

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Association's Influence Is Spreading

The new plan of forming five-member Advisory Councils in each county in Oklahoma has already won new prestige for the University of Oklahoma Association throughout the state. Each Advisory Council forms a permanent link between its community and the University, and it should prove mutually beneficial.

A high school graduate may be wondering whether he wants to go to O. U. He has heard various stories about it. He wonders what the real truth is. So he or his parents go to one of the members of the local Advisory Council, and friendly, accurate counsel about the University is easily available.

On the other hand, if and when the Association finds it necessary to present to the public some problem deeply affecting the welfare of the University a strong organization is ready to go into action on a moment's notice.

It can be used without criticism for such purposes as maintaining freedom of speech at the University, seeking to raise University standards in general, and awakening public sentiment to the need for adequate appropriations.

Parting Words Of Sincere Advice

When Dr. Robert K. Carr, professor of government, resigned to take a much more attractive position at Dartmouth, he was asked to write a series of articles for the United Press news service, frankly stating his views on governmental problems in Oklahoma.

His articles were plain-spoken, thought-provoking. The greatest mistake of all in Oklahoma government has been the failure to utilize a greater portion of our national wealth for social good, he declared. He asserted that if, as Minnesota has done with its iron-ore production, a reasonable portion of this vast wealth had been taken by the government and utilized for the benefit of the people of Oklahoma, the state would now be a "veritable paradise."

Professor Carr condemned Oklahoma's hodge-podge tax system as a "betrayal of the people," declaring that taxes are not too heavy but that they are burdensome because they fall too greatly upon the common people rather than upon sources able to pay.

But the indictment that strikes most deeply at the University, is this statement: "I believe that one of the most serious criticisms that can be made of the University of Oklahoma is its timidity, its cowardliness, its constant fear that it may 'get its neck out.'"

It should be remembered that these words are coming from a man with a keen mind, one who had been in Oklahoma just long enough to understand it, but not long enough to become resigned to its weaknesses. He continues:

"During the years I have been in Norman the University has time and time again quailed at the first sign of opposition and turned away from the path of duty lest it displease a few cranks, politicians or business-men. Until the University can overcome its fear and strike boldly forth in a conscious effort to do a little honest-to-heaven, simon pure educating for a change, I can see little hope for progress. And I hope I have made it clear that by educating I mean not only that the University should train those who enter its portals and enrol as students but become a positive force of enlightenment in the social, economic and political life of the entire state."

Those are fighting words, but can we honestly deny their truth?

Rather than resenting them, we express the hope than in the

near future a courageous faculty, backed by a vigorous alumni association that believes in academic freedom, will raise our standing in the eyes of such clear observers as Professor Carr.

That 'Exodus' Of Faculty Members

A glance at certain newspaper headlines might have left the impression that the University faculty suffered severely from resignations during the summer. The impression would be partially correct.

President W. B. Bizzell analyzes the situation very carefully in an article in this issue of *The Sooner Magazine*, and brings out two important points.

One is that the depletion of faculty ranks should not be overemphasized as some of the losses were "by request," and the number of good men who left is not large in proportion to the total size of the faculty.

On the other hand, the University could ill-afford to lose several of those who resigned to accept far better salaries elsewhere, and the loss of the most able instructors is certain to continue unless sufficient appropriations are provided to increase the salary scale.

The University's appropriations have not increased nearly as fast as the enrolment. The people of this state must decide which of three courses they want to take in regard to higher education in Oklahoma:

1. Let standards of instruction become lower because appropriations have not kept pace with enrolment increases.
2. Severely limit enrolment.
3. Increase appropriations in proportion to enrolment increase.

Shortage of Teachers Significant

During the summer an O. U. chemistry graduate who had a teaching position in the public schools of the state was re-elected to teach another year at a salary of \$110 a month for nine months, a total of \$990.

But he didn't go back to that job. A major Oklahoma oil company offered him \$185 a month for 12 months in the year, a total of \$2,220 a year.

In this true story lies the explanation of the critical shortage of teachers that developed in Oklahoma this year. The simple truth is that business and industry are taking the best qualified teachers from the state's public schools. The salaries offered are so much higher than the general level in the state schools that even many persons sincerely desiring to remain in the teaching profession are forced to leave their chosen fields.

The Teachers Placement Bureau at the University was deluged in August with telephone calls, letters, telegrams and personal calls from superintendents who were frantically trying to replace teachers who had resigned to take better jobs. The shortage was particularly noticeable in the fields of science and commercial subjects.

In many cases school systems have had to accept teachers with inferior qualifications because the kind desired simply could not be obtained. That is unsatisfactory from the standpoint of school standards.

But in the long run it is perhaps the best thing that could happen to the teaching profession. It has proved beyond any doubt that the scale of teachers' salaries in Oklahoma is unreasonably low. The public schools cannot obtain teachers well qualified with University training and postgraduate work without paying salaries comparable to those paid by business and industry for workers of similar qualifications.