

ASIA Challenges America

In a powerful presentation, the author tells what America must do if she is to meet the challenge. First of a series of alumni reports.

By EARNEST HOBerecht, '41journ

EDITOR'S NOTE: For 11 years Earnest Hoberecht, '41journ, has been covering Asian affairs. As United Press vice president and general manager for Asia, he is one of the best informed men in the Far East today. Recently he made another complete tour of the Asian area he knows so well. Here is his report, based on his observations and conversations with hundreds of persons in both high and humble places.

Asia is challenging the United States to prove it really believes in "Democracy."

This is no "tea party" challenge; it is a "chips down" affair. The stakes are high: Who gets Asia?

In many ways the challenge is quite fair; in many ways it is like a pair of loaded dice.

It is a fair challenge because Americans believe in Democracy and believe their Democracy and their way of life will stand the test.

But in another way, it's a low blow. The challenge frequently is hurled by a sincere man who is so filled with emotion and half truths that he is unprepared to give due credit even when he receives the perfect answer.

So, I put the word "Democracy" in quotation marks in the first sentence for a very definite reason. Democracy means many things to many men.

Perhaps the average American doesn't realize this as completely as one who has lived abroad a number of years. The fact

is emphasized by the interest of foreign friends who want a quick definition of the word.

Just when you think you have a few perfect, pat phrases which will turn the trick, you bump into a character who asks one simple question that throws you for a loop.

Remember there is "Democracy" in North Korea and Communist China according to the governing regimes in those areas. The Communists probably use the word more times in a 15-minute newscast than any five U. S. radio stations put together. When the Communists speak of Democracy, they are not talking about the wonderful way of life we Americans enjoy. They are describing the fine "Democratic" life they "enjoy" behind the Iron Curtain.

Asians hear the American version and they hear the Communist version. Some are impressed by what Moscow, Peiping and Pyongyang say. The promises frequently sound very good—often superior to the promises being made by the Free World.

"Democratic" life at the Communist end of the rainbow sounds much better than life as it actually is lived in some areas of Asia where there is no escaping the reality of today.

This is the challenge the Free World must meet in Asia. Our reality must compete against the sometimes naive hopes of the awakening Asians and the calculated promises of the Communists.

It does no good to argue that such a

challenge is unfair. It exists. It must be met.

Until the Communists take over a country, they do not have to make good on their promises. By the time they take over, they are in such firm control that it does the local native population little good to protest the Red failure to fulfill.

The age of the common man which swept through Europe and America has reached Asia. Asians are looking for the end of the rainbow—socially, politically and economically. And they want to get there in a hurry.

There are various driving forces, some more powerful than the others.

The Asian people are tired of being treated like "poor relations." Today they are like the kids in the neighborhood who haven't had enough equipment to get in the main ball game. They are starting a team of their own, even if they don't have the same fancy balls, bats and gloves.

Even if they don't have a rule book, they are going to play. They may make mistakes, but they will have fun making them in their own happy way.

On a recent tour of 10 Asian countries, I found there was one feeling which seemed to dominate the people everywhere: "We want to belong."

During the past decade I have stood on the cold stone steps of the Forbidden City, crossed the deserts of India, watched the steam rising from the jungles of Burma and floated down rivers in Siam on Imperial barges. From Japan to Jakarta and

from Cambodia to Karachi, I have talked with thousands of Asians who not only *want* to "belong," they *demand* it.

They want to be accepted; they want to be treated as equals and they intend that it shall be this way from here on out.

I have talked with many Americans, including diplomatic and military officials on the scene, who now believe this feeling accounts at least to a certain extent for Korean President Syngman Rhee's anti-armistice stand this past summer.

"I felt right along President Rhee would agree to the United Nations plan being put forward by the United States," one American in Korea told me. "But it was evident the Korean President enjoyed the situation and was in no hurry to give in. He was pleased with the thought of having high American officials beating a path to his door—practically begging him to agree to an armistice he knew was inevitable."

In numerous public statements, Rhee and other high Korean officials made it plain they felt the United States and the United Nations military authorities had by-passed them in the armistice planning. They felt left out. Rightly or wrongly, they thought they were being treated as "inferiors" and had been "taken for granted."

Rhee's stubborn old revolutionary spirit boiled. He wanted to prove to the world—and to himself—that he was important. And there is no doubt about it, his "standing up" to the United States and the United Nations won him quite a bit of respect in many Asian quarters.

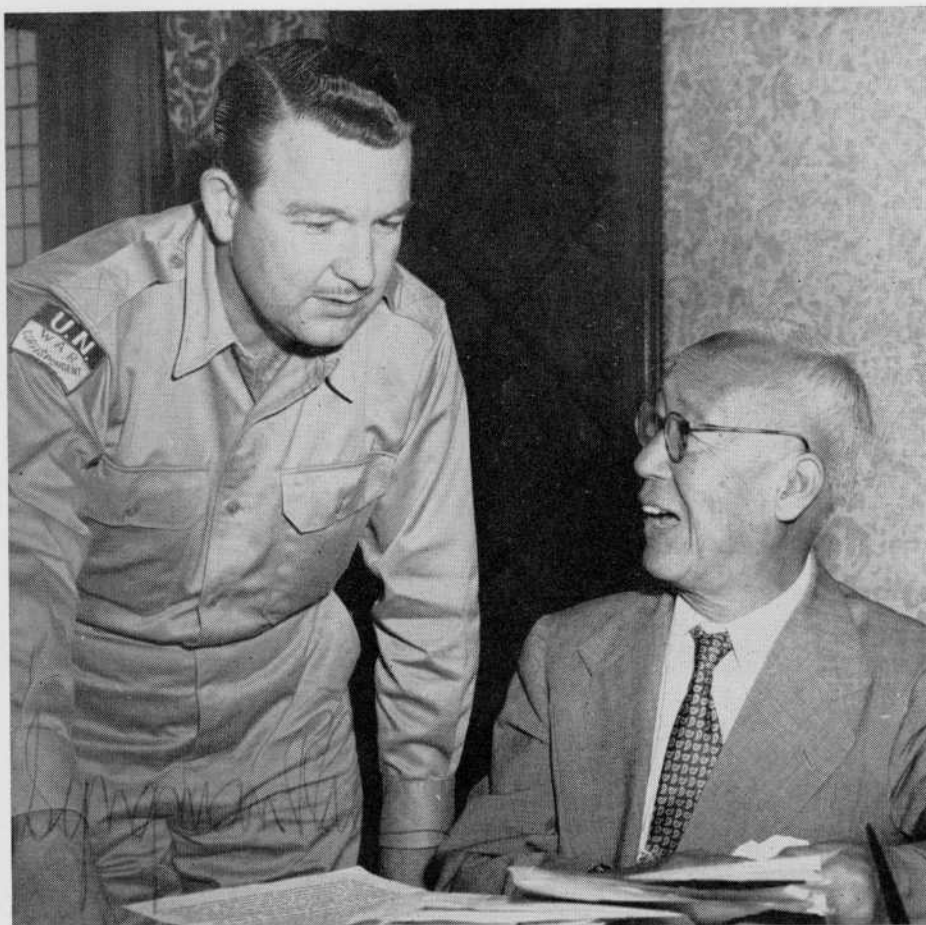
Rhee was determined to show the Americans he was an equal and had to be treated as such. He demanded and finally got the kind of treatment he wanted.

This atmosphere isn't confined to Northeast Asia. I found it in India and elsewhere. And recent statements by Prime Minister Nehru of India have all hit one theme: "The world must pay more attention to what the people of Asia want."

It is too simple to say America faces this or that specific problem in Asia today. Most certainly, one of the main problems confronting the Americans is the need to make honest friends and to demonstrate that the people of the 48 states today are honestly ready in practice to live up to their own American Constitution.

In the intervening years since our own American Revolution, we have come to consider our Constitutional government as conservative rather than revolutionary. But in Asia, our Constitution appears quite revolutionary to many in the area who only today are reaching the stage of revolt against colonialism.

Because of bad selling on our part—or perhaps due to successful Communist prop-



AUTHOR AND SYNGMAN RHEE. Hoberecht says Asians want to belong and points to Rhee's stubborn anti-armistice stand as an example. "Rhee was determined to show the Americans he was an equal and had to be treated as such. He demanded and finally got the kind of treatment he wanted." Rhee autographed the picture for Hoberecht. Note signature in lower left corner.

aganda—the average Asian today believes we have forgotten our Constitution.

Many Asians look upon all Americans as ultra-conservative supporters of colonial regimes and exploiters of working people the world over.

Few Asians are aware of the fact the American people themselves once fought a revolution for freedom—just as the Asians are doing, one way or another, today.

Freedom is coming rapidly to many of these people. Several Asian nations have gained their independence since the conclusion of World War II. The United States has actively encouraged and supported some of these independence movements. But the United States gets little credit. On the contrary, it seems to get plenty of blame.

Travelling around this wide area where about half of the world's people reside, I find many serious-minded Americans wondering where Uncle Sam dropped the ball.

The United States certainly favored India's independence, but today the Indians view Americans with a great deal of sus-

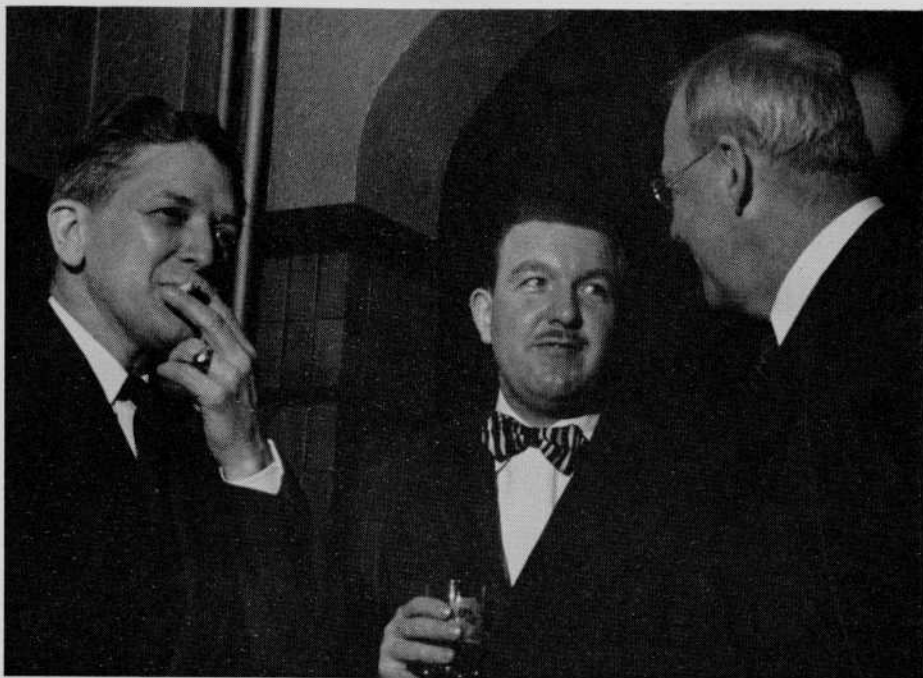
picion and the USA is not considered India's closest friend.

"Both we Americans and the Indians got our independence from England," a prominent American businessman in Bombay said to me, "and you would think this might give us a lot in common. It doesn't. We had the inside track, but we lost out. Today, the British have won India's friendship but we haven't."

The United States strongly supported Indonesian independence, but Americans in Indonesia today are not welcomed with open arms. The Indonesians view Americans with almost as much suspicion as they do the Dutch, their former rulers. And the Dutch blame the USA for their having lost the rich island empire.

There are parallel situations in many other places in Asia. America, with her best intentions, missed the boat.

The situation is not the same in every country and generalizations in this case—as in most others—are dangerous. However, prominent American diplomatic and military leaders, as well as individual American citizens, have told me privately they are alarmed by the general lack of



AUTHOR AND AMERICAN LEADERS. Hoberecht, United Press vice president, chats with Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and William J. Sebald, U.S. Ambassador to Burma, at a reception in Tokyo. The author says America's initial answer to Asia's challenge is to "clearly and vigorously demonstrate to the Asians they are wanted as friends . . . partners in a dynamic Union. . ."

active friendship and by the reduced prestige America enjoys in Asia today.

Nobody appears to have a cure-all formula for overcoming America's difficulties. Nobody is quite sure how we can prove we really are "democratic" . . . if that is what it takes.

The weakness in the American position, according to some who are willing to venture an opinion on the matter, is due to many things.

Some of the experts are inclined to blame "ignorance" for many of the current headaches.

The United States has spent millions of dollars supplying Asian nations with food and various types of equipment. Thousands of tons of assistance of almost every form have gone to almost every country.

But much of the goodwill the United States could have expected to have received in return has not been forthcoming. Why?

Some people argue that charity never is appreciated. Others say this aid would have made more friends if the local people had been fully aware of what was happening. There is a lot of evidence to indicate millions of Asians weren't fully informed about America's motives and purposes.

The illiteracy rate in some countries in Asia is extremely high. In other countries where large numbers of the people can read, the newsprint shortage is so desperate there is little or no room in the newspapers to tell the American story.

The newspapers have plenty of news to print. The full story of what is happening

in the United States and the rest of the world is available to them. The United Press, for example, distributes throughout Asia every day enough news to fill even a large American newspaper. Other American press associations also deliver large news files to many of the Asian nations.

Unfortunately, only a few editors, in many cases, see all this news. The papers are just too small; most of the dispatches are thrown away.

Some information on America reaches the people via radio, but not much in most areas. There are a few countries—such as Japan—with many radio sets. But most Asian nations have only a handful of radios per thousand people.

A pro-American editor in Burma said the American aid program to Burma (which the Burmese stopped) might have been very successful if the masses could have been fully informed.

"A few shipments of newsprint—along with your other aid—should be standard operating procedure," he said. "Help the local editors tell the American story by giving them enough columns to do so. Let the masses know what you are trying to do. Let them hear about your democratic activities."

This editor pointed out that most editors would be happy to pay for the newsprint if it were made available to them.

His suggestion, even though perhaps very good, is not a new idea. In China, the Communist organs never seemed to suffer the newsprint shortage which hounded all

other publishers. There always was enough newsprint to tell Moscow's story.

Almost all Asians agree on one thing: The United States should spell out its foreign policy, clearly and often. And, as much as possible, there should be continuity on which other governments can count—an announced long range program which will serve as a basis for planning and co-operation.

U. S. domestic policy and politics frequently are misunderstood by Asians who cannot differentiate between what goes on inside the United States and what the United States wants and does abroad.

Asians can't understand why America spends millions building up the economy of a country and then throws up tariff barriers against the products which that country must sell in the United States to keep its economy going.

They can't understand restrictions on immigration quotas, or quotas which they believe discriminate against Asians.

Often they can't understand the behavior of Americans living abroad in almost complete disregard for local customs and traditions.

In this connection, it is necessary to point out that these "revolutionary" Asians—these people who want and demand independence for their own countries—sometimes are extremely conservative in other ways.

By virtue of their own background and conditions in their part of the world, they sometimes are confused by "The American Way of Life" and completely baffled by the so-called "big debates" in the United States.

For one thing, the mere fact we Americans claim to follow democratic methods is not proof to all people that we are "Democratic."

Many persons in Asia can't always understand why opposition politicians are permitted to hack away at the government and baffled by conflicting statements by members of the same political parties.

Just as Americans make mistakes when they try to judge Asia by American standards, so do Asians make mistakes when they try to judge America by Asian standards.

A frequent charge made privately by Asian officials is that the Americans try to "take over" every government they set out to assist.

The complaint usually runs something like this:

"The Americans come to help. They want to give advice. The advice winds up consisting of their insisting everything be

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Covering the Campus . . .

The 1953 Campus Chest drive lid was blown off November 2 and lasted through November 6. Joyce Gregory and Doug Fox, both from Oklahoma City, were co-chairmen. Highlight of the drive was the traditional carnival held in Woodrow Wilson Center. All proceeds of the drive is put aside in one fund and is appropriated to the different charity drives held throughout the year.

Doris Fleeson, Washington correspondent, will be guest speaker at the annual Matrix Table dinner November 19 sponsored by Theta Sigma Phi. Miss Fleeson's topic will be "Women's Status in a Changing World." Awards for the outstanding Sooner coed, faculty member and state woman will be awarded by Martha Plummer, Bixby, president of the professional women's journalism fraternity. Miss Grace E. Ray, '20ba, '23ma, associate professor of journalism, is Theta Sigma Phi sponsor.

Other well-known figures visiting the campus recently were Senator Mike Monroney, '24ba, and Muhyiddin Nusuli, editor and publisher of a Lebanon newspaper. Senator Monroney spoke to the Oklahoma College Democrats.

Nusuli was a guest of the Journalism School while on campus. He came from the Middle East to America with 19 other Moslem scholars to attend the Colloquium on Islamic Culture at Princeton University.

The 1953-54 Celebrity Series program was launched October 20-21 with the appearance of Charles Laughton, famed stage and screen star. Hundreds of students, faculty members and Norman and Oklahoma City residents filled Holmberg Hall for the performance entitled "An Evening With Charles Laughton."

Don Lane, '52ba, senior law student from Pampa, Texas, is student chairman for the series. Other celebrities scheduled to appear include Cesare Siepi, November 18-19; Jascha Heifetz, January 13-14; Jennie Tourel, February 2-3, and Jack Lowe and Arthur Whittmore, March 18-19.

John Malone, '37ba, extension specialist, is faculty manager for the series.

Bowl-hungry students are already making big plans for a Florida New Year's weekend in anticipation of Big Red winning the Big Seven championship, and consequently getting a bid to play in the Orange Bowl game, Miami, Florida. The recent bowl tie-up between the Atlantic Coast and Big Seven Conferences created the early speculation.

Big Red's victory over the Texas Long-



CLEE FITZGERALD, '49ba, '51Law, Stillwater, former Dad's Day trophy winner, may be back on the stand in 1973 to watch daughter Mary Lynn carry off the honors. She's already won as far as he's concerned. Mrs. Fitzgerald is the former Jennie Locke, '40ba, '41Lib.sci.

horns October 10 is past history, but the pleasant thoughts of the annual Dallas trip is still lingering in everyone's mind. The newly formed Pep Council, spearheaded by Jordan Cohen, Kansas City, and Fred Cook, Holdenville, presented a petition to the Board of Regents requesting a holiday be granted if we won the game. It was not granted.

Asia Challenges America . . .

made over according to the American pattern."

Asians not only resent it, but the idea is completely impractical.

This mode of behavior raises doubts as to America's democratic intentions and overlooks some very realistic obstacles.

The background of most Asian areas is vastly different from that of the 48 states, and the material resources—for just one thing—either are lacking or tremendously underdeveloped. For another thing, you can't switch from 16th century practices to idealistic 21st century techniques overnight. Evolution and education have to play some role.

The fact that many of these Asian nations now have gained their independence does not mean they are now in a position to operate governments along lines which match those of the United States and England. Neither does it mean they can operate armies or build dams the same as we.

Like the 13 original American colonies, they have far to go.

"The trouble with many Americans," a Filipino publisher friend told me, "is their readiness to speak with authority on any subject and their eagerness to criticize

anything and everything not exactly like that 'back home.'

"Things are different here in Asia. You just can't judge all of Asia by your own 1953 standards. That just won't work.

"Further, remember public criticism does not always make friends. If you must criticize, remember you taught us Filipinos many of the things we know today. Stop talking down to us.

"Think before you speak. Asians have feelings. Just like you, we can be offended."

Some of America's diplomatic representatives in Asia voice the private opinion that too much of their affairs are rigidly controlled by Washington. Some claim this long-distance diplomacy, made possible by modern communications, tends to follow a theoretical formula and fails to allow enough give-and-take by competent men on the spot.

But everything is not adverse. America does have a great many friends in Asia. It would like to have more.

America has won diplomatic battles. It would like to win more.

The United States retains considerable prestige as a result of the military victories of World War II.

The material strength of the United States is respected although there are people who are tremendously envious and jealous and who resent the manner in which most Americans abroad display their position and high standard of living.

America's aid programs have been highly appreciated by millions of Asians who literally have been saved from starvation. However, some of these same people believe the United States attaches too many strings to its gifts.

Strong American leadership, whenever it is displayed, is highly commended by most Asians and appreciated.

The very nature of Americans, themselves, is one of the great assets America has to exploit in Asia. Americans are naturally friendly and good-natured. But this quality, too, sometimes is misunderstood by Asians who have been raised under vastly different codes of public and private behavior. Sometimes the most friendly and best-intended gestures of Americans backfire because these acts do not fit into the local pattern of life.

Undoubtedly, it would be impossible for the United States and all Americans abroad to overcome all their faults. It would be impossible for the United States to solve all problems, or to overcome all objections.

And I believe our Asian friends, too, will admit they are not completely perfect.

Most thinking Americans agree there are a few major points which merit effort. If the United States wants to win the

friendship of Asia, Americans must earn this right by accepting Asians as equals. Asia is anxious to be treated as a full partner and undoubtedly could be counted on for more assistance in almost any program if encouraged to co-operate on such a basis.

Much of the success of the Communists is due to their ability to get across that intangible feeling of "belonging." Communists have a unity of purpose, they are going somewhere, they have a common bond.

America is being challenged to come up with something better. America is being challenged to prove it wants Asia's friendship.

Once the United States has proved to the Asians it wants their democratic friendship, the United States will be in a position to take a second step. Many experts on Asian affairs believe the second step is necessary if Communism is to be defeated.

The second step is this: A full-fledged, free-swinging, all-out wide open campaign to sell Capitalism.

Combatting Communism is not enough. We must sell Capitalism, the only real hope for the millions of poverty stricken citizens of the Asian nations.

We must sell "Capitalism for the Common Man" just as the Russians are selling Communism.

Americans know what Capitalism has given them—the highest standard of living in the world. We must convince the Asians that Capitalism—not Communism—can do the same for them.

In a sense, the American slogan can be "Capitalism Makes Every Man Rich." Compared with most people of Asia, almost all Americans are "rich." Certainly, we could help Asia lift itself out of the hole.

A sales campaign of this nature will not be easy. "Capitalism" has a bad name in many areas in Asia. Capitalism as practiced by some of the native capitalists—and the former colonial powers—has an evil reputation.

The United States must sell "American Capitalism"—the kind that develops natural resources, raises the standards of living, provides families with basic needs and some of the luxuries of life.

To do this, America must have friends—influential people such as government leaders, editors, teachers and others who will "sell" American Capitalism with as much drive and enthusiasm as local Communists are selling Communism.

So, America's initial program in Asia today is this: To clearly and vigorously demonstrate to the Asians they are wanted as friends, full and equal partners in a dynamic union of free and prosperous men.

Campus Vignette

The Coffee Break

By DOROTHY SHULER

"I still haven't made up my mind about the one platoon system. Now, look at last week's game. . ."

"I'm not doing anything about raising hemlines yet, Paris or no Paris."

"It will be interesting to follow the development of the bases in Spain. . . I rather doubt the feasibility of such a program. . ."

"Bring me another cup while you are up, Tom. I like a little cream."

While it is not listed in the University class schedule, the "coffee break" is as much a part of O.U. as red and white. It is the time for refreshment, relaxation, reflection and, yes, romance.

The four R's of the coffee break are listed, however, as required courses in the curricula for the School of Campusology, which confers a Bachelor of Campusology degree after two years of regular attendance or 360 hours of elbow bending at the Union. (It has been known for a few eager souls to receive their B.C. by mid-term of their freshman year, but advisors do not recommend this for those seeking degrees in other schools.)

"Meet you at the Union about ten?"

Students find time each day to make their way to the Union. Here, one can "fortify himself" or easily kill time before an 11 o'clock. Here, one may glean first hand information about the Team, a psych test, who's been seen with whom, the Kinsey report, politics and the other infinite variety of subjects the coffee drinker delights in exploring, hearing about or making profound observations about. Here, Big Deals are born, nurtured and buried.

Processions of small classes often arrive en masse. Over a coffee cup, the professor continues to project certain points of his philosophy he introduced in class. The pleasant, informal experience enables the student and the professor to know one another better.

In contrast, the dewey-eyed brunette with all the pseudo-assurance of a freshman sits with an admiring blue-jeaned companion. Obviously, they are not well acquainted. At this table, the coffee break is serving as a means of arranging a date for a Friday night party. The girl carefully lets the crewcut-topped coffee drinker know she is impressed. Their

romance may flourish over many succeeding cups of coffee.

In the excitement and anticipation of the Big Game Saturday, spontaneous pep rallies may originate at one table and spread over the room to the tune of "Boomer Sooner."

There are scribblers who like to draw on endless numbers of napkins, while others play with straws. The incorrigible table-hopper makes his rounds. "Coffee, black. Coffee, white." Some come to look and drink and not to talk. All have long ago mastered the art of making a cup of coffee last from 30 to 60 minutes.

From today to tomorrow, this year to next year, the crowd may change. Maybe, more will use sugar or more cream. They don't play cards much any more. There are new faces, new hair styles, new fads. But the institution of coffee drinking remains.

On the Sooner Scene . . .

rial Union Building on each home football game Saturday. While many of these special events of the football season seem frivolous on the surface they are really all heartwarming experiences and they add to the tradition which is O.U. and to the spirit which is so characteristic of Soonerland—wherever you find it.

Under Cover . . .

little criticism. Apprehensive that the Big Seven would not lift its bowl ban for any reason this year, football fans in this area appeared pleased that the Sooners have a chance to shoot for an automatic bowl bid. Too, the prospect of playing Maryland had something to do with the reaction.

I am inclined to think that the tieup for a short trial period is the answer to Oklahoma's bowl ambitions. The players will get a chance to perform periodically in a bowl if they are good enough, the fans will have a chance to watch or hear the team in action against a good post season opponent, and a degree of post season sanity will prevail under the can't repeat rule. Besides wouldn't it be great to play Maryland.