

SOONER MAGAZINE

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Significant Test

Conditions are shaping up so that the action taken by the State of Oklahoma on the University's budget request for the 1945-47 biennium will be a clear test of whether or not Oklahoma really wants a first class state university, able to stand comparison with universities of surrounding states.

The State will be better able than at any time in history to give the University the financial support it really needs!

Governor Kerr, in his first annual report, stated last month that the State's bonded indebtedness can be retired very rapidly with the surplus funds now being accumulated; that if you consider the per capita indebtedness for both state and local government, Oklahoma already has one of the lowest per capita debts of the nation; and that it is quite possible that by the end of the present fiscal year, Oklahoma will have *the lowest per capita debt of any state in the Union!*

From every standpoint, the State will be able to give its system of higher education ample support.

The University's needs for 1945-47 are extensive, and imperative. Our buildings, our laboratories, our equipment, our faculty salary scale—all suffer in comparison to numerous other state universities of nearby states. It hurts to admit these things. But they are cold facts that cannot be ignored in planning adequately for the future.

The University has not had a real building program since the late Twenties. The salary scale has never recovered from the drastic slashes of the depression years. Maintenance funds have been repeatedly held to the very minimum, so that the physical plant has not been kept fully up to best standards, and funds for equipment have been so scarce that our laboratories are not nearly as modern as they should be.

All authorities agree that there will be a great increase in the number of college and university students immediately after the war. There already are a number of medically-discharged war veterans on the O. U. campus. Will the State of Oklahoma provide a real university for the postwar rush of students? Or will it let our best young people go to more attractive schools in other states, and in many cases keep their talents permanently in those states?

People spend their money on the things they really want. In 1945, we will find out whether the State of Oklahoma really believes in the value of university education.

We believe that Oklahoma, in thriving financial condition, will want to do a good job of building a fine state system of higher education, crowned with a great state university.

Good Selection

The appointment of George L. Cross, acting dean of the Graduate College, as acting president of the University effective January 1 has met widespread approval. The Board of Regents is to be congratulated for selecting a man who has had successful experience in educational administration, who is generally respected and liked by the faculty, and whose viewpoint is neither extremely liberal nor extremely conservative.

Alumni and the general public will feel better about the permanent appointment to be made later—regardless of who is chosen for it—because of the fact that the regents decided to appoint an acting president and thereby give themselves plenty of time to make a complete and comprehensive survey of outstanding educators throughout the country, as well as weighing carefully the merits of the most qualified men now on the University's staff.

The Cover

In response to an engineering alumnus' request, we feature the Engineering Building, decorated with a generous snow. Photo by Richard Meek.

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