

THE DAILY OKLAHOMAN

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Saturday, May 19, 1973

Leadership Needed

THE basic question at stake in the continuing wrangle at Oklahoma College of Liberal Arts is, "Who will run the school?" This has been true for years, and problems of faculty tenure and accreditation cannot be satisfactorily settled until it has been determined who will be in charge of the institution.

For more than a decade, students and faculties of many institutions across the country have been demanding and receiving stronger voices in determining administrative policies. OCLA came into being as a co-ed liberal arts college during this period. It appears that positive direction has been lacking, probably due in part to eagerness to listen to everybody's advice.

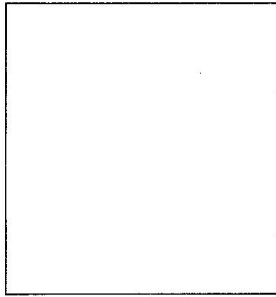
Efforts to give the faculty larger participation in policy-making didn't work out for the simple reason that there were at least two faculty groups with different opinions. Confusion attributable to this conflict caused the North Central Association to put OCLA on probation for two years in regard to accreditation. Faculty tenure was an issue that figured in the decision.

The Board of Regents tackled the problems and Dr. Bruce Carter was brought in to straighten out the situation. He recommended dismissal of 14 faculty members, presumably to relieve friction. This was not to say that those remaining were completely right or that those who were dis-

missed were completely wrong. Naturally, those who were dismissed were unhappy about it, but the action to eliminate a problem by pruning was similar to what might have been done in a private organization or business. Dr. Carter had been sent in to "put out a fire" and this was one of the actions he found advisable.

The matter is not helped by the announced entry of the American Association of University Professors into the dispute. This organization wired the chairman of the school's board of regents urging "immediate reinstatement of those dismissed," apparently after hearing only the claims of the discharged professors. So far, the board has not bowed to pressure from the out-of-state organization.

OCLA, like other state colleges and universities, should be operated so that its curriculum and faculty will meet acceptable standards. Its graduates will not be highly regarded by other educational institutions or by business unless this is done. To accomplish this, intracampus fighting must be stopped and the administration, faculty, patrons and students start moving toward worthwhile educational goals together. Such progress can come about with a strong program and capable leadership, but not with everybody concerned trying to be chief policymaker.



OKLAHOMA COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

CHICKASHA, OKLAHOMA 73018

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

May 21, 1973

R. Lee et al

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Mr. Charles L. Bennett
Managing Editor
Box 25125
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73125

Dear Mr. Bennett:

I do not know if you wrote the editorial "Leadership Needed" in the Saturday, May 19, 1973, edition of the Daily Oklahoman. It is my desire to thank you or whoever wrote the editorial for your down to earth, common sense, evaluation of our situation at OCLA.

The editorial is quite right, it is simply a matter of "who will run the college." I assure you that my only desire is to give to the area and the state the kind of a college that the area and the state deserve.

Sincerely,

Bruce G. Carter
President

bgc/mg