

# Under Cover

The world that the graduates of the Class of 1951 inherits is neither as good as many would like it to be nor as bad as some believe it to be. The editor appraises the conditions the new alumni face following graduation June 4, 1951.

By David Burr, '50

The announcements have gone out.

From rural areas to cities, college and highschool students are walking across stages and platforms to receive a form that says they have completed the "prescribed requirements."

Commencement time is a peculiar and frustrating time of the year. A time for sentiment for some. For others, rejoicing. Some would turn back to try again; others believe the process known as education has given them all it has to hold.

Whatever the reaction for the moment may be, it is tempered by what day after tomorrow holds. Or perhaps, merely tomorrow. No two graduating classes have found tomorrow the same. As state and world situations shift, men and women have to make a new evaluation.

Twenty years ago, the problem was graduates but no jobs. Ten years ago, it was merely a question of how soon would the men be in the army and which women would fill the vacant spots.

Today's graduates are a peculiar breed. Unlike those of ten years ago, the directions marked for the men indicate a forked road. For most women who desire a career, the chances were never brighter.

What's in store for most men can be summed up by a look at three case histories. These graduating men are not someone else's sons, brothers, cousins, distant relatives. Though not held by blood ties, they are a part of each of us. They belong to us and we to them. Their success or their failure is ours. In turn, they have inherited all of our failures and our successes. The harvest they have reaped is obvious.

There's Jim. He's 21 and looks 18. He comes from a farm background. He's like many another young graduate. Lacking the full stature of maturity, he simulates the experience he lacks. Although he doesn't know exactly the time or the place, he does know that soon he will start serving a hitch with the Airforce. Jim's going to be commissioned a lieutenant when he graduates as a result of his training in the Air ROTC program. His plans for the future are nebulous. One job at a time.

Consider Glenn. He's married and has

no ROTC record. He missed the last war by a few months and would not appear scheduled for the draft because of marriage. He is in line though because he was married only a short time ago—after the deadline set in the present draft policy. Glenn worked his way through school. He could continue on with his firm on a full time basis or he could stay on the campus to get the advanced degree he considers so important. Marriage poses an additional problem. He can no longer live his life for a day at a time. He needs to make plans. He can't.

Or Basil. A veteran of the last war, Basil didn't hold enough rank to make the reserves seem advisable. An individualist, he entered school and refused to work at "making contacts." When the time came for interviews with major business concerns he was ready. He was quickly picked up for a position as a junior executive trainee by a major concern. His training and education will have a chance to prove themselves within a short time. His future seems to be as secure as any 20-25 year old. He's lucky. He knows it.

Most case histories have their own subtle shadings. Yet most would fit basically one of the three patterns.

Today's graduate faces certainty in the midst of uncertainty. Perhaps it was always so.

## A Little Less Difficult

Leif Olsen, editor of the student *Oklahoma Daily*, took time out the other day to give the *Sooner* editor a piece of advice concerning alumni and their views of undergraduate life on the campus.

I think it's worth passing along.

"Some time say to the alumni that they would have less difficulty understanding the moods or apparent whims of the student body if they would stop to consider themselves as former students rather than graduates or alumni.

"It's not, I don't believe, a matter of hair-splitting. The titles of graduates and alum-

ni seem to bear with them a positive separation from the University. Former student automatically tends to recall undergraduate activity and a look at the University's history seems to indicate that undergraduates have always had problems that were difficult for the off campus viewer to understand."

It seems to me, Leif has an excellent suggestion. When you as former students read of a student protest, strike or eruption, you should remember that there were protests and rumors of protests when you were enrolled. It is nonsense to believe the student body is "going to the dogs." But more important, if you would remember your former campus days, you would also feel closer to the University. You are not a race apart. You were here.

## Dear John . . .

With this issue, John Wagoner, '51ba, feature editor, completes his work on the staff of *Sooner Magazine*. A recent initiate of Phi Beta Kappa and the outstanding journalism senior, John will remain on the campus during the summer to start work on a graduate degree and to become editor of *Sooner State Press*.

It is difficult for me to express my appreciation for his work on the magazine. I'm sure that the association has been a happy one for the staff, for alumni readers and, I believe, for John.

## Song of the Pitchman

Every so often we make a pitch for two things—1) changes of address 2) news items for the *Sooner Magazine*. The need for the first is obvious. Without proper addresses there would be little reason for an Alumni Office or for a magazine. It takes just a moment's time to let us know when you move.

Each month we mail out letters to alumni asking them for the latest information about themselves, their family or their alumni friends. It is impossible to write each alumnus or alumna monthly or even yearly. So we use the magazine as a means of communicating directly with everyone and urge you to write us. It's the easiest possible way to let your alumni friends know what you are doing by sending one letter—to us. To the younger graduates, who may not have submitted anything to the magazine because you feared it lacked news worthiness, let the staff decide. We seldom decide against anything connected with the alumni. We need pictures also. An individual shot or one showing alumni at work or play is desirable.