can bring pressure to bear retrospectively, and to all corners of the academic hamlet.

Of violence to dissenters, by individuals or by policemen, the remedy lies in the courts. Of discrimination to strange looking students, the remedy lies with their colleagues. OU's student newspaper, the *Oklahoma Daily*, and the Student Senate took up that matter quickly in November. Charlie Miller, Bartlesville junior, urged an act whereby businesses that discriminate will be prohibited from advertising in University publications or in University housing and from delivering their goods on campus.

The point is that all available remedies must be utilized. The alternative to their employment is a cloistered environment, an Oklahoma where winds of opinion are still. END

The Boutelle Incident

You'd have thought that OU had decided to drop football for all the uproar. At one point there weren't any panic buttons left to push. The hue and cry was raised because of the appearance on campus of Paul Boutelle, a tall, slender, goateed young man in his thirties who calls himself a Marxist and a black nationalist and who is candidate for vice president of the United States on the Socialist Workers Party ticket.

Boutelle arrived in Norman Oct. 17 for a two-day stay during which he participated in a Vietnam teach-in and spoke on "How to Achieve Socialism in America" in the Union's Meacham Auditorium. OU was the final stop on a college speaking tour which had taken him through the South and Southwest. With only a ripple of notice by news media, Boutelle had addressed sparse audiences on campuses in radical states like Georgia and Texas. Rice University was the last place he had spoken before his OU visit. His speech there was scarcely noted and poorly attended.

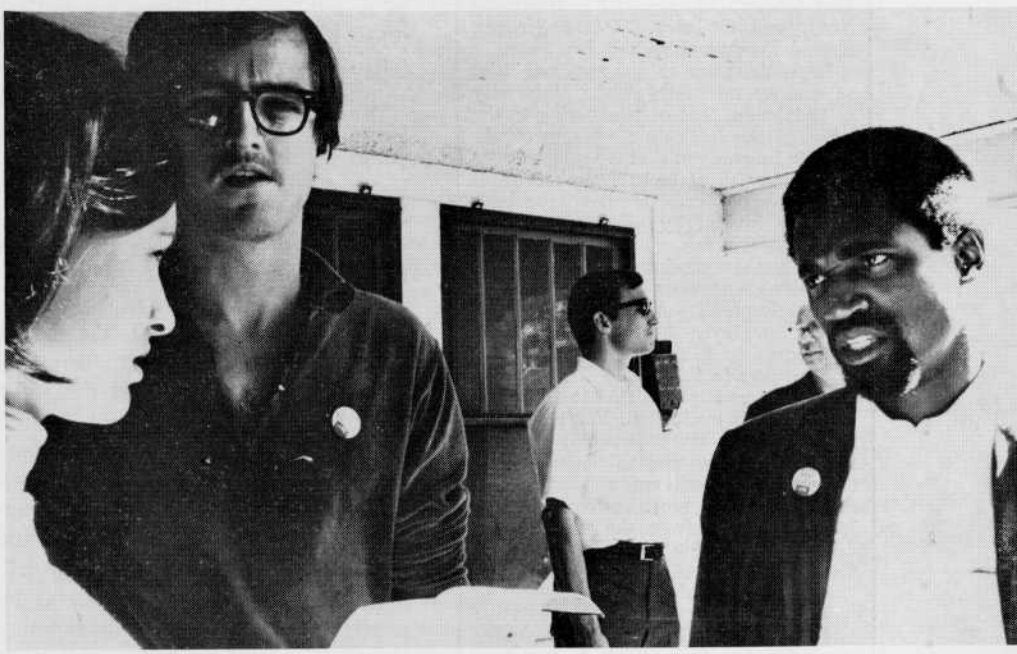
Oklahoma was something else. Boutelle drew the largest crowd of his tour, which was quite predictable after the publicity he received. State newspapers, radio stations, and television news programs covered Boutelle relentlessly. Politicians eagerly leaped into the furor, grabbing their front page column inches and helping to ensure the success of Boutelle's appearance. Everybody was trying to get into the act, it seemed. Boutelle's angry opponents couldn't have cooperated more beautifully with his objectives if they had been fellow members of the Socialist Workers Party. Boutelle filled Meacham Auditorium.

Part of the controversy centered on the sponsoring groups. Boutelle's appearance was publicized as being under the auspices of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and the Southwest Center for Human Relations Studies, part of OU's College of Continuing Education. Most people are familiar with the SDS, a group of young radicals of the New Left, who bug most of the older generation to distraction. The state press seems fascinated by the group and never ignores it. The SDS arouses reaction from majority people to a degree greatly disproportionate to its small numbers. By its very existence SDS points up how exercised some people can become over minority groups, how intimidated some people are by unpopular and different political beliefs.

The co-sponsor gave critics something to hang their anger on. A member of the staff, Jack Middleton, had agreed that the center would share sponsorship of Boutelle. Opponents didn't believe any part of OU should have anything to do with such a controversial person and unleashed a tremendous amount of pressure. The center quickly withdrew sponsorship, and Middleton was subsequently punished—his duties changed—which was the one blemish, and a serious one, in the stand by the University. (*See letters on next page.*)

What *really* upset most critics, however, was Boutelle, not who had sponsored him. That a man who subscribed to Marxist economic doctrine and who spoke so deprecatingly and harshly of American society and its political and social practices could address an audience at a state university was the basis of their objections.

Charges began to fly. A state representative from Oklahoma City, Texanna Hackett, hinted darkly at economic sanctions toward OU by the legislature. Higher education in Oklahoma now ranks last—*fiftieth*—in the nation in state appropriations per student. Perhaps the legislature could make Oklahoma *fifty-first*, but it seems unlikely.



Paul Boutelle (right) and Daily Reporter (left)
A focal point in the right of the student to hear

There was also talk by some legislators of passing speaker regulations. It is hoped that if they do consider such legislation, they will study the experts, countries which have such laws, like the Soviet Union, Spain, Greece, the Union of South Africa.

Some people might describe Boutelle as a demagogue. At any rate his talk, nearer to a harangue at times, was immoderate and occasionally inflammatory. He used every political speaker's tactics of oversimplification and exaggeration, and his attacks on Lyndon Johnson were not any more intemperate than those you can hear daily from Democrats and Republicans or during the last presidential election. Boutelle also called the American flag a rag, which was a distasteful thing to say. But Boutelle is an angry young man and he reflected an anger and a hate which pervades the dispossessed, who live with despair and oppression, in our urban ghettos. The point was in listening to the man in an attempt to understand.

Most students at the University want an opportunity to know what is going on. They want to "hear it like it is," and they resent people deciding whom they can hear and whom they cannot hear. They want the freedom to decide for themselves. The question of free speech and academic freedom with all its emotional arguments was resurrected during the Boutelle incident.

After the smoke had cleared and Boutelle had left satisfied (He admitted that his party had no chance of winning and only sought exposure of its views—which he received in great doses here, thanks to his opponents), there was time to reflect on what all the fuss was about. Dr. Cross, a superb semantical strategist, discounts academic freedom or freedom of speech as the issue raised by the Boutelle incident. He prefers to talk about "the student's right to hear." Dr. Cross understands that most of the "student unrest" which receives such attention is sincere concern with what many students consider the irrelevance of much of the education offered them. Students are dissatisfied with professors who still lecture from notes which may be a decade old and who, they feel, do not keep up. They look at the mess, the hypocrisy, and the racism in our society and demand better preparation in facing it. They do not want to be protected from what's going on in the world today. They want to understand it. This, they feel, is a function of a university, to prepare them to cope with the world as it is. They want to listen to what people have to say, all kinds of people, some of whom are radical. They believe it is important to do so. They do not want arbitrary censorship by some person appointed by the college and who would decide who could speak, which is what the Oklahoma City FBI man suggested colleges do. They don't want some legislator to decide for them. Or some regents. They resent the belief that college students are not capable of deciding for themselves, that they are particularly susceptible to error. If society feels it can't trust the judgment of its college students, then it should refer to colleges as indoctrination centers, not centers of knowledge, they believe. A university cannot afford to ignore the social and cultural ills of a society, they feel.

A panel discussion sponsored by the Philosophy Club brought together three principles in the reaction to Boutelle. One was Dr. Richard Wells, associate professor of political science and assistant dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, whose letter to the editor (*see box*) placed him as a spokesman for those who support a student's right to hear. A professor who had answered his letter, Dr. John Whitaker, professor of journalism, with Rep. Hachett, were the other panel members who commented on an address by Dr. Heydar Rhegaby, a new member of the philosophy department, on academic freedom.

Dr. Wells said he believed in limitations to speakers laid down by the First Amendment to the Constitution as interpreted by the courts, the "clear and present danger" safeguard. He asked Rep. Hachett what limitations she recommended. She refused to give any specific ones, answering that any "intelligent person would know them."

Dr. Whitaker in his reply to Dr. Wells' letter had criticized Wells on his apparent lack of faith in the public to understand what a university is for and had written that he believed in some form of regulation concerning who could speak to students. Dr. Whitaker said he would not object to another appearance by Boutelle, if "he would speak like a gentleman." Dr. Whitaker read the speaker limitations recently passed by the OSU Board of Regents as his idea of a good set of regulations. The considerations which would ban speakers at OSU are that they do not encourage lawlessness or the breaking of any laws or that they do not advocate the change of any political system or laws by violence. When Dr. Whitaker was told that such safeguards would disallow the visits of men as disparate as Hugh Hefner and Martin Luther King, who advocate civil disobedience, he replied, "Civil disobedience isn't against the law."

Dr. Wells believes that the OSU policy is in violation of the due process of free speech and press guaranteed in the Constitution.

Internal troubles are dividing OSU once more (Magazine, May and July) because of its official policies on limiting academic freedom. A highly respected professor resigned in October, criticizing the administration for its pressure. Students rallied to her side. The OSU Regents then came galloping in after it was announced

A letter to Dr. Cross, Dr. Hollomon, and the Board of Regents from the following campus ministers: the Rev. John Crooch, and the Rev. James Shields, Methodist Student Center; the Rev. Don Gibson, Disciples of Christ (Christian), and the Rev. Donald Scruggs, United Presbyterian.

In fulfilling one of our responsibilities as campus ministers at the University of Oklahoma, that of ministering to the whole of this institution, we respectfully wish to inform you that we categorically oppose any effort to ban speakers from the University campus who have been properly invited by official University groups.

We further condemn as unjust any effort by the state or University to professionally penalize any professional University employee for arranging for a speaker to be heard at this University or anywhere in the state.

Each of us is committed to the well-being of this institution. For a university to be healthy, however, it must be open to all ideas and to the men who are committed to them, and its professional employees must be free from the fear of reprisals from the several publics, in and outside the university, who find some men and ideas personally and socially unacceptable.

We, collectively or in a representative fashion, would welcome the opportunity to explore in greater depth our concerns and your responsibility in these matters.

that the appearance of LSD advocate Dr. Timothy Leary was being disallowed. Leary's invitation was withdrawn against the wishes of the student speakers forum which had invited him. The Regents then passed their speakers regulation. OSU seethed and still seethes with discontent; OU students supported OSU students with a petition signed by 1,700 in a day and a half calling for the withdrawal of the Regents' policy. A large rally was held on the Stillwater campus. A faculty committee has asked the Regents to meet with it and discuss the abolition of the policy.

One of the problems posed by censorship is who decides. A statement that was used more than once during the debate over Boutelle went something like this: "A tax-supported institution shouldn't allow such people to speak; the taxpayers won't stand for it." It would be hoped that the taxpayers would be mature enough and intelligent enough to insist that their university not be subjected to the dictates of a censor or censoring group, even if he or it represented the conventional views of the majority.

A free individual prefers to decide for himself and not have a Texanna Hachett or a John Whitaker or a board of regents or a Paul Boutelle decide for him who might be safe for him to hear. And some of the most important speakers may not speak like "gentlemen." We still need to understand them, and a university, whose purpose is the pursuit of ideas, seems to be a most appropriate place to examine thought of all kinds.

Protection of individual rights written in the Bill of Rights is a foundation of American freedom. Some, with reason, doubt whether the first ten amendments to the Constitution could even make it through committee today. On the anniversary of the ratification of the Bill of Rights a few years ago, a Baltimore newspaper took the first ten amendments to a major street corner of the city and asked passers-by to sign them. The 100 persons who were asked to sign the "petition" were not told that it was the Bill of Rights. Only four would sign their names. Of the 96 who declined, many called the petition "communistic."

The OU Regents stood their ground in their support of administration policy to let controversial speakers appear. And though Middleton's change in duties had nothing to do with his involvement in Boutelle's appearance, *authorities said,* it *appears* that it did even if it didn't, which is a bad precedent and could discourage sponsorship of controversial speakers.

Such a policy should not exist; clarification is needed.

The result is that if OU does not have a policy of sanctions, then the citizens of the state still have at least one university where students have the opportunity to learn without censorship, a university which has remained responsible to the concept of freedom to hear and inquire, to accept or reject free from interference from the many publics who support its essential objective, the search for knowledge and truth.

It is unfortunate that controversial views can arouse such emotional reactions—some of which stem from genuine concern, far too many of which result from irrational fear. Such outbursts do little to engender "pride in Oklahoma," or an atmosphere for learning. One gets the idea that the crucial point for some citizens in the decision to allow the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse to appear on campus would be whether they are anti-communist. After all the up-tightedness of the Boutelle incident, maybe discontinuing football would have been less hectic after all.

Paul Galloway

A letter to the editor of the Oklahoma Daily from Dr. Richard S. Wells, associate professor of political science and assistant dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Reaction to the recent appearance of Mr. Paul Boutelle on the OU campus raises some serious questions about the responsibilities of the University to itself and to the state. Speaking as one faculty member (but one who hopes that others feel likewise), I submit that the University's responsibilities to itself are in the best interest of the state. The principles that a responsible university should be open freely to all views is basic to its function as a site of knowledge. This principle makes meaningful our best weapon against the dangers of ignorance—i.e., an understanding of what is happening in the world.

Why, after all, do we have universities? Presumably we have them in order to produce people who are knowledgeable enough to cope with the problems that arise in the course of living as society. If we have and maintain universities to pass on, unchanged and unexamined, the same beliefs, generation after generation, then we do little more than celebrate pleasant reveries. If old ideas, upon examination, are adequate to our problems, that's fine. But others may be better, and others may be causing our problems; in either case they must be understood, and they must be heard to be understood.

This argument is old, and simple, and practical. It is also extremely difficult to understand. After all, why should society provide opportunities for people to speak against its fondest ideas and practices? In a way it defies common sense. But it also defies common sense if one chooses to be ignorant. *The university exists to make ignorance a matter of choice.*(Our italics)

So much for generalities. Specifically, it is my opinion that the reaction of the University to the Boutelle appearance is irresponsible. An employee of the University has been reprimanded, in effect, for extending the University's auspices to Boutelle. It also appears that the administration of the University intends to give support in the withdrawal of recognition from a campus political organization—Students for a Democratic Society.

The reprimanding of Mr. Middleton is a serious matter for members of the University's faculty. If a non-tenured professor supports the appearance of a speaker whose view is controversial, he runs considerable personal and professional risk. He now must, if he is a moderately prudent man, look over his shoulder to see if a sacrificial axe will fall; unfortunately, it may well depend upon a retrospective determination of a speaker's effectiveness. So all bets are off, unless the speaker is non-controversial, clearly and predictably ineffective, or consistent with the views of powerful or loud politicians. In short it is not too much to say that, for the present, academic freedom is no better at OU than at OSU.

The possible removal of SDS from official University recognition as a campus organization is deterimental to what often is not recognized—the academic freedom of the student. If the professor's freedom exists, then the students' must as well. It consists in more than a right to listen to the professor. It embraces the variety of ways that students may employ in getting acquainted with what is happening in the realm of thought and action.

I am in hopes that the University will decide to be responsible to itself. Some people of the state do not understand what their universities are for, much less what they do. Our current problems thus are largely of our own making, and we must begin to persuade the people that a university serves them in many ways, some of which require a public tolerance of distasteful ideas. I hope that we begin soon, because it may take about a quarter of a century.