



## Mr. Wrightsman,

**B**ACK in 1923, rip-roarin' Governor Jack Walton grabbed his list of political plums for faithful henchmen, read down to "Faculty—University," and looked no further. From that moment until Oklahoma ended its ten months of Walton rule, one man stood between O.U. and a faculty full of Oklahoma City policemen.

Charles J. Wrightsman, Tulsa, became president of the Board of Regents during the reshuffle of state school officials in which six O.U. regents and the presidents of the University and Oklahoma A&M bit the dust. When Walton sent his faculty loading orders to Dean James S. Buchanan, acting O.U. president since Stratton D. Brooks' hasty departure, the dean had only Wrightsman to back him up in the fight for O.U.'s academic reputation.

Walton had already packed every other state payroll, issued wholesale pardons for dangerous criminals, and would shortly plunge the state into disastrous martial law, eventually leading to his impeachment. But Wrightsman and Buchanan hadn't even this relief in sight that spring.

If the Board of Regents had allowed Walton to pay off his political debts at O.U.'s expense, every accomplishment of the young university would have been destroyed. The governor had already struck at the school with arbitrary appropriation cuts (later declared unconstitutional), and Buchanan well could follow Brooks into unemployment if he crossed the high-flying Walton.

The story has it that Buchanan asked the governor what he was expected to do with these unsolicited "faculty members" in Norman. Walton replied, "It will be all right with me if you let them teach history." At any rate, Wrightsman countered with some orders of his own and refused to call the Board of Regents into session to okay Walton's demands.

Today's concern with maintaining the University faculty at peak quality must bring back vivid memories to 90-year-old Wrightsman, now a Fort Worth oil man. Legislative haggling for appropriations must seem pretty tame to the man who held the line against chaotic Jack Walton.

## Governor Walton, and COP PROFS

