

For the Southwest, a Shower of Information

The University's Institute of Asiatic Affairs and its director are providing a better understanding of conditions in an important area.

Teeming millions of Orientals crowd Americans into a small minority of the world's population. And Dr. Percy W. Buchanan, director of the Institute of Asiatic Affairs, believes these millions must be reckoned with and understood in the expanding world of the atomic age.

A dynamo of intellectual energy, Dr. Buchanan is splattering information about the Orient over Oklahoma and the Southwest. Since the institute was founded at the University in 1948, he has spoken before from five to nine civic and scholastic groups a week. Now he's added a weekly broadcast on University radio station WNAD. Titled "The Orient in the News," the broadcasts interpret events in the Far East.

O.U.'s Institute of Asiatic Affairs is the first of its kind in the southwestern states. Its heads its purposes with the intent to stimulate interest in Oriental studies in the University, state and the Southwest. It also serves as a central agency to which the University and state can refer questions regarding the Orient.

Dr. Buchanan has launched a program to utilize the O.U. staff in specialized fields of oriental study. Courses on the Orient are now offered in art, history, philosophy, government, geography and modern languages. Courses in other departments and schools are being planned.

"Ultimately, we plan to have a curriculum which will enable O.U.'s students to specialize in oriental study," Dr. Buchanan explains.

Dr. Buchanan is now teaching the University's first courses in Chinese and Japanese history. Japanese language courses were offered by the modern languages department for the first time this year. And a non-credit course in Chinese is being taught with the intent of introducing it into the curriculum when it is thoroughly organized.

Correspondence courses in beginning Chinese and Japanese are offered through the University's correspondence classes. These courses, conducted through the mail, fit into the plan to expand the institute's facilities to the entire Southwest.

Speaking in clipped syllables, Dr. Buchanan declares, "The Southwest is a virgin area so far as oriental studies are concerned."

To fill in this intellectual gap, he has carefully planned a year-by-year program for the institute. The present plan is aimed at making Oklahomans conscious of the Orient and its problems. A well-filled black book listing speaking engagements for weeks to come indicates the enthusiasm with which Dr. Buchanan is tackling this phase of his program.

When the Oklahoma lectures are completed, there are speaking requests to be filled in neighboring states.

Dr. Buchanan's backlog of oriental information isn't the arm-chair variety. He was born in Takamatsu, Japan, where his father was stationed as a missionary. And his grass-roots familiarity with the Orient was acquired during the 30 years he has spent as a teacher and missionary in the Far East.

A man of many interests, Dr. Buchanan has a bachelor of music degree and a bachelor of divinity degree from Union Seminary in Richmond,



DR. PERCY BUCHANAN

Virginia. After his graduation in the United States, he returned to Nagoya, Japan, to teach music and English in Kinjo College. Later, he came back to the States to acquire a master's degree and a Phd in linguistics from Princeton.

In addition to his work as a teacher and linguist in Japan, he served as a Presbyterian missionary. He has been an ordained minister since 1925.

In 1937 the Japanese forced him to leave Mongolia. He was in China doing linguistic research for the American Philosophical Society. And it was only fast talking in the oriental tongue that enabled him to keep the ancient Mongolian manuscripts he carried.

The next time he tangled with the Japanese army his musical ability saved his neck. When he was apprehended in Formosa, he sang Nipponese folk songs for his captors. They liked his singing and let him go. The Japs liked his singing so well on Okinawa that they gave him a police escort and offered to assist in his research.

Another contact with the Japanese army was not so pleasant. He was in Shanghai on "Bloody Sunday," the day the Japanese first bombed the city.

During World War II Buchanan headed the army intelligence language school in Washington, D. C. And for a year after V-J Day, he directed counter intelligence training in Japan.

He returned to the United States to direct the Institute of Asiatic Affairs at the University of Colorado for a year. Then he joined the O.U. faculty in 1948.

Dr. Buchanan admits his teaching and speaking activities keep him busy. But he finds time to work on a mammoth Japanese-English dictionary. Begun more than six years ago, the dictionary uses a different classification system from that of

any Japanese-English dictionary yet published. He believes it will be a great help to English-speaking students studying Japanese.

His other contributions to the Japanese language field include a dictionary of Japanese business terms and a grammar of modern written Japanese. In addition to his books on language, Dr. Buchanan took time in 1935 to exercise his musical talents. He wrote *Simon Peter*, an oratorio.

When Dr. Buchanan speaks of books, his bright blue eyes gleam with enthusiasm. A collection of literature to make for an understanding of the Orient is another of the institute's projects.

Smiling, he says, "I have written to O.U. graduates located in the Orient, asking that they collect native language books for the institute." Then he produces letters from O.U. alumni which list books they are sending.

The Institute of Asiatic Affairs which Dr. Buchanan is building is patterned along lines of others scattered over America. But it is only in recent years that these centers of oriental study came into existence.

"Less than 10 years ago, there were only 15 persons in the United States who specialized in teaching Asiatic affairs," Dr. Buchanan recalls. Today there are 170.

This increase in Asiatic specialists reflects a growing interest in world government, Dr. Buchanan believes.

With a meditative frown, Dr. Buchanan explains, "We Americans represent a minority in the world population, and we must learn to understand the problems of the millions of people in Asia."

The O.U. Institute of Asiatic Affairs hopes to develop a means for an understanding.

American Story Told

Voice of America has been far less successful in selling Americans on its indispensability than it has been in telling the American story to people of the world.

Ernst Erich Noth, former Voice of America advisor and now editor of *Books Abroad* at the University, told visitors to the Fifth Annual OU Radio conference that no public service can be successfully performed without public support.

Voice of America and the part it plays in the battle for peace waged over the international airwaves is "far from being a success story." He believes lack of public endorsement is the principal cause. Emphasizing that the U.S. must find an antidote for Moscow's poisoning of the minds and undermining of morale of free countries, Noth says that Voice of America, as the only instrument available, must be developed into a bigger and better tool.

"It is not enough," he says, "for Voice of America to project the physical, material features of this country or to translate in all languages of the world the official statements of our government." The basic requirements, he says, is to propagate faith in our free institutions, our democratic way of life and our humanistic ideals.