Clearing the Desk

TO THE many readers of this magazine who took time to write a note of appreciation for the special February issue containing the list of Sooners in the armed forces, we want to extend our thanks for your thoughtfulness. Your editor also wants to make it clear that about 99 percent of the credit for making the service list so complete and so accurate (as accurate as it could be in such a rapidly changing situation) goes to the managing editor, Edith Walker, ’41journal, and the assistant editor, Elaine Larecy, ’42journal. We want to thank, also, the readers who were kind enough to send us information about omissions and out-of-date information they detected in the service list.

INCIDENTALLY, there was such a tremendous demand for the February issue that 300 extra copies were soon exhausted, and it was necessary to print 500 more copies of the service list to give to new subscribers who asked for the list. Paid membership in your alumni association is now at the highest point in history.

WE HASTEN to assure everyone that the connection between the business of the Alumni Association and the state Pardon and Parole Board is more apparent than real. The explanation is that Elmer Fraker, ’20ba, ’38ma, of Mangum, is president of the Alumni Association and also a member of the Pardon and Parole Board. It’s about 150 miles from Mangum to Norman or Oklahoma City and one doesn’t make a trip like that lightly in these days of gasoline rationing. So you frequently will find conferences of alumni officials being held on the same dates as meetings of the pardon and parole board.

HOMER HECK, ’35, who used to direct the University radio station before accepting a top-flight position as radio production director for NBC network in Chicago, sends a newspaper clipping from a Chicago paper which indicates that Oklahoma is outgrowing the “Okie” reputation given it by John Steinbeck. Says this newspaper editorial from the windy city:

STILL ‘SOONERS’

A Nazi newspaper is printing Steinbeck’s “Grapes of Wrath” as a serial. The idea is that it is good propaganda against the American “plutocracy.”

Tim about is fair play, even in war, so we are not protesting, and our own stage reeked with morbid plays about Germany before 1914. But by way of a footnote for the Nazis, and for Mr. Steinbeck, too, we would like to call attention to the fact that of 11 American aviators cited as “aces” by General MacArthur’s headquarters, four are natives of Oklahoma, that blighted land from which came Steinbeck’s “Okies.”

Before the Los Angeles Babbitts coined the word “Okie,” they called them “Sooners.” The general idea of a “Sooner” is a fellow who beats the gun, and the Japs must think so, too.

ONE PIECE of unfinished business to end the “Okie” tradition is the discovery of some way to stop the thousands of sailors stationed in central Oklahoma from referring to Oklahoma City as “Okie City.” That custom has become so universal that it appears to be established at least for the duration.

—R. C.