

The President Speaks

By DR. GEORGE L. CROSS

In the last issue of the *Sooner Magazine*, I mentioned the possibility of 15,000, or even 18,000, students at O. U. by 1960. As this issue goes to press, we are doing what we can with limited funds to provide physical facilities for this greatly increased student body. During the past year, four large buildings or major additions to buildings have been completed on our campus.

Classes are now being held in the new Research Institute Building located on the south oval, across from the Biology Building. Offices and instructional facilities are being moved into the new classroom building farther south on the same oval.

Equipment is being installed in the new Press Building, and the large addition to the Engineering Building is now ready for occupancy. This addition to the Engineering Building is approximately twice the size of the original building.

A west wing on Holmberg Hall—consisting of air-conditioned and sound-proof practice rooms for the School of Music—is nearing completion.

The women's quadrangle, consisting of four large residential halls, with a centrally located lounge and dining hall, are being rushed to completion on a site immediately north of Sooner City. This new development for girls will provide housing for 848 coeds.

The total to date is ten major buildings or additions to buildings completed or under construction by the University of Oklahoma during the past year.

While this construction will make a substantial addition to our campus, it does not nearly meet the needs of a student body of 12,000 or 15,000. Architects are working this summer on the first wing of a geological and minerals industry building, which we hope to start building this fall. Bids will be received soon on a new heating plant, the total cost of which will be nearly \$2,000,000.

Union To Be Expanded

The Board of Directors of the Oklahoma Memorial Union are working on plans for a \$2,000,000 addition to the Union Building. The Union will be expanded, according to our plans, to the north and to the south.

The expansion to the south will mean the removal from the campus of the old wooden gymnasium, now popularly known as Kraepli Hall. In a great many respects, the Oklahoma Memorial Union Building is the most important and significant structure on the campus. It serves as a headquarters for most student activities, which are carried on outside of the classroom, and it is the social center of the campus.

Judging from the communications which come to my office from time to time, the history of the Union, and its relation to the University as a whole, are not well understood by the student body or even by the alumni. Questions are raised from time to time concerning these relationships, and it occurred to me that I might answer many of them in this article.

The Oklahoma Memorial Union is a chartered corporation. The land upon which the building stands is leased to the corporation by the Regents of the University of Oklahoma under authority granted by the Legislature of Oklahoma. The lease on the land is for 99 years. The corporation owns the building, for no state funds were ever appropriated either to build the structure or to operate it.

The present building is valued at approximately \$750,000, and it has been paid for in full. Of the

purchase price, approximately \$330,000 were contributed by alumni and citizens of Oklahoma, while the balance was paid from a compulsory student fee of four dollars per student each semester. Ownership and control of the Union Building thus resides in the Board of Governors of the Oklahoma Memorial Union. While the Board of Governors, under the Articles of Incorporation, has general supervision and administrative control of the Union Building and its operation, the University has a voice in these matters through the fact that the President of the University and the President of the Board of Regents serve on the Board of Governors. The Board selects the manager of the Union and approves the budget for each year.

Board Manages Affairs

Because the Board of Governors, for the most part, are not residents of Norman and, therefore, do not have an opportunity to meet frequently, the actual management of the Union Building is left to a Board of Managers, established in the Articles of Incorporation. The Board of Managers has general operational control of the building, and the University is represented on this board by the dean of students, the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, the president of the Student Senate, and the editor of the *Oklahoma Daily*.

The activities of the Oklahoma Memorial Union are planned and supervised by a Union Activity Board, which consists entirely of students. This board plans the entire program of student activities, and the program is then administered by a full time employee of the Union.

The question is frequently raised as to why the students should still be assessed the four dollar fee each semester, in view of the fact that the indebtedness on the building has been retired. This fee has been retained in order that a fund may be developed for an expansion of the present facilities. No part of the fee has ever been used for operational expenses. In the past, it has been used to retire the bonds and pay the interest on the bonds. The fees will be used in the future to retire indebtedness on the proposed addition. Anyone who has visited the campus recently will have had an opportunity to note the crowded conditions existing in the Union Building and the long lines of students waiting for cafeteria service. The proposed addition should provide efficient facilities to meet the needs of a student body numbering up to 12,000 students.

Under the able management of the manager of the Union, Ted Beaird, '21ba, the financial affairs of the institution have been kept in excellent condition. For more than 20 years, daily, monthly, and annual audited reports of the Union business affairs, and detailed reports of Union activities, have been available in the Union business office for student inspection at all times.

The Union Activity Board also publishes periodical reports. It is expected that the student representatives on the board will see that these reports are made available to the student body. The financial statements are mailed individually to all the members of the Board of Regents and to the members of the various boards of the Union. All reports are available for inspection at all times in the Union business office.



University Uses Building

For the past several years, through the indulgence of the Board of Governors, the University has been permitted to utilize certain quarters in the Union Building. The offices of the counselor of men and counselor of women have been located in the building for several years. However, this fall the counselors' offices will be moved to the third floor of the Administration Building, where the officers may work in closer co-operation with the director of student affairs and the administration of the University. With this space vacated, and with the additional space to be provided through our expansion program, it is expected that ample office space for all student activities will be available in the building.

The Union Building houses the offices of the Alumni Association. This is a most logical arrangement, because it is the function of the Alumni Association to act as a liaison between the University and the public, and because the Union Building was conceived and brought into existence by active and interested alumni. With nearly 80,000 ex-students as potential members of the Association, the opportunity of the Association to render service to the University, and thereby to the state, is great.

The present membership in the Association is relatively high, but a far greater number of our alumni should be members of the Association. The University of Oklahoma is making tremendous progress in many ways, and its service to the state increases yearly; but its potentialities are certainly not as yet realized. Only with the loyalty, encouragement and active support of its ex-student body, can it develop fully and render the service to the state of which it is capable.

The existence of the Union Building has long provided a nerve center for the activities of the Alumni Association. The result has been a much greater growth and increased usefulness on the part of the University than would have been possible without this facility.

To those intrepid alumni who had the imagination, initiative and drive to develop the idea of a Student Union and push it to a culmination so many years ago, I express my hearty congratulations and sincere appreciation.

When J. L. Rader was appointed University librarian in 1908, the O. U. library contained 500 volumes. Today there are 290,000 books in the general library, 150,000 pamphlets and more than 9,000 volumes of governmental documents.

Dr. Robert A. Hardin, University industrial education professor, is chairman of a committee chosen to edit the state bulletin entitled "Industrial Expansion."

Clyde J. Bollinger, University associate geography professor, started his teaching career as a rural school teacher in Michigan.

Harold Keith, sports publicity director at the University, served as a staff member of the *Alva Record* from 1923 to 1925. Previously, he was seventh grade teacher at Amorita, Oklahoma.