

Backlog

IT'S ONE THING TO TAKE A STAND
AND QUITE ANOTHER TO TAKE ACTION

Just being for or against something takes very little talent, intelligence or imagination. You simply pick an issue and announce, "I'm unalterably opposed to full citizenship for the Eskimos," or something of that sort. Then you sit back and criticize the rest of the adult population for not having the good judgment to come around to your way of thinking. There's nothing to it; anyone can play.

But acting on your convictions is another matter entirely. This is why it is so refreshing when a fellow like Paul C. Teas comes along. Teas is an independent geologist and oil producer in Dallas, Texas, and most recently he has made news at the University of Oklahoma by accepting the chairmanship of the newly-formed National Council. His reasons for doing so are simple: this job gives him an opportunity to support actively something he is for—the University of Oklahoma—and secondarily, it gives him an opportunity to oppose something he is against—federal aid to education.

Paul Teas is no joiner. His list of memberships and activities are modest at best, and he is proud of this fact. The lion's share of his time and effort has been devoted to his business and his family. Teas has been a pioneer developer of major oil fields, such as the Permian Basin area. His achievements have given him professional prestige as well as financial rewards. As for his family, he looks with appropriate fatherly pride on his two grown children, Sue, now Mrs. Dan D. Sutherland, Dallas, and Paul Jr., who has followed his father into the oil business in Midland, Texas. Beyond these interests, Paul Teas has saved his energy for the few things that really count in his life. He has decided that the University of Oklahoma is one of them—and for very definite reasons.

When he came to O.U., Teas had spent World War I in the Navy as just another sailor. His prospects were limited and he didn't quite know where he was headed. When he emerged from the School of Geology in 1923, he had a profession and no where to go but up. Many schools were performing the same sort of service for hundreds of young men at that time, but the University of Oklahoma happened to be the beginning for Paul C. Teas of Conway, Arkansas. He never forgot it.

"No one ever came on the O.U. campus and got more out of his stay than I did," he said when his appointment to the National Council was announced, "and I wasn't any Phi Beta Kappa by any means.

Now I have an opportunity to help the University, and I'll do everything I can to get the job done."

The National Council is also giving Paul Teas an opportunity to take action on an issue he opposes. Teas personally opposes federal aid to education, but he also wants to see O.U. become one of the great educational institutions of the country, an ambition which takes money. "I've decided that if I'm going to be against something, in this case federal aid to education, I'd sure better come up with a better answer." To Teas this "better answer" is private support of higher education.

You do not have to agree with Teas' economic philosophy—and many of his fellow Council members do not—to admire his way to acting on his convictions. Each of the Councilmen has his own reasons for participation, but they all have the same objective—effective support of the University of Oklahoma.

If proper use is made of this Council, 150 to 200 alumni will have a real opportunity to perform a valuable service for the University, not an opportunity to keep busy with meaningless tasks or to participate on rubber stamp committees. The members of the Council will in effect be official representatives of O.U. in the various parts of the country in which they are located, serving as two-way information sources—to inform others about O.U. by interpreting its programs and policies, and to advise the University of local trends, attitudes and needs which could affect its operation.

The most immediate Council project, which will be handled by a 20-man executive committee, is the direction of the current Plan for Excellence, a program designed to give the University the boost from average to excellent—which is based on fund raising of a major gifts variety.

But long after this particular drive is completed, the National Council will be functioning as a strong arm of the University—or if not, the University will have missed an opportunity. The men of the National Council represent many areas of the country. Most are prominent Oklahomans, of course, with many of our neighbor Texans represented, such as Chairman Teas, but there are also men from New York, Pennsylvania, Washington, D. C., New Mexico and Arkansas. More importantly, however, these men represent success in many fields; they are not the sort of men who intend to be associated with anything that is less than a success. —CJB

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