

Under Cover

The "Loyalty Oath," passed by the present state legislature, has drawn comment from several University faculty members and from President George L. Cross. The editor presents the text of the "Oath" and expresses his views on the measure.

By David Burr

The loyalty oath or "non-communist" oath, recently passed by the state legislature and hesitantly signed by Gov. Johnston Murray, has drawn fire from the University and in turn the University has been the recipient of some well-barbed remarks.

Drawn into the controversy because of two provisions in the bill, Dr. George Cross contacted the Governor's legal counsel with the request that the bill be recalled by the legislature so that they might revise those provisions which he believed were unconstitutional.

Immediately the holiday for Romans began. Newspapers tended to imply the University administration was opposed to the entire loyalty oath idea. State senators and legislators strongly hinted that there were, at the very least, pinks all over the campus and that Dr. Cross was aiding and abetting the Communists. The implications could have been no further from the truth.

For the purpose of clarity the entire loyalty oath is reprinted as follows: "I, (name), do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the constitution of the United States and the constitution of the state of Oklahoma against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the constitution of the United States and the constitution of the state of Oklahoma; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties upon which I am about to enter.

"And I do further swear (or affirm) that I do not advocate, nor am I a member of any party or organization, political or otherwise, that now advocates the overthrow of the government of the United States or of the state of Oklahoma by force or violence or other unlawful means;" (up to this point no objection has been raised) "that I am not affiliated directly or indirectly with the Communist party, the Third Communist International, with any foreign political agency, party, organization or government, or with any agency, party, organization, association, or other group whatever which has been officially determined by the United States attorney general or other

authorized agency of the United States to be a communist front or subversive organization; nor do I advocate revolution, teach or justify a program of sabotage, force or violence, sedition or treason, against the government of the United States or of this state; nor do I advocate directly or indirectly, teach or justify by any means whatsoever, the overthrow of the government of the United States or of this state, or change in the form of government thereof, by force or any unlawful means; that I will take up arms in the defense of the United States in time of war, or national emergency, if necessary; that within the five years immediately preceding the taking of this oath (or affirmation) I have not been a member of the Communist party, the Third Communist International, or any agency, party, organization, association, or group whatever which has been officially determined by the United States attorney general or other authorized public agency of the United States to be a communist front or subversive organization, or of any party or organization, political or otherwise, that advocated overthrow of the government of the United States or the state of Oklahoma by force or violence or other unlawful means;

"And I do further swear (or affirm) that during such time as I am (insert 'an employe of' and name department) I will not advocate and that I will not become a member of any party or organization, political or otherwise, that advocates the overthrow of the government of the United States or of the state of Oklahoma by force or violence or other unlawful means."

It is difficult to see, however much a citizen might be in sympathy with the idea of the oath, how legislators would let such a bill be passed. Without drawing the discussion out ad infinitum, consider merely the two provisions which did draw fire from President Cross (again I say, he did not oppose a loyalty oath. He did oppose two specific provisions of the oath as now written.)

1. The provision which requires bearing of arms makes no provision for con-

scientious objectors. Being a conscientious objector does not imply disloyalty in itself and this provision does violate certain religious faiths.

2. The clause that begins "that within five years" and continues to make the definition of loyalty subsequent to the decision of the United States attorney general or of other authorized public agency of the United States. Not only does the state relinquish its right to determine what is loyal and disloyal but does not specifically name the agencies who may determine what is loyal and disloyal.

In addition let me point out that there is no provision written into the bill to provide for foreign professors. Perhaps the legislature intended to rule out the hiring of foreign instructors. It seems more likely, however, that no thought was given to this type of provision.

The portion dealing with membership in a "subversive organization" within the past five years does not smack of very good Americanism to me. Retroactive censure becomes persecution if an individual belonged to such an organization in good faith, and with no subversive purposes in mind, and resigned from such an organization when its objectives became known.

For some people, this editorial will seem like quibbling. Yet I cannot believe that thinking people will believe our fear of disloyalty should reach the pitch that requires two wrongs to make a right.

If the oath required the swearing of allegiance to the U. S. and Oklahoma, and the denying of any connection or sympathy for communism, that's fine. If it requires the relinquishing of fundamental, constitutional rights that's another.

Reunions

June 3 and 4 are the days set aside for reunions of the classes of 1906, '11, '16, '21 and '22, '26, '31, '36, '41, '46 and '47. A reservation blank and the complete program will be featured in the May issue of *Sooner Magazine*. If you are a member of one of the classes listed above, why not plan your vacation to coincide with the reunions and look over the campus and visit with old friends.

All alumni who graduated in the class of 1901 or before are urged to attend. The class of 1901 will be initiated into membership in the Honored Alumni Club as will others who graduated 50 or more years ago but have not attended recent reunions.