

Is Oklahoma a state where there is "nothing in the past to look back on with pride, and nothing in the future to look forward to with hope"? A study of certain figures and statistics indicates that there are a good many adherents to that view.

A recent survey shows that nearly half of those born in Oklahoma leave the state—a third of them migrating to California. Oklahoma's population would now be increased by 217,549 if those born here had stayed—a figure which approximates the combined populations of Tulsa and Enid.

In addition, while Oklahoma's per capita income exceeds that of surrounding states, Arkansas and Louisiana, it was lower than that of Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, Kansas and Missouri, and is \$400 per person lower than the national average.

Being mindful of those statistics, and considering the attitude Oklahomans have about their state, is it any wonder that an alarmingly large proportion of this year's Oklahoma graduates, both at the University and elsewhere—young lawyers, doctors, teachers, engineers, and others, educated mostly at state expense—will leave the state for what they suppose are "greener pastures"?

Why is Oklahoma not as attractive to our young people as are other states. What's wrong with Oklahoma? We must look to Oklahoma history for a good part of the answer.

There immediately comes to mind the obvious fact that Oklahoma is a young state and has not yet had time for great development. That fact, however, at best, is only a partial answer. There are others.

First, there is the fact that, when originally settled, Oklahoma had too much population. Starting with the opening of the first 'strip' in 1889, down to the settlement of the Big Pasture in 1906, Oklahoma for the most part has been divided into 160-acre tracts. From an economist's standpoint it is apparent that, even in the early 1900's, that was not enough land to adequately support a family in most sections of Oklahoma. That fact was bluntly and tragically pointed out when hard times came in the 1930's, and it is even more true today when, especially in western Oklahoma, farming to be profitable must be highly mechanized. It is not surprising, therefore, that from 1930 to 1945 Oklahoma lost heavily in population.

Second, it is important not only to note the number of people, but also the type of people who settled in Oklahoma. A good many of these, like it or not, were ne'er-dowells who could not or would not make a living in their own home states. Most, however, were of the hardy, pioneering stock, the type which built America. Most of

these people came in search of land, and most of them became farmers. So it was that much land was broken out and planted in "money crops" when it should have been left in natural grasses; so it was that much of our soil was quickly and badly depleted and eroded. Moreover, very little industry and risk capital moved to Oklahoma, due to the lack of facilities, opportunities, and markets, and to the fact that they were doing well enough where they were.

Third, Oklahoma population at statehood was composed of a tremendous number of Indian peoples, over one-third of all those in the United States. At the present time, Indians are among our top state leaders; they have fused a new strength into our blood. However, during earlier years, the Indians were members of a totally different way of life, and, of course, had different values, aims, and ideals. They were willing and extremely capable of what the white man called "progress," but they for some time did not know the way to achieve it.

especially those in agriculture, have had a hard time making a living from Oklahoma's ill-used soil, and partly to the attitude which the nation as a whole has in the past held for 'Okies' and Oklahoma in general, Oklahoma citizens have never possessed much feeling of pride for their state.

Sixth, a factor which does not derive from Oklahoma history, Oklahoma has a lack of water in abundance necessary for the development of industry.

Is it too late to correct these drawbacks? Certainly not! As George Bernard Shaw so aptly said:

"People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. I don't believe in circumstance. The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for circumstances they want, and, if they can't find them, make them."

The same is true of states.

Oklahoma today, as far as resources, location, facilities and opportunities are con-

Give Oklahoma Back To the Indians?

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Fourth, has been the factor of Oklahoma government. Although recent state and local governments have been characterized by orderliness and efficiency of administration and an ability to look ahead, it has not always been so. For quite a few years, our legislature had no way of knowing exactly how much money came in or how it was spent. Too many times roads were built on the basis of local pressures rather than needs, one reason why Oklahoma taxpayers today are saddled with the tremendous burden of keeping up too many roads too poorly constructed. Too many times has state and local purchasing been done on the basis of personal favoritism and the desire for personal gain. These things cannot be blamed solely, or even primarily, on the public officials. They must be laid at the door of the people of Oklahoma for a lack of vigilance—for apathy and lethargy in things governmental.

Fifth, closely allied with the fourth factor, is the attitude of Oklahomans in general. Due partly to the fact that early settlers came from another state which they called home, partly to the fact that many,

stands in one of the most enviable positions among its sister states. It has a great potential for an increase in per capita wealth which has never been realized. There is no reason why per capita income in Oklahoma should not be much higher than the national average. To bring about such an increase, however, we must have greater industrialization. Through such development only can Oklahoma more abundantly support a greater population.

There are certain concrete attributes which manufacturers look for in a prospective location. There must be a proximity to market, adequate utilities, suitable labor supply, available transportation facilities, sufficient natural resources, a fair tax structure, and sufficient water supply. In all of these, save the latter, Oklahoma is recognized as outstanding. Even in fairness of tax structure, contrary to popular belief, Oklahoma ranks better than most surrounding states.

Why then do industries fail to flock to our state? The reasons are several.

First, until recently potential investors

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and industrialists thought of Oklahoma as a land of oil and Indians; they were not aware of these opportunities. We must continue to disperse information about our state. In doing so, however, we must be cautious lest we exaggerate or oversell. It will help nothing—and will frighten away others—to invite by false facts and promises an industry to a site for which it is not suited. We must build carefully and calmly without special favoritism or false propaganda. Otherwise, in the event of a recession, those lured into the state would be the first to go under.

Second, we must continue to improve the efficiency of our state and local governments and their operation. We must be ever watchful to curb waste. Industrialists, as they themselves have stated, are deterred not so much by taxes as they are by inefficiency and a small return on the taxes paid.

Third, we must have more water in Oklahoma, especially in the western part of the state. There can be no great amount of growth without it, and, therefore it is probably the most important single factor. It is estimated that if maximum development of Oklahoma is to take place, daily water consumption, in the southwest alone, will climb to more than 93 million gallons, more than eight times what it presently is. Subsurface supplies are already inadequate. The only answer is the building of more dams to store surface water to meet future demands. Whether such reservoirs are built by state, federal or private funds, or a combination of those sources, it cannot be emphasized too much that they must be built.

But one of the most important factors in Oklahoma's future—one of the greatest present deterrents to its development—has not yet been discussed: the attitude of our people. Why is it that Oklahoma retains only 55.4 per cent of its native-born population, while a state like Texas keeps 81.5 per cent? Some of it is due to the greater obvious opportunities, but a great part of it is due to the pride which Texans have in themselves and in their state.

Potential investors and manufacturers

place a good deal of emphasis upon initiative and ambition, born of a people's pride in themselves, their state and their community.

Certainly Oklahoma history provides incidents and events which will swell the heart and chest of any Oklahoman. Past and present state leaders furnish our children with ideals worthy of emulation. The typical Oklahoman is one in whose veins flows the hybrid blood of the visionary but sturdy pioneer and the wise, honorable Indian. We must erect and preserve the shrines of our history. We must cultivate the natural love which man is wont to feel for those things near to him.

We must not only look to outsiders for

help and development. We must take up the task ourselves. As young people, we must dedicate ourselves to the job of building our state, of helping its people, and of aiding in the development of Oklahoma's great natural resources. As investors, and potential investors, we must seize upon the great untapped opportunities which exist in Oklahoma, either privately or by banding together in Oklahoma investment groups. We must develop Oklahoma resources in Oklahoma, for Oklahomans, with the profit derived therefrom remaining in Oklahoma for the greater welfare of our state and of our people.

We have already started in the right direction. Our source of income is gradually

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shifting more and more to manufacturing. Population has found its norm and has been continually rising since 1945 as industrialization progresses. Population shifts from rural to urban areas have been advantageous to those concerned as shown by the fact that mechanization of agriculture has increased as has per capita farm income, and the fact that incomes of urban workers have been steadily increasing. In addition, there are 757 more manufacturers in Oklahoma than there were in 1947, and 72.4 per cent more industrial production. The trend has started; but there is much yet to be done. It can only be done from within.

Therefore, to the question: "What's

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wrong with Oklahoma?", comes the quick answer: "Nothing which an aggressive, proud, active people cannot remedy." Certainly, in Oklahoma there is a past we can look back on with pride, and with dedicated work there is a future we can look forward to with trusting hope.

Aims of Education—Faculty Views

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Dean Livezey suggested that "the faculty and students can collectively share the burden. It is essential that the material be presented ably and inspiringly by the instructor, but the ultimate success will depend upon the receptivity of the student.

"And, four years in college," he said, "is only the training ground to prepare an individual so that outside he can still continue to grow. You've got to have intelligent, dedicated teachers, reasonably competent and definitely interested students before you can achieve any form of the goal.

"The University fails," Dean Livezey continued, "when the student sees in it nothing more than a country club or a professional athletic club as a means to achieve financial independence or personal self-gratification."

Dr. Reese offered the idea that college could be extended with students first handling general background subjects and then specializing, "but," he said, "that means a five or six-year program."

He mentioned as well that colleges might follow the British plan of giving broad educations in college with students specializing after college, by serving apprenticeships. "It may be," he commented, "that students do not need as much specialization in college as they get."

Dr. Bender proposed that because of the enormous increase in subject matter, "a reorganization will be needed so that students will have some understanding at least of the origin of the knowledge in these many fields. "This," he pointed out, "has already been undertaken at Columbia and Chicago and to some extent at other universities."

So there are many possible solutions to the problem confronting our universities, and there is not always agreement on what should be done. But there is agreement that this current trend will have to be stopped. Some educators are optimistic that an evolution—or revolution—whichever it may be, will come soon. Others are not, to varying degrees.

Dr. Merrill commented, "We are in the position of the boy with the bantam hens who decided their eggs were too small. The boy got an ostrich egg and hung it up in the chickenhouse, telling his hens, 'Keep your eye on this and do your best'."

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