

Revolt on the Campus

MASS meetings. Torch light parades. Witch burning. Down with existing conditions. Salvation. Give us liberation.

Four student mass meetings—three of them concerned with future wars and the fourth with the less colorful question of how the men's governing council should be selected—were held on the campus during the spring.

More may follow. It's the spirit of the times. The bleak days of depression are leaving. Times are looking better. Pent up feelings, repressed for a half dozen years, are gaining expression. People are breathing more normally. They are saying what they want to say. Students are adding their word.

The revolt of the O. U. Veterans of Future Wars is dead, at least temporarily. Efforts at revival may follow, but that is doubtful. The first mass meeting was called to organize the Future Veterans and the Gold Star Mothers of Future Veterans.

Ernest Butler, son of a Woodward clergyman, was chairman. He was elected president of the group. Elizabeth Nicholson, a winsome coed from Oklahoma City, headed the Gold Star Mothers organization. A second meeting, set for a balmy spring evening on Varsity corner, crystallized the Future Veterans' revolt.

A third mass meeting protested against the new method of selecting men's council members. (They are chosen by faculty members on a civil service basis, with so many points awarded for grades and for belonging to different organizations.) The meeting asked that elective features be returned to the selection of the councilmen.

The fourth mass meeting, held in front of the Administration building, was a peace meeting with a faculty member and a student opposing participation in future wars.

From a distance, the revolt of the Future Veterans looked strangely different from the way it actually appeared in the meeting room. Ernest Butler, a nice looking chap from Woodward, was making his debut as the leader of a campus movement. He had not taken the campus front page previously and as a result was not affiliated with any particular set of students—the lawyers, or the public speakers, or the journalists, or the chronic "antis."

On the morning of the first meeting, students gathered slowly and a bit warily for that first session. A strange nervousness ran through the group. It was all a big joke. They wanted to see what would happen. Not a single faculty member at-

tended the meeting. Young Butler rapped for order.

"We are met here to organize the Veterans of Future Wars," he said. A titter ran through the room. Butler smiled. Someone turned the knob of the door from the outside. Every eye in the room was focused on the door. It was only another student.

"Being no orator," declared Young Butler, "I have prepared an address." So saying, he unsheathed a manuscript of yellow paper and proceeded.

Roughly, Mr. Butler expressed the view that veterans are unable to spend bonuses once they were dead. Also, that maimed veterans are not able to enjoy the many things bonuses afford them, when they are not in good health.

His references to "the blood-stained fields of France where death strikes momentarily and with the precision of a tax ferret" brought more laughs from the crowd. Wise cracks were added from across the meeting room and the gathering was held in abeyance several times by verbal exchanges from those in the audience.

Preposterous resolutions added more levity to the meeting. Fighting the phantom war was not as gratifying as a personal attack. The American Legion was added to the list under fire. Anything that suggested war was condemned. Anything that suggested peace was praised.

In 45 minutes, the meeting adjourned in high spirits with everyone presenting a more preposterous resolution. It was a hilarious meeting.

But when newspaper accounts told stories of it, that spirit of levity was lost in the printing. The voice of honest Ernest Butler raised against the terrors of war and the wise cracks that were flung at him and those he sailed back were lost.

From newspaper accounts, it was not difficult to imagine that red agitators were behind the movement on the campus. It was not difficult to see how Elmer L. Fraker, '20as, state Legion commander, might believe that subversive forces were at work on the campus.

Actually, nothing was so far from the truth. Anyone who has watched Elizabeth Nicholson sipping cokes between classes in the Union or "wowing" the lads at a fraternity dance could not begin to associate Moscow with this soft spoken Oklahoman. Or should anyone see Young Butler competing in the intramural pole vault event for the Flying U team, they could plainly see that he wore no Stalin mustachio.

The men's council protest meeting was the most picturesque. Two hundred torch lights flamed against the black backdrop of night. Old Man Dictatorship was hanged in protest against selection, rather than election, of councilmen.

Again very few faculty members turned out. The banner proclaiming against dictatorship had to be planted under a faculty nose, so after some discussion, the nose of J. F. Findlay, dean of men, was selected. The torch light parade made his house a terminus.

In the crowd of marchers were numerous students who have a sincere liking for Dean Findlay. Actually, the march to his house was no intended reflection against him. If anything, it was a tribute to his friendship for the students. They knew he was good natured and would not attempt to "get even" if they made his house the terminus of the parade. He was a member of the administrative council and was concerned with student affairs as dean of men. The protest had to be made directly to a faculty member. He was made to suffer, or maybe he understood student psychology well enough not to suffer.

The peace meeting, the fourth of the mass sessions, was orderly and had the sanction of the administration. Classes were dismissed twenty minutes for the meeting. John Horwitz, student orator, decried against propaganda agencies. Dr. M. L. Wardell, '19as, associate professor of history, spoke for the faculty. He declared that the prevention of future wars will necessitate the changing of human nature that rallies to the colors when the band plays.



In her column, *A Woman's Viewpoint*, for *Scripps-Howard* newspapers, Mrs. Walter Ferguson, '07ex, commented on the Veterans of Future Wars:

"Wouldn't it be smart of us to analyze a few of our popular phrases? For example, in the teapot tempest stirred up by Princeton and Vassar students who suggest a bonus for future wars, indignant legionnaires repeat this sentiment: 'When the name of a Gold Star Mother is dragged into the public press, and the woman who gave her most priceless possession, her only son, in order that this country might be a safe place to live in, the action cannot go unnoticed.'

"How grand that sounds, yet how untrue it is! Once there may have been a time when American mothers sent their sons out to fight for their homes, but none ever voluntarily relinquished them to protect foreign soil.

"In the last analysis, women never 'give' their sons. Those sons are taken, dragged from maternal arms, and the pretty words we use to cover up an ugly action must not go unnoticed either.

"There is no foundation for the statement that women of the United States

willingly watched their men leave for France in 1917. Men originated the sentences by which we were beguiled into accepting the fact. Part of the business of the war machine is the invention of words to hide the ugliness of the whole filthy mess. And the real pathos of war is not the suffering and death it brings, but the manner in which we resign ourselves to such suffering and death for the sake of heroic phrases. Like shiny cellophane disguising prurient goods, noble language wraps up our greed.

"Figures speak louder than words. Re-

gard these which were recently compiled in Washington:

"Grand total of regular appropriation for national defense—983 millions.

"To maintain State Department—19 millions.

"No number of words can bridge the gap between our intelligence and stupidity at this point. And if our heads are on straight no sentimental gush will make us believe that American mothers ever did or ever will give their sons to fight in European wars. If they did, what have they got for it?"

Right of the Fit to Education

By EDITH JOHNSON

IN THE "DAILY OKLAHOMAN"

DO you know, Mr. and Mrs. Taxpayer, that it costs you and other citizens of this state \$50 more a year to maintain an inmate in the Oklahoma state penitentiary than it does to provide one year's college training for a young man or woman in the University of Oklahoma?

And this is but a sample of what is going on. Our tax bill for keeping up the unfit, that is the criminal, the mentally incompetent and the insane, is bigger than our bill for higher education, to say nothing of the staggering cost of maintaining courts and trying offenders. As Dr. W. B. Bizzell, president of the state university, told the education committee of the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce on Monday, we shall not build a better civilization until we provide every possible opportunity for the mentally competent. Only 50 per cent of graduates from high school in Oklahoma enter institutions of higher learning. The remaining 50 per cent go no farther, either because they have no desire to go to college or because they cannot buy and pay for a college education. Many a student is in college because Dad has plenty of money and for no better reason, while many a youth who has a far greater capacity for making good use of higher education is deprived of the opportunity by his economic condition—there is not room for unlimited numbers to work their way through college and young people are

often forced to earn their own support and that of others by the time they reach college age, if not before.

Considering her age Oklahoma has done fairly well in providing higher education and technical education for her youth. Even so, our state rates twenty-fifth in the nation, in money invested in learning. Despite the richness of our resources, it will take time to raise our standards both in quantity and quality to compare with the educational facilities offered in Iowa, New York, Massachusetts, Virginia, Ohio and California.

Not in years have our state schools operated on such small budgets as now. Take, for instance, the University of Oklahoma. With an enrollment varying from 8,000 to 9,000, or 1,000 more than in 1926-27, this, one of the ten largest universities in the United States, is worrying along on \$300,000 less a year than it had in 1926-27.

The most expert, commercially, of college presidents cannot furnish the quality of instruction on a reduced budget that he can on a liberal budget.

What our state university and other state schools should be in a position to offer is higher quality, more instructors, whose ability to teach compares favorably with the best in the land. A great teacher is a tremendous asset to any school—we have more than one in Oklahoma. A great

teacher inspires young people, leads out the best that is in them, incites them to develop their capacities and powers.

Economical management in every department of state government would release more money for the employment of great teachers and it would provide better equipment and more of it in schools where that need exists.

Whenever the business men of this state decide that education is a sound investment—not all of them realize its value—our schools will receive better support and more of it.

The prospect of realizing this ideal is better today than ever, for many business men in Oklahoma City are intensely interested in this problem and 33 per cent of the state's total of students in institutions of higher learning are enrolled in schools within 18 miles of the city.

Moreover, Oklahoma City has a Chamber of Commerce, one division of which works all the year 'round on promoting culture—the committee on education, organized to foster art, music, drama, literature, higher education and religion. And if reports be true, ours is the only Chamber of Commerce in the United States having as one of its projects the development of the community's artistic, intellectual and spiritual life.

Somewhere along the way from kindergarten to college commencement this nation's youth should be taught how to spell.

Judging by results, spelling must be a sadly neglected branch of popular education. And punctuation seems to be a lost art.

Grade schools, high schools and colleges—commercial institutions included—should turn out good spellers if in order to accomplish that weekly contests or spelling bees must be held.

Incidentally, business colleges would serve their students and the latter's prospective employers more satisfactorily if they would give a course in office conduct and manners. There are many times when it is almost more important to know what to say and do in an office than to take dictation and transcribe it with accuracy and speed.

Turning from what we ought to do in education to what we have done, the progress made within the past 50 years is astounding.

Less than half a century ago it was the exceptional youth who attended college. Few girls' faces were seen on the college campuses of this country. A girl who took her college course seriously was regarded as a blue-stocking. Her prospect for marrying was anything but good.

It was some distinction in those days to complete a four years' course in high school. As for technical education, except in law and medicine, that was rare, indeed.

We are making substantial progress. It is characteristic of us as Americans, however, to want to make greater speed.