - i. The Board discussed at some length the recommendations of the Speech Association of America and their implication for our contest structure. The Board wants to know What do You Think About the Recommendations of The Speech Association of America? (See article by Earl Kjer on page 12.)
6. Under the item of new business, it was suggested that our state contests be changed to festivals. Considerable discussion indicated that while there was some agreement with the proposal in theory, there seemed to be too many practical reasons why the festival idea would not work out. It was agreed by all that every effort should be made to make contests real learning experiences.

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7. Several members felt that judges could do a much better and fairer job if they were sure of the official position of the Association on various controversial aspects of our contest structure. It was the feeling of the group that persons responsible for league, district, sectional and state contests be sure that the judges

- (1) receive, read, understand, and subscribe to the "Aims, Purposes and Definitions" of contests, edited by Mr. Brockhaus, and
- (2) give a critique of each section before the entire section before announcing any awards.

8. The Secretary-Treasurer announced that

- a. Another conference for speech teachers and coaches will be held on the campus during the coming summer session.
- b. A revision of Planning Student Activities in the High School is now available. 25 cents in Wisconsin, 50 cents out of state.
- c. The Speech Association of America Convention is to be held in Chicago, December 27-29.
- d. We need your help in selecting the debate topics and revising the one-act play list for next year.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:25 P. M.

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State Drama Contest

The State Drama Contest will be held Saturday, December 8, at Bascom Theatre, 272 Bascom Hall on the University campus. Schools receiving "A" ratings in the sectional contests will automatically be scheduled for the state contest. Directions will be mailed to these schools as soon as we receive the results of the sectional contests.

Whether or not your play cast is eligible to enter the state contest, everyone is welcome to attend the contest, observe the plays, and hear the comments of the judge. No admission is charged.

One-Act Play List

The Board of Control, at its November meeting, again asked the Wisconsin Idea Theatre to compile the official one-act play list for next season. *

We are anxious to learn your reaction to this year's play list. Which plays should be omitted next year? Which new ones should be added? Please send your suggestions to Mr. Ronald Gee, Wisconsin Idea Theatre, 304 Stadium, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin.

Forty Four-minute Cuttings From Wisconsin History

Stories of life in early Wisconsin, useful as speech training material or for social studies. 50¢ each, or three for \$1. Order from

Bureau of Information and Program Services
1327 University Avenue, Madison 5, Wis.

*We are discontinuing the practice of sending evaluation forms to schools because of the few responses we received the last two years.

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Next Year's Debate Question

All schools which checked debate on their registration card have been sent a double post card asking for suggestions for next year's debate topic. If you received one, please respond. If you didn't and have some suggestions, please send them to the state office by December 1.

See the May 1951 News Letter for an article entitled "Who Chose That Debate Topic?"

Planning Student Activities in the High School

We are happy to announce a revised edition of Gordon Klopff's popular handbook for extra-curricular activities and student government. "Planning Student Activities in the High School" includes sections on the student organization, positions of leadership, parliamentary procedure, the student council, program planning, social activities, and student activity promotion. The appendix includes suggested types of activity programs, complete bibliographies for students and teachers, and a list of suggested 16 mm motion pictures.

Every school should have at least one copy. 114 pages, illustrated, 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ x8 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". 25 cents per copy in Wisconsin, 50 cents out of state. Order from the Bureau of Information and Program Services 1327 University Avenue, Madison 5, Wis.

Certificates of Merit

Application forms for certificates of merit will be included with the February News Letter. Hold your requests until then, please.

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Debate Issue: Universal Conscription

By Lewis Paul Todd*

"RESOLVED: That all American citizens should be subject to conscription for essential service in time of war."

This topic has been selected by the National University Extension Association for debate in the nation's schools during the 1951-52 season. It is a highly provocative question, the most significant, perhaps, of any ever chosen for this purpose.

One would find it difficult, if not impossible, to select an issue that brings us so quickly to a consideration of the nature and meaning of the democratic way of life. For this reason, social studies teachers as well as debate coaches will be interested in making it a subject for classroom discussion. Those who are of this mind will wish to consult the American Observer or the Weekly News Review for October 1, and the "Special Annual Debate Number" of the Congressional Digest (August-September, 1951), in which arguments for and against the proposition are presented at some length.

§ How Timely is the Question?

Is there any real possibility of universal conscription in the United States, or is the chosen debate topic merely an academic question, similar in this respect to the issue of world-wide disarmament that we debated with so much fervor some two decades ago?

This question is not easily answered. "In official Washington," the Digest reports, "there is scarcely a whisper about wartime civilian conscription, at least not for public ears." The plain fact is that the issue is a "political hot potato," and as such is carefully avoided. The rare comments that do emerge from official circles are usually repudiations of the

*Reprinted from The Civic Leader, November 5, 1951

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entire idea. Take the May 23, 1951 statement of Secretary of Labor Maurice J. Tobin as an example:

"I want to emphasize the voluntary nature of our program," said Mr. Tobin, whose department administers the government's program of manpower mobilization. "The U. S. is not going to mobilize its manpower in the struggle against communism with coercive technique. We could not do it if we wanted to. We are a free nation with a free enterprise system and a free trade union movement; and we have got to choose techniques that suit our temperament and our tradition." In the event of another war, he continued, "our manpower program in all states would rest on the theory that people do things better ~~when they choose to do them~~ ~~themselves~~ and when they know why."

And the Library of Congress, after considerable effort to locate "live" material presenting both sides of the issue, was forced to conclude only a few months ago that "since the close of World War II there has been little controversy concerning the advisability of adopting a national service program in the United States. Therefore, at this writing it is necessary to rely almost exclusively on materials published during World War II."

Here, indeed, is a curious situation. We have as a debate topic an issue upon which the nation's official leaders are studiously silent, and upon which.. very little current reading material is available.

Nevertheless, the topic is timely. At any moment Korea, Iran, Suez, or any one of a dozen smouldering international volcanoes may erupt with fearful violence, engulfing us in the flaming holocaust of World War III. Then--an if--this does happen, the American people--and free peoples everywhere--will face the supreme challenge of all time. We shall fight for survival and the price of victory will be an

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outpouring of blood and treasure beyond imagination. Mobilization of men and resources will be complete.

And we may be sure that if these dread times do come, the issue of universal conscription will be a matter of primary concern to Congress. Already, according to the Digest there are "straws in the wind." Many rumors float about that a wartime conscription bill is now completed. **DRAFTED DOWN TO THE LAST DETAIL, with the object of conscripting all property and every person in the event of another major war.** Such a bill is supposed to be carefully tucked away in some Administrative pigeon-hole--just waiting to be presented to Congress on the next 'D' day. This rumor is very likely true even though Administration officials disclaim it."

Do we wish to consider the implications of this matter now when we can discuss it calmly and with some measure of objectivity? Or do we prefer to make our decision, or have it made for us, in the anxiety-charged atmosphere of wartime? The question answers itself.

Loan packages of materials on the debate subject other than materials available from the WHSFA and NUESA Committee on Debate Materials may be obtained from the Bureau of Information and Program Services.

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Shall We Change the Interpretative Events
In the Forensic Program

By Earl Kjer, Chairman, Speech Department
Eau Claire State College

There has been enough comment concerning our present declamatory contests to warrant a consideration of ways and means by which some changes could be made with the thought in mind of improving the present plan.

It is not my purpose to condemn the present set-up completely, nor would I advocate abandonment of the present contest until we feel that we have something that will function to better advantage for the student. In that respect I differ with those who would discard it completely. I also think that something of greater value can be developed.

The present contests, humorous and non-humorous declamations, have made some valuable contributions in the speech field. Briefly some of these are:

1. They have provided the means and incentive to get students started in the field of interpretation.
2. They have helped to develop more appreciation for better types of literature.
3. They have provided speech experiences for those students not interested in public speaking and debate.
4. They have helped to sell speech in the community.
5. They have been a factor in the building of speech departments.

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Against these achievements I would list the following objections to declamation as it now exists.

1. Too much poor material is still being used. There has been a great improvement in the quality of material used in the past few years. The plan to be suggested will, I believe, hasten that use of **better literature** and eliminate entirely the undesirable material.
2. Far too much time is spent on one selection. This may run into months and even years. There aren't many ten-minute selections worth all of that time.
3. The activity does not have ~~enough~~ carry over. (Oral reading is the type of **interpreting** that one will do after finishing school.)
4. Contests frequently become tiresome and not entertaining.
5. Students are often apt to develop elocutionally rather than interpretative skills.
6. Not enough students participate in the contest as now set up.

To replace the present memorized declamations, I suggest that we have more reading from the book, with less memorization. With this we can incorporate some extempore speaking work as this reading will require introductions.

Now I do not mean to infer that this method will cure all ills, nor do I offer it as something new. It has been talked about before and tried out in other states. The contest might be handled in this manner.

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1. Let certain authors or selections be named for use each year.
2. Have the contest divided according to types of material, as drama, short story, poetry, essay, monologue, etc.
3. The student would choose and prepare his material, including an introduction.
4. The length of the reading might be from five to ten minutes.

Certain definite advantages would accrue from such procedures, as:

1. The student would contact and use many different pieces of literature.
 2. Precautions could be set up so that only good literature is used.
 3. It affords a greater variety of experiences, practiced more.
 4. It would prove to be of greater value in later life. (I believe oral reading to be one of the most valuable of all speech activities.)
 5. It would involve some direct communication, as in the introduction or summaries.
 6. The use of more materials should prove refreshing to the student.
 7. It would develop more real interpretative skill.
- I am convinced that the average quality of all performances would be raised by this method.

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The use of this method would not prevent the exceptionally talented person from doing other types of interpretation. They could still continue to do that, just as many are now doing.

It has been said that this change would leave us with three oral reading contests. But each contest would be using a different type of material and material would be classified so that judging would be simpler. It is much easier to judge all play readings than to try and compare a play reading with a short story or a poem. (I believe that our present classification of humorous and non-humorous material is outdated and unnecessary.)

However, the exact number of the contests and details concerning them could be determined later. Right now the general principles that would correct some of the disadvantages and eliminate some of the criticism is of greatest importance.

Of course, every one is not going to favor this change, or like it if eventually adopted, but I'm sure the number of adherents would increase rapidly each year.

Nor do I expect this change to come at once, but we need to discuss it, plan for it, study it, so that we are prepared with a counter program to meet those who would like to eliminate declamation completely.

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Summary of the Debate Survey of
Twenty-Six Leading Schools
From Thesis of Walter R. Smith

1. When do you begin your debate season i. e. meetings, practice debates, and background teachings?
Summary Answer: Average of 26 answers—Oct. 1st.
2. Is debate instruction conducted within the regular school hours or after school?
Summary Answer: 13 schools have regular debate class
13 schools hold debate meetings after school
3. How many speech teachers and speech classes do you have in your school?
Summary Answer: 3 schools have 3 teachers
6 schools have 2 teachers
14 schools have 1 teacher
3 schools have none
2 schools have 5 speech classes
2 schools have 4 speech classes
7 schools have 3 speech classes
1 school has 2 speech classes
6 schools have 1 speech class
8 schools have no speech class
4. How many practice tournaments and practice debates with other schools do your debate teams annually engage in?
Summary Answer: The approximate number of practice tournaments range from none to seven with average of three tournaments. The approximate number of practice debates range from two to 150.
5. On an average, how many debaters do you have try out for the debate squad or team?

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Number of Debaters: Range from eight debaters to seventy. Average of twenty debaters. One school has seventy debaters. Two schools have fifty debaters. One school has forty debaters. One school has 35 debaters. Two schools have thirty debaters.

6. What awards or credits does your school offer the successful debater?
Summary Answer: 8 schools awarded school letter
5 schools awarded ~~1~~ credit
2 schools awarded ~~1~~ credit
1 school gives one full credit toward graduation
3 schools give debate pins
5 schools give National Forensic League membership
7. How many hours, approximately, does the debate coach in your school devote to debate during a season?
Total hours including coaching, practice debates, and tournaments: 26 answers range from 75 to 500 hours. The average is 300 hours.
8. How much is your annual debate expenditure budget?
Summary Answer: 26 budgets range from \$50 to \$800.
1 school has \$800
2 schools have \$500
5 schools have \$400
5 schools have \$300
5 schools have from \$125 to \$250
9. Does the debate coach in your school possess an undergraduate major or minor in college speech training?
Summary Answer of 26 schools:
9 have speech majors
8 have speech minors
9 have neither
Several have Masters Degrees

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10. Did your school's debate coach participate in varsity debate during his undergraduate years in college or university?
Summary Answer: Yes 15
No 11
Three debated in high school
11. Is debate in your school given as much faculty, administration, and community recognition and support as music and athletics?
Summary Answer: Yes 6
No 17
One school says almost equal
Two schools say as much as
music but not as much as ath-
letics
12. Are there any changes you would suggest in our present **State** Association debate tournaments?
Summary Answer: 14 schools no change
Other Suggestions: Run-off tournament of best 8
Two-day 12 debate tournament
Three judges
Give written judges' criticisms
13. Are there any changes you would suggest in our present method of judging or basis for decision in the State Association debate tournaments?
Summary Answer: 18 schools no change
Greater uniformity of judging
standards
3 judges
Less emphasis on conversational
delivery in debate
14. Do you use memorized or partially memorized or extempore constructive speeches in debate?
Memorized: Sometimes first Affirmative
14 schools partially memorized
12 schools extempore

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15. In selecting your first team debaters, do you select the best speakers or the best thinkers?
Best Speakers: 6 schools
Best Thinkers: 13 schools
Combination of both 7 schools
16. In the over-all planning of debate case strategy in your school, does the coach do 100%?
Summary Answer: 1 school 100%
10 schools 50%
12 schools 25%
17. Do you believe that psychological appeals or logical proofs should predominate in debate speeches?
1 school, psychological appeals
24 schools, logical proofs
1 school, both
18. In debate delivery, do you emphasize friendly conversational delivery or driving forcefulness?
Friendly Conversational 11 schools
Driving Forceful Delivery 3 schools
Some of each 11 schools
Delivery most natural to student 1 school.
19. Do you believe that debate speeches should contain a reasonably large supply of evidence i.e. statistics and authority quotations to support the debater's contentions?
Large Supply of Evidence 9 schools
Small Supply of Evidence 14 schools
Medium Supply 3 schools
20. How do you teach and improve refutation and rebuttal?
Summary Answers: Practice debates
Cross-examination debates
Shifting debaters from one
side to another

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- Extemporizing on issues
- Refutation contests
- Coaching a unit on rebuttal
- Direct class debates

21. In the average debate, what two factors are strongest in influencing the judge's decision in your opinion—delivery, evidence, analysis and case strategy, organization and summary, or refutation and rebuttal?

Summary Answer:

- Refutation and rebuttal 17 schools
- Delivery selected by 14 schools
- Analysis and case strategy 12 schools

22. Since delivery and all that it includes in personal appearance, English and diction, bodily action and posture, and vocal pitch, quality, inflection, rate, force, and volume play such an important part in debate, what methods do you use to get the best speakers to try out for debate?

- Personal Interviews: 13 schools
- Screening and urging in English and Speech classes: 1 school
- 7 schools both methods
- 2 schools do not use any method

23. In your practice debate tournaments with other schools, do you attempt to build for coming seasons by entering second teams or freshman-sophomore teams as well as your first team?

26 schools answered yes

24. In building a successful debate team, what single factor do you consider the most important?

Summary Answer:

- Excellent naturally talented debaters: 10 schools
- Good coaching 4 schools
- Experienced Debaters 1 school

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Many Practice Debates: 6 schools
Regular Debate (Class Period) 5 schools

25. In the preparing of the constructive speeches, do the students write them under your supervision?

- Yes 11 schools
- No 2 schools

Do you as a coach write them in part or wholly?
None

Do the students prepare a brief and speak from an outline without ever writing the complete speech?
11 schools do
2 schools use all methods except coach writing constructive speeches.

26. What suggestions would you make for improving debate as an educational activity?

Summary Answer:

- Wider participation
- Objective judging
- More emphasis on logic
- More audience debaters
- Use of direct clash debate style to eliminate unethical coaching and writing of speeches.

Enclosed with this News Letter

1. Copies of new declamations
2. A Complete List of Materials Available from The Wisconsin Idea Theatre
3. Speech Film Supplement # 1
4. Aims, Purposes and Definitions of Speech, Drama, and Debate Contests (Drama and Debate not included at this time, but will follow)
5. Universal Conscription for War Service, (for debate schools only as long as supply lasts).

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Films for Speech and Drama

A year ago we announced a bulletin of 63 films related to the field of speech which was prepared by Owen H. Brockhaus, Chairman of the Department of Speech in the Extension Division. Mr. Brockhaus has now prepared a supplement of 14 additional films. A copy of this is included with this News Letter.

More recent additions to the BVI Film Library include:

<u>Four Ways to Drama (Stage, Radio, TV, Movies)</u>	33 min.	3.75
<u>One Way to Build a Flat</u>	14 min.	2.50

mimeographed Articles Available from WHSFA

Speech

- Pointers on Preparation for Reading (Carlile)
- Extemporaneous Reading Contests (Johnson)
- Extemporaneous Speaking (Suggestions for)
- A Blueprint for an Oration (Brockhaus)
- Selecting and Cutting Material for Forensic Contests (Borchers)
- How to Teach Declamation (Schindler)

Drama

- Suggested Criteria for Judging Contests in Play Production
- Standards for Selecting Plays for High Schools (Bavely)
- The Drama Workshop (Cauvey)

Debate

- Refutation (Haberman)
- Minimum Essentials of Debating Theory (Buys)
- Role of Discussion and Debate (McCurney)
- Suggested Instructions to the Debate Judge (Lahman)

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Speech Association at Chicago

The Speech Association of America holds its annual convention at the Stevens Hotel in Chicago between Christmas and New Years. It is at this convention that the NUESA COMMITTEE OF DEBATE MATERIALS will meet on Thursday and Friday to

1. consider the proposed change in selecting the annual debate proposition, and
2. select three topics from which the schools will choose next year's topic.

Friday evening L. H. Adolfson, Director of the University of Wisconsin Extension Division and President of the National University Extension Association, will preside over the debate and forum on this year's debate topic.

Your secretary-treasurer will represent the Wisconsin Association at these meetings but he wishes that as many speech coaches as possible attend the convention and help us think through these important questions.
