

# A New Goal in Radio Service

By HOMER HECK

**B**BETTER utilization of Oklahoma's state-wide facilities for public service radio broadcasting is the aim of a new council starting to work this autumn under leadership of the University of Oklahoma.

The University has been broadcasting for eighteen years—dating back to the pioneer days of this comparatively new industry. Throughout that period of time, it has owned and operated its own radio station, most of the time as a function of the Extension Division. In the early days T. M. Beard, now O. U. alumni secretary, was director of the station in connection with his work in the Extension Division, and he still retains chairmanship of the University's Radio Committee.

Station WNAD, whose call letters stand for "We Never Are Dull" according to one ironic wag, has been operating on a frequency of 1010 kilocycles by authority of the Federal Communications Commission, with a power of 1000 watts. The station has very attractive, well equipped studios, and a staff composed of a supervisor, a production manager, a secretary, and a few NYA students. Because of this limitation of staff, WNAD has been unable to broadcast more than a few hours each day. It has always been the aim of the personnel of the station to work for continual growth and improvement of program material of a public service nature.

Note the use of the term "public service." This is used deliberately in place of the term "educational broadcasting" which is gradually going out of favor. Too often the use of the term "educational broadcasting" merely brings on a twist of the dial to some other station, since the average radio listener doesn't like to be told he is being educated. Also, a further objection to the use of "educational" to denote the University's broadcasting program is that all broadcasting is, in a sense, educational, whether for good or ill.

A recent resolution of the Board of Regents gave official approval to a considerably expanded broadcasting program for the University. This program of expansion came as a direct result of the ratification by the United States of the so-called Havana Treaty which provides for reallocation of broadcasting frequencies to eliminate interference between the nations of this hemisphere. The reallocation provisionally contemplates the assignment to WNAD of a much more favorable frequency than that now held, making pos-



President Crane . . . Radio Expert

sible satisfactory service to a much wider area of the state. The frequency schedule for WNAD is so favorable, indeed, that it is very attractive to the commercial broadcaster, since it is a clear channel frequency capable of carrying a power of 50,000 watts.

It was felt by the administration of the University that if we were to hope to secure and hold the proposed new frequency we would have to give evidence of preparedness to render a real public service and it is the ambition now of the University to make WNAD a state radio station in every sense of the word, with its facilities available to other institutions and departments of state that could utilize broadcasting time to the advantage of the people of Oklahoma.

The National Committee on Education by Radio has long advocated the establishment of state or regional broadcasting councils for the purpose of further improving the quality of public service broadcasting. Such councils are now in operation in various parts of the United States, notably in the Rocky Mountain region.

Officials of the University have felt that with the sanction of the Board of Regents to a program of expanded service, the University might well take the lead in developing such a radio council for Oklahoma. Co-operation of the Oklahoma A. & M. College, State Department of Education, State Congress of Parents and

Teachers, and Oklahoma Baptist University, and others was requested and wholeheartedly given in planning for this first conference. Invitations were sent to practically every organization and institution in the state that was known to be in any way concerned with education or to have a potential interest in broadcasting of educational material.

The response to the call for the conference was gratifying. Twenty-three organizations and institutions sent representatives July 11 and 12 to the first preliminary conference on public service broadcasting held at the University. The services of Miss Judith Waller, director of education and public service broadcasting of the National Broadcasting Company for the Central Division, and Dr. A. G. Crane, president of the University of Wyoming, president of the Rocky Mountain Radio Council and chairman of the National Committee on Education by Radio, were secured for the conference.

On the recommendation of Dr. Crane it was agreed by the conference to plan a series of general conferences of this nature before definite organization of a council was perfected, and a planning committee composed of the following persons was appointed: Dr. Alice Sowers, State Congress of Parents and Teachers; Dan Proctor, Oklahoma Education Association; Mrs. Ernest Rutherford, American Association of University Women; Marvin Orr, State Department of Education; Ralph Matthews, Oklahoma Baptist University; Sam Schneider, Oklahoma A. & M. College; H. H. Leake, University of Oklahoma and WNAD; Layne Beaty, Department of Agriculture; Perry Ward, commercial broadcaster; and H. R. Heck, chairman, and ex-officio member.

This committee was instructed to: (1) plan the program of the next conference, (2) draw up a preliminary constitution of the proposed Oklahoma State Radio Council, (3) conduct inventory of needs, materials and resources for public service broadcasting in Oklahoma, and (4) investigate the possibility of temporary loans of personnel from institutions for the preliminary setting up of such a council.

This committee was to meet in August at the University to begin its work. Briefly, the proposed plan of operation of the State Radio Council is as follows: Organizations and institutions representing both the broadcaster and the consumer will band themselves together for the purpose of mutual assistance and the

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him the following season with Hugh McCullough. With McCullough finishing in 1938, Stidham brought out little Beryl Clark. With Clark also gone after a single season of stardom, his place as the ace Sooner passer probably will be filled by Jack Jacobs, 6-foot ½ inch 187-pound junior. Also, Fullback Johnny Martin is a good passer and so are two sophomores, Boyd Bibb of Sayre and Lindell Hays of Waggoner. And in Jennings, Bentley, Smith, Sharpe and some of the backs the Sooners have several good receivers. The forward passing game should come close to measuring up to last year's; might possibly surpass it.

### *How about the kicking?*

If Jacobs plays regularly, the punting should be better. The Indian boy is probably the greatest straight-away power punter the Sooners have had since Bob Dunlap, '33, in spite of the fact he didn't play enough last year to prove it. Martin and Mathews are also experienced punters. The place-kicking probably will drop off some from the high standard set by Raphael Boudreau, '38, and Dick Favor, '39, and Favor's long kicking-off certainly will be missed.

### *Where will the team probably be most vulnerable because of its inexperience?*

On defense, particularly against forward passes. The starting quartet of Martin, Jacobs, Mathews and Whited (if that proves to be the first team backfield) should do okay but the second team backfield will be green and also any subs that may have to go in for first team backs. Also, the team will sadly miss its slashing defensive end play of last season. Also, there is the quarterbacking problem. Mun-

sey, the most able signal-caller, won't return because of a shoulder injury and Clark is graduated.

### *Who will probably be Oklahoma's toughest Big Six foes?*

Nebraska way out in front. Kansas State and Iowa State next. Missouri returns All-American Paul Christman and a host of backs but lost most of her linemen, plays her tough games away from Columbia and so probably will be relegated to the second division this fall.

### *What are the most difficult games on the Sooner schedule this fall?*

Nebraska and Texas. Temple and Santa Clara may surprise. The danger spot of the schedule is probably the Iowa State game at Ames October 26 and the opener against the improved Oklahoma Aggies could be close since Jim Lookabaugh's boys will be improved, and moreover preface their game here October 5 with earlier jousts against the Edmond Teachers and Texas Tech, which means they should be smoother on their assignments than the Sooners.

### *How long has it been since the Sooners lost a game at Norman?*

Three years. In 1937, Stidham's first year, Kansas beat Oklahoma 6 to 3 on that famous last-second forward pass that ricocheted off a Sooner's hands into Dick Amerine's arms. That's the only game a Stidham-coached Sooner outfit ever lost at Owen field.

### *How many games do you think Oklahoma will win this fall?*

The Big Chief would probably sell out quickly for five wins, three losses and one tie. Probably a more reasonable forecast would be four wins, four losses and one tie which wouldn't be at all bad considering the class of the 1940 schedule.

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pooling of resources for public service broadcasting, and an executive committee will be selected that will be held responsible for the operation of the project.

This executive committee will then set up a central office with a staff trained in all phases of radio, and with studios and recording equipment for the purpose of producing programs for broadcast. Standards for such programs will be kept high for we must admit that we are, whether we like it or not, in competition for the listener against programs of a high entertainment quality. While some of these programs will undoubtedly be carried over WNAD at the University, it will also be the aim of the council to make programs available through transcription to other stations of the state in order to secure wider listening audiences. Organizations

that become members of the council do not in any way lose their freedom of action in broadcasting other material. The council will simply serve to give wider circulation to exceptional programs and will see to it that any program bearing its stamp of approval shall have a high degree of excellence.

If such a council is eventually organized for Oklahoma, undoubtedly the University will play a prominent role along with other major educational institutions of the state in carrying out its functions; and it is believed that such a progressive program would result in tremendous improvement of the quality of public service broadcasting now carried on by various agencies throughout Oklahoma in a desultory and largely unsatisfactory manner.

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