

Business-Man Governor

BY CAPITOL CORRESPONDENT

First O. U. Alumnus To Serve As Governor Continues His Fight for Balanced Budget

TWICE a day for two years, Governor Leon Chase Phillips, '16law, has given the six of us who work the Capitol end of news-writing a running account of the day's business and an indication of what to expect in the future.

He finds twice-daily press conferences a chance to relax, usually, and talk about a lot of things that do not always figure in the news of the day. The subjects may range from white-faced Jersey cows to cribbage, football, the future of education in the state or raw honey as a cure for hay fever.

Twice a day for two years is rather frequent, and as a result the participants come to know and understand each other's viewpoint somewhat better than casually.

All of us know, for instance, that the governor's fondest hope is to go out of office with a reputation for stringent economy and a balanced state budget to show for it. That he has been unable to reduce expenses to match income has proved a blow to the first two years of administration. He is, however, well on the way toward his goal.

He also would like to have a reputation as a friend of the University of Oklahoma as its first alumnus governor. And the next two years should see him working seriously to improve relations between the Legislature, the University and himself. He would like to go out as governor with a ten-year plan for the building of the University well started. Friends of the school will hear more about this in the coming months.

His appointment of John Rogers, '14law, and Harrington Wimberly, '24ba, to the Board of Regents, for instance, was motivated by a desire to place the University in the hands of its alumni who are most interested in its future welfare.

Never, perhaps, in state history have University alumni held so many important positions in a state administration.



*Governor Phillips at
work in his office
at the State Capitol*

From Jack Bell and Roy Cox on the Board of Affairs to Geoge Meacham on the Highway Commission and Charles Steele as secretary of the School Land Department, the University is well represented with former students in responsible administrative positions.

Dick Jones was appointed to the Criminal Court of Appeals, Sam Neff to the Supreme Court, Don Welch as selective service director. There are scores of others.

As a member of the all-victorious Oklahoma football team of 1915, the Governor has been interested in Sooner football and in Coach Tom Stidham's success. A number of players have been helped with summer jobs and another group has been given work after graduation.

Despite all of this, alumni of the University frequently raise the question of why Governor Phillips and the Univer-

sity have not been even more friendly. They refer to the campus "red hunts" and the occasional criticism from the governor appearing in the newspapers.

To understand this, it is necessary to understand the governor. And if there is to be co-operation and a spirit of helpfulness between the University and the governor, each must understand the other.

Even though his profession is that of an attorney, Governor Phillips is primarily a business man. His sympathies are with business men and his outlook is that of a business man.

He has little interest in governmental experimentation, theories of all kinds, new deal philosophies, women's clubs, cocktail parties or drinking of any kind, receptions, dinners or parlor debating.

He is primarily a man of action with little brief for less realistic persons than

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himself. He likes to work sixteen hours a day and does not understand people who do not like to work at least half that long.

His best friends and closest advisors are classed as hard-headed realists. He expects them to say little and do much. Those who have been unfortunate enough to go off on tangents not to his liking have found themselves publicly spanked.

The governor, on the other hand, perhaps does not have the same conception about the status of a university faculty member that most faculty members have.

For instance, the governor was critical of faculty members who recently participated in a state conference for governmental liberties. College men and women in every state in the country have no doubt been active in such organizations throughout the history of education. The governor's first reaction was that they should be spending their time "teaching school" instead of defending civil liberties. He commented that in his opinion professors were hired to teach students in classrooms and not to go about the state organizing groups to take leadership in matters about which controversy raged.

University faculty members, on the other hand, are more likely to be interested in the principles involved in a situation, or the possibilities of improving the social order, than in the practical problem of making the present business setup run smoothly and show a profit.

The true scholar—and the true University—are interested in the truth for the truth's sake.

It's a fundamental difference in viewpoint between scholar and practical politician—a difference that should be recognized but not deplored, since each has an entirely different job to do.

It is probably noteworthy that the governor's criticisms of the University were most numerous early in the administration. In the last year he has visited the

campus many times, he has spoken at meetings of various state groups in session at the University, and he has expressed a deep interest in the future of the institution and its possibilities for serving the state.

While Mr. Phillips left the selection of President W. B. Bizzell's successor to the members of the Board of Regents, it is certain that the choice of Joseph A. Brandt, Sooner alumnus now director of the Princeton University Press, to be the next president of the University of Oklahoma was entirely satisfactory to the governor.

At the Capitol, the Phillips administration has ushered in an era of unprecedented sobriety and industry. Working hours have been extended in most departments. There is comparatively little loafing, and patronage abuses have been curtailed to a minimum.

The cost of state government has been reduced about seven million dollars per year and the budget would have been practically balanced had not oil production fallen and with it, the gross production and income tax revenue. Mr. Phillips is determined to balance the budget for the second biennium of his administration, and this effort will be the keynote of the legislative session starting this month.

Some of Mr. Phillips' stormiest battles have been with the national administration. Originally he was opposed to a third term for President Roosevelt, but dropped the issue when it appeared the state was swinging overwhelmingly for Mr. Roosevelt. He has fought a bitter legal battle against the Red River Dam project, which he sincerely believes is economically unsound.

Governor Phillips now faces his most trying period—the second Legislature and the last two years of his administration. New candidates for governor will begin sprouting soon and a new campaign will be just around the corner. The Legislature won't be entirely happy over the problem of cutting expenditures and raising taxes.

But the governor has sounded a call for public support in his effort to balance the budget, and indications are that he has a fair prospect of success.

All in all, the state's first O. U.-alumnus governor is doing an outstanding job of trying to run the state on a sound basis. The business men of Oklahoma will have a difficult time trying to find another governor who so nearly expresses their conception of what an administration should be.

Governor Phillips is an attorney by profession, a trial-court lawyer in ability to sway listeners, but a business-man in his viewpoint and sympathies. He puts it this way: The business men of the middle class pay the bills of government—they are the backbone of the country—so why shouldn't the state government show them some consideration?

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