

# College Co-ordinating Plan

Approved by Alumni Board

A far-reaching proposal designed to force the coordination of higher education in Oklahoma and eliminate politics as far as possible from college financing was being studied last month by various interested groups.

The proposal was made by Governor Phillips' Coordinating Board in the form of a constitutional amendment which the governor asked the Legislature to submit to the people in a special election to be held probably in February.

Norman Brillhart, of Madill, president of the University of Oklahoma Association called a special meeting of the association's executive board at Norman January 19 to hear an explanation of the plan by Dr. W. B. Bizzell, president of the University, and John Rogers, Tulsa, member of the University Board of Regents, both of whom served as members of the coordinating board.

Past presidents of the alumni association, members of the Board of Regents, and executive officers of the University Dads Association and University Mothers Association also were invited to the meeting, and all of these groups were represented. State Senator Jim Nance, Purcell, and Richard T. Pendleton, Cleveland County representative, also were present.

At the close of the lengthy session, the group authorized Mr. Brillhart to appoint two alumni committees, one to make a recommendation for the alumni association's policy toward the proposed coordinating amendment, and the other to make recommendations on the wording of the legislative vitalizing act.

Members of the policy committee are Fisher Muldrow, Ardmore, chairman; W. L. Eagleton, Tulsa; Max Chambers, Okmulgee; Earl Foster, Oklahoma City; and A. N. Boatman, Okmulgee. Members of the other committee are Mr. Eagleton, chairman; Raymond Tolbert, Oklahoma City; Judge Harry L. S. Halley, Tulsa, and Mr. Foster and Mr. Boatman.

The policy committee later recommended support of the proposed amendment, in principle, and the alumni executive board ratified this policy in a mail ballot.

To open the afternoon's session, President Bizzell reviewed the history of higher education in the nation and in Oklahoma, and discussed various attempts toward coordination of higher education in this state such as the survey by the U.S. Department of Education, the Brookings Institution survey, and the coordinating boards appointed by several governors.

The present coordinating board, Presi-

dent Bizzell and Mr. Rogers reported, came to the conclusion that no system of voluntary coordination by the eighteen state-supported institutions of higher learning in Oklahoma would ever be successful.

The board therefore recommended, in its report to Governor Phillips, that the people be given an opportunity to vote on an amendment that would set up a constitutional coordinating board with full power over budgets and standards. The report suggested the following amendment:

## ARTICLE XIII A Higher Education

Sec. 1. All institutions of higher education supported wholly or in part by direct legislative appropriations shall be integral parts of a unified system to be known as "The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education."

Sec. 2. Control of the System shall be vested in a corporate body known as "The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education," which shall have custody of all property appropriated for use in the System, and whose powers and duties shall be prescribed by law. The corporation shall consist of nine members appointed by the Governor, confirmed by the Senate, and who shall be removable only for cause. Upon the taking effect of this Article, the Governor shall appoint the said Regents for terms of office as follows: One for a term of one year, one for a term of two years, one for a term of three years, one for a term of four years, one for a term of five years, one for a term of six years, one for a term of seven years, one for a term of eight years and one for a term of nine years. Any appointment to fill a vacancy shall be for the balance of the term only. Except as above designated, the term of office of said Regents shall be nine years or until their successors are appointed and qualified. The Regents shall constitute a Board of Control for the University of Oklahoma, the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, the Oklahoma College for Women, the East Central State College, the Central State College, the Northeastern State College, the Northwestern State College, the Southeastern State College, the Southwestern State College of Diversified Occupations, the Panhandle Agricultural and Mechanical College, the Connors Agricultural College, the Eastern Oklahoma A. and M. College, the Murray State School of Agriculture, the Cameron Agricultural College, the Colored Agricultural and Normal University, the Northeastern Oklahoma Junior College, the University Preparatory School and Junior College, the Oklahoma Military Academy, and any public institution of higher education (supported wholly or in part by state appropriation) which may hereinafter be established.

Sec. 3. The biennial budget request of state institutions for higher education shall be presented by the Regents in consolidated form.

Sec. 4. Admission fees, instruction fees, laboratory fees, library fees, activity fees, health fees, graduation fees and incidental fees may be charged in any or all state supported institutions of higher learning by the Regents in the manner and form and in the amounts the Regents may determine from time to time.

Sec. 5. Private and denominational (and other institutions of higher learning) may become coordinated with the State System of Higher Education under regulations set forth by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

Mr. Rogers explained that the proposed State Board of Regents would have power

to prepare and submit to the legislature a consolidated budget for all institutions; to determine the functions of each institution in order to eliminate needless duplications and "upgrading," and thereby make the work more efficient; to set uniform standards for the work in all colleges, and to set instructional and other fees on a coordinated basis.

Whether the board would be given any administrative powers such as that of selection of faculty members would depend upon what the Legislature wrote into the vitalizing act to put the amendment into effect, Mr. Rogers said.

"The amendment lays the basis for coordination, and it would be up to the legislature to work it out—and I wouldn't want to take that power away from the legislature," Mr. Rogers said. "It's an open question with me whether the main board should be an administrative board also, or other administrative boards should be set up for groups of schools."

**E**XPLAINING the reasons for the various sections in the proposed amendment, he said that the consolidated budget is designed to prevent log-rolling in the legislature in behalf of separate budgets. In general discussion, some of the attorneys present pointed out that the wording of the amendment requires submission of a consolidated budget, but does not require the legislature to act on it in that fashion. Mr. Rogers agreed that the wording probably should be changed to make it mandatory for the legislature to pass the appropriation for all colleges on a consolidated basis.

He explained that the specific authorization to set and collect fees was placed in the amendment because there is some doubt about the authority of educational institutions to collect fees under present laws.

Many of the alumni present at the meeting expressed belief that there would be great opposition to the amendment if it were interpreted as being an authorization to charge tuition. Mr. Rogers replied that the coordinating board did not have in mind the collection of any kind of fees not already being collected, but that it was believed desirable to clear up the doubtful point of law and also to keep the matter of setting fees in the hands of educational experts rather than letting it become a political issue.

The coordinating board did not frame any suggested vitalizing act to be passed by the legislature. It did, however, present some recommendations in its report.

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## College Co-ordinating Plan

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One of these calls for appointment of a chancellor, who would be an expert on the functions of the coordinating board and would have an office staff to collect information and prepare data for the use of the board. The chancellor's duties and powers would correspond to those of the board, and presumably would be limited to coordination work unless the Legislature saw fit to add administrative powers.

President Bizzell recommended that there be three subordinate administrative boards.

"There ought to be three boards to govern the three groups of institutions—the academic group headed by the University, the agricultural group headed by Oklahoma A. and M. College, and the so-called teacher college group headed by one senior college," he said.

"I can't conceive of this plan's working effectively without a board to work with the executive officers of each group of schools."

Under this plan, each of the three groups would have one president who would represent his group before the coordinating board. Dr. Bizzell had personal experience with this kind of setup when he was president of Texas A. and M. College and also administered three other colleges at the

same time. The plan worked perfectly there, he said. He believes the powers of the proposed State Board of Regents should be limited to co-ordination, and not include administrative powers.

Discussing the proposal for bringing private and church colleges into the coordination plan, Dr. Bizzell declared there is a great opportunity for establishing uniform standards in all colleges of the state—both public and private—but that there would be no state financial aid to private schools.

Both Dr. Bizzell and Mr. Rogers favored adoption of the general coordinating plan, although they said that it was quite possible some modifications should be made in the amendment before it is submitted for a vote.

"It is hopeless to go on like the present with the people feeling like they do toward the schools, and rivalries making it impossible for the schools to cooperate," President Bizzell said. "I realize that we are playing for big stakes, but you have to either coordinate or not coordinate. I'm in favor of the amendment. I want to see the budget recommending power put in the hands of a group friendly to higher education."

Mr. Rogers added "If you want coordination, the only way to get it is by law. It's impossible to do it by legislative action alone, because the constitution now gives the State Board of Agriculture control of A. and M. College. Too, any system set up by one legislature can be changed by the next."

President Bizzell warned that the coordination plan would not necessarily mean a saving in the cost of higher education in Oklahoma.

"If you eliminate all the unnecessary duplications of work, it wouldn't do much toward balancing the state budget," he said. "It would probably result in spending more, because the schools are seriously in need of more money and the legislature probably would have more confidence in the consolidated budget recommendation of the coordinating board than it does in the individual budget requests of the various schools."

Both President Bizzell and Mr. Rogers emphasized that the success of the plan would necessarily depend largely upon the type of men chosen for membership on the coordination board, and for the position of chancellor.

The idea of coordinating institutions of higher learning is not a new one. About half of the states already have some such system in operation. Governor Phillips' coordinating board made a careful survey of the experience of other states in preparing its report.

The 122-page report of the State Coordinating Board of Governor Phillips contains three sections, one devoted to background information on the coordination idea, one devoted to the higher educational institutions of Oklahoma and the reasons for the failure of various attempts at coordination, and a final section devoted to recommendations.

The recommendations included the following statements:

1. "The study of past efforts to coordinate Oklahoma's institutions of higher education leads inescapably to the conclusion that without additional and clarifying legislation, the State Coordinating Board cannot perform the responsibilities imposed upon it by law. ... The whole legal status of the board is confused."

2. "Because of the obvious difficulty of effecting an integrated system of higher education under present legislation, the Coordinating Board, while collecting a considerable body of data on all Oklahoma institutions, has for the past year concerned itself chiefly with a consideration of the legal provisions and the administrative structure necessary to effect the "Greater University" idea. It now recommends that all state institutions of higher education be declared integral parts of a unified system; that control be vested in a single Board of Regents with a Chancellor of Higher Education as its chief administrative officer; that the biennial budget request for higher education be presented by the Board in consolidated form; that private and sectarian institutions may become affiliated with the State System under regulations set forth by the State Board of Regents. Because of existing laws, an amendment to the constitution will be necessary to effect this type of administrative organization."

3. A proposed draft for the amendment (as quoted earlier in this article) is presented.

4. While recognizing that by repeal of the constitutional provision naming the State Board of Agriculture as a Board of Regents for the agricultural colleges and also that section which prevents use of state property at sectarian institutions, the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education could be effected by statute, the report emphasizes that "it seems desirable to provide constitutional safeguards for certain basic features of the plan."

5. "As long as individual institutions make separate appeals for appropriated funds, each legislative session will continue to be high-lighted by factional rivalry. The provision (for a consolidated budget) takes from the legislature a part of its influence in the determination of educational policy, and the question may arise as to whether higher education will still be responsive to the will of the people as expressed by their representatives. It is perhaps true that institutions will not be as susceptible to a certain type of political pressure as they are at present, but as long as the legislature holds the purse strings, it is not likely that the System will stray too far out of line with prevailing public opinion."

6. "Section 4, which concerns the relation of private and denominational institutions to the public schools, will, if adopted, mark a unique departure from Mid-Western educational philosophy and practice. It has no direct counterpart in American legal history, but the idea that denominational insti-

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tutions complement tax-supported higher education and deserve any encouragement the State can give has been an integral part of the coordination movement for the last ten years. x x x Details of the affiliation of private institutions must be worked out gradually after the State System of Higher Education has been launched."

7. "The heart of the System is represented by the chief executive officer employed by the State Regents and responsible to that Board for administering its program. The selection of the chancellor of higher education is undoubtedly the most important single responsibility of the board. x x x Assisting the chancellor would be an Institutional Cabinet, composed of the presidents of colleges and universities in the System. The cabinet could authoritatively advise with the chancellor and the regents, pass upon the facts as presented to them, warn of ill-advised regulations, standards, or other proposals, and in general represent the several institutions fairly and effectively."

8. "It is all-important x x x that first, the major functions of each different institution or group of similar institutions be decided; that, second, the organization of administrative and curricular divisions essential to carrying out these functions and only these, be set up and all others eliminated; and, third, that the straying of the institution from the functional aim allotted be prevented."

9. "The State Regents might well consider the advisability of turning over to subdivisions of the State government the physical properties of the separate junior colleges, and of recommending to the Legislature a unit of subsidy for junior colleges operated by local communities as a part of their secondary systems. The subsidy would be granted, of course, under safeguards providing for the maintenance of adequate standards of local support. x x x In no case should the state furnish any junior college building or equip it."

10. "The plan outlined is not advanced as a panacea for all of the state's problems in higher education. It does embody, however, essential features of the more successful attempts to coordinate the work of separate institutions of higher learning. It calls for drastic changes in present organization—but half-way measures adopted in the past have failed to accomplish the end in view."

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## Don't Get Excited

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like manner when fear and distrust arise in our lives we turn, for satisfaction, from normal to abnormal modes of conduct.

A much more wholesome type of adjustment when danger threatens and fear assails is the assumption of an objective attitude and the vigorous performance of worthwhile tasks. As long as we keep our personal feelings, prejudices, and egoism at the center of all our thoughts and actions we

close the door to facts and to the processes of logical reasoning. To the degree that we get our egos out of the picture and view the situation in an objective way, we open the door to facts and to reason. The first injunction is to marshal all the facts available, ruling out hearsay, prejudice, bias and personal feelings. When the facts are all assembled, weigh them in a calm, logical manner giving to each its due weight.

As alumni of our university this should not be too difficult, for it has been shown by experiments that people with relatively high intelligence and with advanced scholastic training are less subject to suggestion and to group biases than are those with relatively low intelligence and with little schooling.

The old phrase, an idle brain is the devil's workshop, does contain an element of truth. The man who is busy at a worthwhile job has no time for brooding, worry, and fear. Fortunately, we cannot perform two major operations at the same time. If we are interestedly engaged at one task, we must lay other tasks aside. Also action produces growth and organization. The more we act in a logical, useful manner the more we become organized to function in that way, and, consequently, the easier it is to avoid fear, anxiety, and suspicion. Our character and personality gradually assume the same nature as that possessed by our behavior.

The second injunction is, do not stop with arguing logically with yourself and others, but realize the fruits of your logic through constructive action.

If this and the preceding injunctions are followed in spirit as well as in form, we shall have far greater satisfaction as individuals, we shall with certainty preserve the essential values of our culture, and we shall most effectively create a state of mental as well as material preparedness.

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Harry Ray Cook, '40bus, Oklahoma City, second lieutenant in the Reserve Corps, has been called to extended active duty at Fort Sill.

DAVIS-MORTON: Miss Frankie Pauline Davis, '40ed.m, and Thomas Morton, '40eng, were married Thanksgiving day in Wewoka. He is a member of Sigma Chi fraternity. They live in Nowata, where he is employed in the production department of the Oklahoma Oil Corporation.

FINLEY-HOYT: Miss Helen Finley and Eugene Hoyt, '40, were married December 19 in Oklahoma City. She attended Central State College. They live in Great Bend, Kansas, where he is connected with the Continental Oil Company.

GOLDSMITH-STREETS: Miss Armyn Goldsmith, '40, and George Streets were married in December. She is director of the Grant County Welfare Department. He attended junior college at Tonkawa. They live at Pond Creek, where he is editor and publisher of the *Pond Creek Herald*.

Alton Coppage, '40, and Mrs. Coppage, returned to Oklahoma in December from Chicago, Illinois, where he has completed his first season as a professional football player with the Chicago Cardinals. He was starting wingman in eight of eleven games. The couple will be at home temporarily in Norman, where he will continue work toward a degree. Mr. Coppage plans to return to professional football next season.

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