

An alumni message

BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD, UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA
ASSOCIATION

The executive board of the University of Oklahoma Association, at its annual Commencement-Homecoming meeting in Norman, unanimously adopted the following resolution, addressed to the taxpayers of Oklahoma and released to the United Press and Associated Press Friday, June 9:

ON March, 1933, Governor Murray issued an executive order pretending to abolish engineering education at the University of Oklahoma and stating this work should be consolidated with the school of engineering at the A. and M. college. Later there was introduced in the lower house of the legislature House Joint Resolution No. 49, by which this move would be made by legislative act.

The house voted down this bill but did pass House Bill No. 686, which provided for appointment by the governor and confirmation by the senate of a board of 15 citizens who would make a thorough study of the entire higher educational system of the state, and devise means for elimination of unnecessary duplication and the effecting of a thoroughly co-ordinated, efficient and economical system of higher education for the state of Oklahoma.

Alumni of the University of Oklahoma welcomed this legislation. They recognize as well as anyone the necessity for economy in state government and the need for a thorough re-organization of the Oklahoma system. If thorough, unprejudiced study by a body of competent, capable and patriotic citizens indicates that changes should be made at the University of Oklahoma, that work should be eliminated, that courses should be abolished, alumni of the university will lead in supporting the carrying out of those changes.

The governor, however, has already delivered to this co-ordinative committee a proposed executive order charging the university with duplicating the work of the A. and M. college, ordering the immediate abolition of a part of the university engineering work and the abolition of all of it within two years. The university alumni protest against these charges, they trust the committee named will investi-

gate, study and analyze all of the facts before taking any action by which property and institutions belonging to citizens of the state are destroyed.

The act creating the University of Oklahoma by the territorial legislature back in 1890 named engineering specifically as one of the branches in which the university must provide educational training for the people of the territory.

Engineering instruction was accordingly started practically coincident with establishment of the university. A great college, which now numbers more than 800 students, has been built up over the past 30 years. Probably no part of the university has been of greater service to the people of the state than the college of engineering. It has graduated hundreds of students who have taken the lead in the development of the resources of Oklahoma and many of whom are recognized leaders in their profession in other states and in foreign countries.

Its school of geology and petroleum engineering is recognized as probably the greatest in America. Probably no college of engineering in this part of the United States has provided so many engineers for service in the oil industry. Its service has been so great in turning out sound and capable engineers that industrial companies and scientific societies have loaned and donated more than \$160,000 in equipment, compared with the \$150,000 in equipment provided by state taxation.

Buildings, especially constructed and equipped for use in engineering instruction, costing more than \$250,000, have been provided at the University of Oklahoma with taxpayers' money. Taxpayers' total investment in the engineering buildings and equipment at the university is more than \$440,000.

Buildings cannot be moved; they could be remodeled at large taxpayer expense to serve some other purpose. Much of the equipment, now permanently installed, in the tearing up and moving would become practically junk.

The College of Engineering has provided engineering instruction at probably less cost per student than any other college or university in the country. Its cost per student for the past year has been \$118 compared with an average of more

than \$300 per student in engineering schools of the country.

A great educational institution such as the College of Engineering at the University of Oklahoma cannot be moved overnight from one state school to another. It can be abolished at one school, and, as in the case of petroleum engineering, another school can begin the laborious and expensive task of building another. But in the meantime, service to Oklahoma boys and girls and service to industries who want specialized petroleum engineers is destroyed.

Surely no other school in Oklahoma is so over-supplied with buildings, so over-equipped and so over-staffed with faculty members that it can take on several hundred additional students with no addition to buildings, equipment or staff. If it can, good government would suggest a thorough investigation of that institution. If it cannot, then wherein lies economy in abolishing a college that provides engineering education to the young men of the state at remarkably low cost per student, replacing buildings and staff and re-installing equipment, all at enormous cost to the taxpayer?

University alumni are surely no less interested in economy in government than are others. The money Oklahoma has spent in their education would have been wasted were this not true. We are not so-called rah rah boys and girls fighting for the "dear old alma mater." We are men and women who pay taxes and own homes, some of us have children in the university, the A. and M., and other state schools now, and most of us are raising boys and girls for whom we hope to be able to find sound educational opportunity in this state as time for college arrives.

Alumni of the university welcome thorough, unprejudiced and impartial study of the facts in this matter. It is surely a question of such importance to the state that citizens are entitled to full knowledge of the facts before they see destroyed an institution which citizens have built up at so great total cost over the past thirty years and which has served them so well.

As alumni and as citizens and taxpayers we protest action on this matter before a full and thorough investigation of the facts, unprejudiced by previous instruction on the conclusion at which the investigators should arrive.

We protest against this expensive act, based, we are confident, on false and incomplete information furnished by selfishly interested parties to the governor. We protest against an act of destruction based upon a false cry of economy.

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Painting presented

An oil painting, "War Bonnet," by the late Mrs. L. M. Tonkin of McAlester, was recently presented to the school of art by Miss Sarah Jane Tonkin and Allen Tonkin, '26law, daughter and son of the artist.