

# EDITORIAL COMMENT

## Constructive Criticism, Or Rock Tossing?

The University of Oklahoma, and particularly its administrative problems, were widely discussed in newspaper stories and editorials and by public speakers in the last two months. There were some constructive criticisms, and there were also some criticisms that were reminiscent of a small boy throwing rocks at a group of playmates because he happens to be mad about something.

Serious and sincere criticisms should be accepted in good faith by the University and its friends, and heeded if the advice is sound. If there is another side to the discussion that should be presented in the interests of accuracy, then by all means the University or its friends should answer such criticisms in an effort to get the actual facts before the people of the state.

Juvenile criticisms, based upon personalities, need not even be dignified by an answer. To deal properly with the critic who says things to hurt individuals rather than to improve the institution would require the services of a psychologist or a psychiatrist.

The rock-throwing type of criticism is particularly weak when it comes—as it sometimes does—from an alumnus of the University who is in politics. In such a case, there is grounds for a strong suspicion that the speaker is talking for effect rather than with constructive aims. Because every alumnus who believes something should be corrected at the University is welcome to work toward that end through the Alumni Association. Each member alumnus is welcome to participate in all activities of the Association, including the election of its officers and the determination of its policies and the wielding of a certain amount of influence on University affairs.

Building a University and keeping it on the upward path is a tremendous task, and one big enough to utilize all the energy and interest that can be found in the alumni group. Thousands of alumni have put their shoulders to the wheel to help, and they are getting a lot of quiet satisfaction out of their work.

The small handful who think it more fun to stand off and toss rocks than to work at the job are fortunately a very small minority.



## The Next Big Task For College Alumni

Two notable accomplishments of the American Alumni Council in the twenty-five years of its history were emphasized at the recent national meeting at Columbus, Ohio. The first is the perfection of the techniques of alumni organization and support. The second is the sponsorship of "alumni education," in which the colleges and universities undertake a continuing commitment for educational inspiration and assistance to their alumni.

Although the University of Oklahoma is somewhat behind the major universities of the nation in these two particular fields, it has made substantial progress.

The next big task of organized alumni in America was described at the national meeting by J. L. Morrill, vice president of Ohio State University, as follows:

"May we not launch the new quarter-century with a new challenge to our colleges? Cannot the American Alumni Council champion the cause of cultivating intelligent alumni attitudes in the crucial undergraduate years before Commencement? How often it is the obvious that is overlooked. The project of post-collegiate education was not one the Council could itself undertake. Our contribution lay in making the colleges sensible of the need. So with 'the incubation and nurture of alumni-to-be,' we can aid only in awakening the awareness of our administrations and faculties to the need of a planned program with explicit techniques to reach an objective too much taken-for-granted.

"The faculties will respond, generously and ingeniously, to leadership in this direction—just as they have responded with enthusiasm and effectiveness to the 'alumni college' appeal."

The University of Oklahoma has anticipated this idea to some extent, and in scattered ways has attempted to create institutional understanding and pride. But there has been no conscious, integrated program to prepare students to be good alumni—good in the sense that they not only are interested in serving the University, but also in continuing to be served by the University after graduation.

Surely there is enough of eternal value and inspiration in an institution of higher learning to inspire loyalty and pride in alumni. But, as Mr. Morrill aptly points out, this loyalty can be built only upon experiences as a student.

Quoting Walt Whitman's statement that "Music is what awakens from you when you are reminded by the instruments," Mr. Morrill comments that each listener will hear in proportion to the enrichment of his ear by previous study and appreciation.

"So, too, the sound of campus chimes or chapel bell—heard in alumni remembrance through the years—will evoke not only sentiment but significant response in proportion to the well-planned contribution of the college."



## Football Radio Contract Still A Hot Potato

When last year's contract for broadcasting of Sooner football games caused some bitterness among radio firm representatives, the University Board of Regents requested that it be allowed to supervise the opening of bids and awarding of a contract for the 1938 season. This procedure was followed. Notice calling for bids was sent to all radio firms in the State, and the bids were opened by the Board of Regents May 2 and the contract was awarded.

But once more, some objections have been advanced. After the contract was awarded to WKY, Oklahoma City, the *Daily Ardmoreite* stated editorially that "High-handed disregard for fair and open competition will not enhance the prestige of those at the controls in athletic affairs at the State University."

The facts seem to be that KOMA and the Oklahoma Network, the two unsuccessful bidders, both made flat offers for the season's broadcasting rights; while WKY guaranteed a minimum rate plus an offer to split the returns from a possible advertising sponsorship of the broadcasts.

The minimum guaranteed by WKY was \$2,500, as compared to flat rates of \$2,600 offered by the Oklahoma Network and \$3,800 by KOMA. But the regents concluded that the chance to share in the sponsorship revenue as offered by WKY made this bid more attractive than the two flat rate bids.

The specifications in the Notice to Bidders made no restriction or suggestion as to whether the bid should be a flat rate or percentage bid. Apparently each bidder was free to use his own judgment as to the form of the bid.

Obviously, the regents and athletic officials had to use a certain amount of judgment in awarding the bid, as it was necessary to consider the possible extent of extra revenue from a sponsorship in the WKY bid.

Knowing the members of the Board of Regents, the diverse business and professional interests they represent, and their reputations for personal integrity, it is difficult to believe that they did anything else than award the contract on the basis of what they honestly believed was the most advantageous arrangement for the University and the Athletic Department.

However, in view of the bitterness that seems to be inevitable so long as one firm is given exclusive broadcasting rights, and no one firm is able to cover the entire state with a broadcast to the entire satisfaction of alumni and the public, the University may be forced eventually to give up the exclusive contract idea.