

IN JANUARY, 1957, a small group of alumni magazine editors gathered in New York City's University Club to discuss an idea. How could we do a better job of presenting the story of Higher Education's achievements, its frustrations, its excitement, its hopes?

The editors believed that they were doing an adequate job of representing their individual institutions. But what of the big picture? Month after month, we were showing alumni a segment without perspective.

Several months before the first Sputnik stirred a sleeping public to storms of comment, alumni editors decided to take a critical look at American Higher Education. By combining our resources, we thought we could do the job. The editors unanimously approved the idea and gave it a prophetic name, "Operation Moonshooter."

The months that followed were filled with grim decisions. By a quirk of nature, editors seldom take themselves seriously. But the issue here was too large for levity. One plan after another was discarded. Then, in mid-summer, the operational procedure was fixed. Reporting would be handled

WE SHARED WITH THEM

through regional news bureaus. Regional reports would be assembled, evaluated and pieced together into a national whole.

In early October, 1957, the editorial board met once more and fixed the content framework. One of the nation's finest photographers, Erich Hartmann of Magnum Photos, was commissioned to tour college campuses across the country. He shot 5,000 pictures in an assignment that covered two months.

Production, financing, writing—all were directed to meet a mid-January deadline. Writing and re-writing. Evaluating and re-evaluating. And always with the editors was the question: With a subject so large, could we do it justice?

Originally intended as a supplement for magazines of editorial board members, the publication was made available to other institutions. The result: This month 153 institutions will mail the supplement to 1,350,000 alumni.

Sooner Magazine and the University of Oklahoma are represented on the editorial board and in the contents of the magazine. Implicit in each fragment of Higher Education's story of challenge and problems, strengths and weaknesses is the University of Oklahoma. We share with our sister institutions the responsibility of sustaining the heritage of American Higher Education as we shared with them the responsibility of preparing and presenting the story that follows.—*David Burr.*