

The Southwest Looks Ahead

By JOHN ROGERS

OUR country is now engaged in what it terms an "all out" program for national defense. It will affect in some degree every business man in the southwest. All business no matter what its size or activity, must contribute actively to the job of national defense. We are in a state of virtual war economy. National defense, in its every phase, and on a large scale, will, in my opinion, be a vital part of our economy for years to come.

However, while defense is imperative and of an emergency character, we must not overlook the normal needs of our national economy if we, as a nation, are to continue to progress. This crisis will one day pass and we will face the colossal task of reconstruction which will test our resourcefulness and our spirit of sacrifice, as has national defense.

I am concerned that, in our desire to do quickly everything necessary to build up our defense, we may lose an essential part of the American way of life—the free enterprise system—by either consciously or unconsciously sliding into state socialism, thereby losing a vital part of the American way of life which we are making an "all out" effort to defend and preserve.

Intelligent discipline placed around energy has never hurt an individual or an institution. The danger arises when government, originally intent upon discipline, begins to control business. It is one thing to correct abuses. It is quite a different thing to take control of the economic machinery. To tell business what it may do is one thing. To tell business what it must do is quite another thing. The first is legitimate regulation. The second is a form of state socialism.

Sometimes it is difficult to tell when the twilight of liberty ends and the light of despotism begins, but there is a point beyond which the state is no longer your servant—it becomes your master. There is a point beyond which freedom ends, and despotism begins.

Without the privilege of each individual to rise in the world as a result of his own efforts and superiority, there can be no such thing as liberty. If we did not have this incentive to rise in the world, neither you, nor I, nor anyone else, would work hard, make personal sacrifice, improve our minds and take the risks that always attend success.

As someone has said: "You can't be free and equal. You can be free or equal, but if you are free the man with more ability will get ahead, and there goes equality."

While our government does not owe any-

one a living, it owes everyone an opportunity to make a living. Any political system evolved by a free people which fails to recognize this fact cannot long survive. Yet a democracy is primarily concerned in preserving the privilege of inequality to our people rather than in guaranteeing them equality.

A number of people today believe that, under the American system of business, everyone is trying to get wealth by taking something away from the other person. They believe that it is impossible for anyone to obtain wealth without making someone else poor in the process. This is not true under our system of private enterprise.

Under this system the acquisition of wealth benefits many people.

Wealth is created. It is new. It comes into existence through the simple process of someone taking raw materials and converting them into articles that are usable. By this process America has become the world's wealthiest nation.

The only method by which we can pull ourselves out of our present rut in our domestic economy is to resume our task of converting raw material into physical wealth. We are at present devoting so much thought to the redistribution of wealth already created—which only makes all of us poorer—that we have almost ceased to concern ourselves with questions of expanding facilities for creating additional wealth, and providing for a more equitable distribution of our total wealth.

Today we are rapidly steering toward a reestablishment of the old mercantile system which is based on state control of enterprise. This system assumes that people are unable to work out their own economic salvation and, for this reason, they should become wards of the state—virtually economic slaves.

Unless an articulate majority of Americans are soon made to realize that business men engaged in free enterprise have made possible not only our freedom and our culture but constitute the very backbone of our democracy, there is very little likelihood of its being saved. Unless we soon begin differentiating between proper and necessary constitutional governmental regulation of business and the extra legal control and regimentation of business, the road back to free enterprise will be too long and arduous to contemplate.

First, we must see to it that business is conducted on a humane and ethical basis, and in the public interest, so that free private enterprise can come to the court of public opinion with clean hands.

Second, we must become intelligent interpreters of the free enterprise system, and apprise the average citizen of the fact that free private enterprise is just as essential to the preservation of individual freedom and liberty as either representative democracy, or civil and religious liberty.

They are inseparable. The same basic concept underlies them all . . . the sacredness of the individual. We Americans intend to keep our nation a free nation of free men and free women. To safeguard our independence as a nation we must build our military, economic and spiritual defenses on a foundation of strong and united purpose; but in building these defenses we must hold fast to the liberties that are the very foundation of the American way of life.

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Covering the Campus

Editor of the *Oklahoma Daily* for this summer and the fall semester is Roy Calvin, smiling, dark-haired journalism junior from Drumright, who has served an apprenticeship as reporter and staff member. Gene Campbell, of Moore, also a junior this year, has been elected editor of the *Covered Wagon*, campus humor magazine. Editor of the 1942 *Sooner Yearbook*, which will be the one marking the University's Fiftieth Anniversary year, is Seth "Jerry" King, of Okmulgee.

► Letzeiser Medals, enhanced by long tradition as prized awards for outstanding senior men and women in the University, have been awarded as follows: gold, silver and bronze medals for women went, respectively, to Margaret Jones, Oklahoma City; Phillis McCoy, Ponca City, and Mary Beth Smith, Tulsa; and the corresponding medals for men went, respectively, to Norman Reynolds, Oklahoma City; Tom O. Boyd, Norman, and Garland McAninch, Norman. The Letzeiser awards were established by the founder of the Letzeiser & Company jewelry company at Oklahoma City.

► Phi Gamma Delta fraternity and Chi Omega sorority won first places in the two divisions of the annual interfraternity sing, which was conducted on a beautiful spring evening before a record crowd of 1,500 that overflowed the amphitheater.

► A newly-organized Independent party of students scored a clean sweep in the Men's Government Association election, putting non-fraternity students in every major class office and in two executive positions of the M.G.A. Charles Nesbitt, Tulsa, was elected president and Orv Mathews, Sooner football player, was named vice president. George McDermitt was elected president of the 1942 senior class; Paul Kenyon, junior class; and Son Wright, sophomore class.

► Students in O.U.'s new Naval R.O.T.C. won't get to make the scheduled cruise to Panama this summer, because of unsettled world conditions. Instead they will be taken on modified cruises for summer training.