

Backlog

DON'T BE MISLED BY CHANGE—IT MAY
BE ONLY A REPEAT OF THE PAST

IMAGE IS NOT AVAILABLE
ONLINE DUE TO COPY-
RIGHT RESTRICTIONS.

A paper copy of this
issue is available at
call number LH 1 .06S6
in Bizzell
Memorial Library.

THINGS change—or so we are told. Campuses change and challenges change and problems and students and faculty members and alumni. This is what we are told—and I suppose it's all true—but a backward glance now and again leads me to believe that the changes may not be so drastic after all.

It's interesting, for instance, to go back through the old *Sooner Magazine* files to read what they had to say when the University was experiencing its early growing pains. The paper is yellowed and the type is old fashioned, but ignore the datelites and it's difficult to remember that you are not reading a commentary on 1962.

Take an article entitled "Changing attitudes toward learning":

"While political history of the greatest significance was being made throughout the world," the author says of the past year, "men of courage and daring were breaking records through their exploits in the air . . . These events merely illustrate the nature and importance of daily happenings in the dynamic world in which we live. History is being made every day. Traditions are being discarded and precedents are being broken on every hand. The spirit of adventure is in the air. Life is being lived dangerously on new levels of experience . . . The 'safe and comfortable and commonplace world,' no longer exists."

The author was the late O.U. President William Bennett Bizzell and he was addressing a Commencement audience in September of 1931.

We've always been concerned about raising the tuition, too, it seems. In October, 1939, the *Sooner*, in "Trend to Tuition," quotes the *Sapulpa Herald*:

"A move afoot to charge tuition for students at the University of Oklahoma to raise revenue may look good from a financial viewpoint, but it knocks the tradition of free higher education winding, so to speak. The suggestion has been made that one dollar per hour for student hours enrolled at the university be charged. That would be raising money rather fast . . . But such tuition plan is seen as the possible beginning of expanded tuition plans."

How right he was. In 1939 the average junior in arts and sciences was paying a grand total of \$24 per semester for laboratory fees and student services. The tuition the editor was deploring was about \$15 per semester—an amount which has grown today to approximately \$105 for instaters and \$225 for out-of-staters.

When Clarence Frost wrote his September, 1941, article "Six Minutes" on the halftime performances of the Pride of Oklahoma, Leonard Haug had barely begun his lengthy career with the O.U. band, but the description could have been written for the article on page 3 of this magazine:

"The time spent by sections of the band in 'woodshed' sessions; the hours on end spent by Leonard Haug . . . in working out maneuvers in detail, diagramming them and putting them on mimeographed sheets; the time involved in fitting the stunts to the occasion and the time, and the years of experience behind the band's intermission show—they are not considered in that time estimate . . . the 'Pride of Oklahoma' is so uniformly excellent in its between-halves entertainment that Sooner fans sometimes fail to appreciate its real worth until they have a chance to compare it with bands of other major universities."

The enrolment problem is not such a recent phenomenon either. Consider this quote, for example:

"The problem of good schools is not at all simplified by the recent rapid and large increase in the numbers of high school and college pupils. Since the war the figures have shot up with astonishing rapidity. Many cities have failed to keep pace with the demand, the result being too many part-time scholars and too constant overcrowding of classrooms."

Post-World War II blues of the late '40s or the '50s or even today? Could be—but actually these were the observations of the Phi Beta Kappa speaker at O.U. in June, 1929.

And the arguments for the value of the University to the community haven't changed a great deal either. As early as 1933 the president of the Alumni Association, Chester Westfall, wrote in the *Sooner*:

"An efficient educational system is a first essential for a state if it is to provide material opportunity and the bases for sound, wholesome living to us and our children. No system can be sound without the inspiration and leadership of a great university, any more than a university itself could be built on some other foundation than good common and secondary schools. An appeal to alumni to get into the harness and help their University is therefore not merely an appeal to that old "rah-rah" college spirit that is quite important in campus days, but has less place later. It is primarily an appeal for a highly essential public service. —CJR