

EDITORIAL COMMENT

A Voice That Springs From The "Grassroots"

The University of Oklahoma, although the capstone of education in a state that is permeated with political influences, has managed to maintain its educational integrity. Politics have caused many a headache to friends of the University, but year in and year out, the public has realized that the actual educational processes carried on at the institution have been free of political meddling and the University administration has been free of any taint of trading patronage favors for larger appropriations.

Occasionally a critic expresses opinion that the University is too aloof from politics, and that the administration should be guided by a "practical politician who could go out after appropriations." The almost unanimous wave of protest expressed in newspaper editorials and personal comments after every such proposal is proof indeed that the public of Oklahoma abhors any such suggestion, and that it much prefers a University that will not stoop to political maneuvering.

On the other hand, an institution that depends almost entirely upon state appropriations for its financial support must face realities. With strong pressure groups battling for every dollar of state revenue, with demands for common schools and pensions and highways and hundreds of governmental services increasing every year—it is hopeless to expect a politically chosen Legislature to consider the University's financial needs purely on their merits.

The ultimate decision of the Legislature will depend, not only upon the merits of the University's budget request, but on the way in which the request is presented and the way in which the people of the state react to that request.

In other words, the voice that rings loudest and most persistently in the ears of members of the Legislature is the voice from the so-called "grassroots."

It is the voice of the people back home who sent him to the Legislature, that if expressed clearly and loudly enough, will guide the legislator in his decisions on appropriations. There are other factors involved, of course, but in the long run, it is the swelling voice from the grassroots that is most irresistible.

O.U. alumni who are concerned with the welfare of the University must think, therefore, about the situation in their own home counties and their home senatorial districts when they cast about for practical means of assisting the University.

If they want to keep raising the standards of the institution that gave them their educations (and by whose success they themselves will be judged to a great extent), they must take an active interest in electing high type, public spirited men to the Legislature, and they must help organize that voice from the grassroots that can impress the next Legislature with the fact that the people of Oklahoma are proud of their chief institution of higher learning and will not stand for it to be "knifed in the back" when the appropriations are parceled out for the next biennium.

"Let's go out and fight for the things the University deserves," is the suggestion frequently heard from alumni in many parts of the state.

The suggestions made above outline a way to fight without compromising with the politicians. It is possible to be aggressive and still be a gentleman. We have full confidence that O.U. alumni can do just that.

A Patch Of Silver Lining In Dark Clouds

Recent years have seen the University harrassed from time to time by political snipers, and on some occasions even attacked in force by so-called public servants who had found that they could not run the University of Oklahoma like an auto tag agency.

There were many dark days, and those courageous souls who bore the burden of fighting for the University had to swallow their pride and sacrifice their personal feelings on many occasions in order to seek the best way out for the University.

There was much grief in all those political battles that had to be fought. But there is one bright angle to these dark chapters in the history of the University. At least we know more definitely who the real friends of the University are.

In the 1938 elections, it is certain that some of the candidates for state offices will be men whose records mark them plainly and unequivocally as foes of the University of Oklahoma.

Others, by their records, have shown a willingness to deal fairly with the State's chief educational institution.

This knowledge will be most helpful to friends of the University when they cast their ballots this year.

There's Always Something To Worry About

Phi Beta Kappa members at the University were entertained by many side-lights on the national convention of that scholastic society when Delegate Lewis Salter gave his official report at a dinner of the University chapter.

Although the problem was not dignified by any official place on the convention program, national officials invited the convention delegates to cast an informal ballot to determine the most popular pronunciation of the order's name.

Some persons, it was explained, prefer the Latin pronunciation, as though it were spelled *Phee Beta Kappa*. Others prefer the English sound, like *Phi Beeta Kappa*. Still others (a majority, the ballot showed) like the plain American version, Phi Beta Kappa with a long *i*.

Most reassuring, however, in regard to the fundamental intelligence of the members of the organization was the result of the vote on the question as to whether it makes much difference how the name is pronounced. A majority said it didn't.

Where Will Oklahoma's Wealth Go?

Oklahoma is rapidly nearing the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the Territory. It is reaching a right respectable age, as far as years can tell. The test of its real maturity, however, lies not so much in the number of years of existence, as in the way in which it makes use of its fortune of natural resources.

Oil has created tremendous wealth in Oklahoma. Other minerals and our agricultural products have brought fortunes to many individuals. If Oklahoma's natural wealth is dissipated in trivialities and personal aggrandizement, we are still in an adolescent stage as a state.

If and when a fair proportion of our wealth, both private and public, goes into the permanent cultural phases of life such as art and education, then we will have a right to consider ourselves a mature commonwealth.