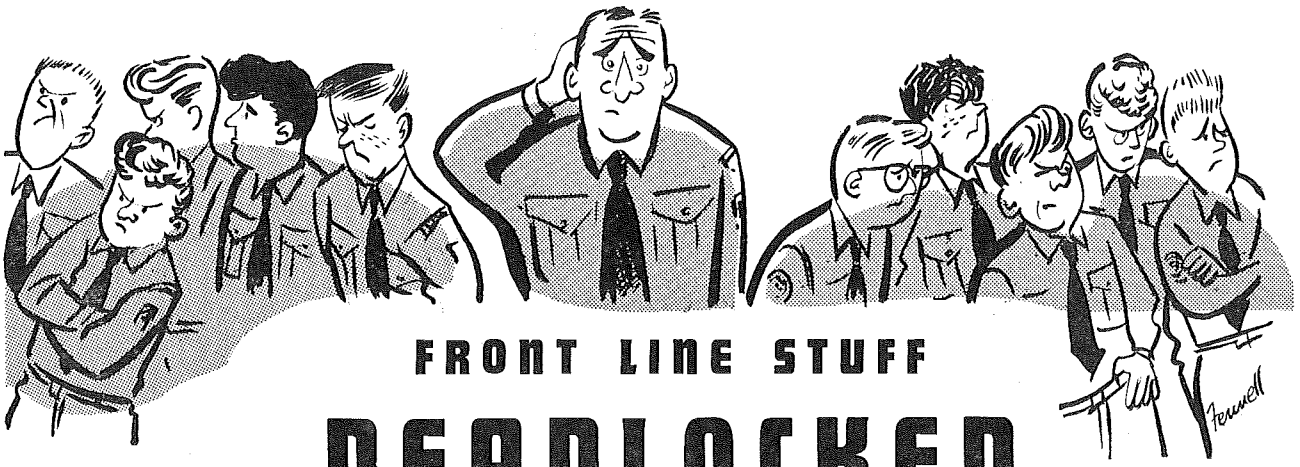

FRONT LINE STUFF

DEADLOCKED

When a jury votes six for conviction and six for acquittal, the jury may be dismissed. But what do you do when an Explorer post is — "DEADLOCKED"

Our Explorer post, organized at the beginning of this year, recently decided to choose a specialty. In the light of what's happened since, I almost wish we'd never thought of the idea.

Specialize? Sure, good deal, everybody agreed when it was first brought up. How do we go about it? We turned to the new *Exploring* manual and read, "*When a post decides a specialty would make their program more interesting and deliberately sets out to choose one, they will do well to go about it systematically.*"

The manual went on to outline the recommended steps in making a choice, and we followed each one just like the book said—systematically.

"*Talk over specialties at post meeting,*" was the first suggestion. This we did, over a period of a couple of months. Quite a number of different fields were brought up for discussion in the beginning, and as we talked the number began to decrease. Progress!

"*Have the officers recommend a specialty,*" was the book's second point. This involved personal investigation of the three or four fields most seriously under consideration, and our officers headed up committees that looked into each one thoroughly. We checked into such items as cost, availability of special equipment and expert help, and influence of bad weather. This narrowed our possibilities to two—auto mechanics and electronics.

"*Choose the specialty at post meeting,*" recommends the book as its final point. This we were now prepared to do, and after a final and thorough discussion at a full members' meeting we voted. Result—we split right down the middle—half for auto mechanics, half for electronics.

We looked at the book again to see what it said about this "*Try to raise enough enthusiasm,*" recommended the manual, "*so there will be a substantial majority in favor of the proposal.*" We'd raised the enthusiasm all right, but it was still divided between one too many proposals.

We considered ways out:

Operate both specialties? Well, we are small and new and don't want to bite off more than we can chew. And as the book itself points out, "*It takes more than enthusiasm to run even one special program.*"

Break the tie by persuading a member to change his vote, or recruit a new member for the sole purpose of voting on this issue? Not very smart, we realized, because it would leave us with a very unsubstantial majority, and a very substantial—and unhappy—minority.

Eliminate auto mechanics and electronics from further considerations and try to agree on a third possibility? This would mean that nobody would get his number-one choice. Hardly a happy solution.

So what's the answer? Frankly, we're stuck. What we've done for the present is to carry on with our regular nonspecialty post program, pending some kind of solution to this dilemma. We're hoping that some reader of "Front Line Stuff" can suggest a way out.

Advisor A.C.
St. Louis, Missouri

Can you help Advisor A.C.? Write your suggestions to Front Line Stuff, SCOUTING magazine, New Brunswick, New Jersey. We'll forward them to him and publish a résumé soon.