Applause from the Press

Selection of Joseph A. Brandt to become the president of the University of Oklahoma when Dr. W. B. Bizzell retires August 1, 1941, has received enthusiastic approval and commendation from the Oklahoma press. Metropolitan newspapers, small city dailies and country weeklies all express satisfaction with the choice made by the University Board of Regents. Mr. Brandt, O. U. graduate of '21 who has achieved national eminence as director of the University of Oklahoma Press and later the Princeton University Press, plainly has the warm support of the state as a whole.

The general tone of the editorial comments was that Mr. Brandt has a fine understanding of the University's problems and a vision of its future possibilities; that he has a distinguished record and the personal qualifications needed to make an excellent president of the State University.

The Tulsa World declared that the incoming president will bring to his task a forceful personality, ample education and business experience. Under the heading "A Fine Selection," the World made the following editorial comment:

Selection of Joseph A. Brandt as president of the University of Oklahoma is deeply gratifying. Mr. Brandt is an able, scholarly and practical man, a graduate of the University, and he has a record of achievement. Tulsa takes particular pride in this choice, for Mr. Brandt was reared here and worked here as a newspaper man. It did not take him many years to acquire a reputation which took him to Princeton as head of publications. Mr. Brandt is best known in Oklahoma as founder and head of the University Press. In this instance scholarship and executive ability had prompt effects. The lore and history of the state were strongly developed within a few years. The young Tulsan turned out to be a notable editor, a business man and a leader. He demonstrated the qualities which a modern university must have at its head. The day of mouldiness in education is over, and the large schools must keep in step with modern progress in general. The naming of Mr. Brandt as president of the University is full acknowledgement of these facts. The regents undoubtedly canvassed the field very thoroughly, but they appeared to have no hesitation in selecting an alumnum who had added to his stature in one of the large and old schools in the East.

The University of Oklahoma has, since statehood, developed steadily and to good effect. It has become a great school; it has lived down handicaps; it has overcome many difficulties. The University is a vital force in Oklahoma, and the people are more and more proud of it. There are plentiful reasons for believing that the school will now go on to greater size, influence and usefulness. The incoming president will bring to his task a forceful personality, ample education and business experience. We believe that all-around congratulations are in order.

A good statement of Mr. Brandt’s qualifications was presented in the Ana-darko Daily News, which is published by Joe W. McBride, ’28bus, a member of the University Board of Regents. The editorial in the News, headed “Forward with Distinction,” was as follows:

The announcement naming Joseph A. Brandt as president of the University of Oklahoma has brought acclaim from everywhere. Joe Bizzell was unanimously chosen from a long list as being the man capable of filling the University requirements for leadership.

Brandt is an Oklahoman, a graduate of the University who attained his education the hard way. He is a young man noted for scholarly attainments as well as being an able executive. He is acquainted with the University and her peculiarities, he is acquainted with the University and her problems. He has talents and background that dovetail to meet the demands for a president of the University of Oklahoma.

Joe Brandt is a clear thinker. His mind is not muddled with prejudices, whims and egotism. He is thoughtfully thorough in his planning and is capable of seeing a clear picture of procedure. He is not selfish and arrogant. He is kindly but firm. He is great because of his humbleness. He knows people as human beings with faults and virtues. He has the ability to bring the good qualities of people to advantage.

Joe Brandt has great ideals as well as ideas. He has the art of gaining cooperation.

All in all he is a most qualified man to follow in the footsteps of the illustrious Dr. William Bennett Bizzell. He will retain the good will and respect that Dr. Bizzell has gained over the state and nation. He will advance in leadership and carry on the excellent progress that Dr. Bizzell brought to the University. He will modernize higher education, keeping to trends that are improved with experience and research. The University of Oklahoma took a forward step with the naming of Joseph A. Brandt. With co-operation from the people of the state, with understanding of the alumni and parents of the state, who may render great service, the University of Oklahoma will go forward with distinction, under Joe Brandt.

Harrington Wimberly, ’24ba, publisher of the Altus Times-Democrat, and also a member of the Board of Regents, made the following comments in his personal column, "The West Side":

Selection of an Oklahoma reared and educated man to be president of the University of Oklahoma is receiving the wide-spread approval that was anticipated. Joseph A. Brandt is a distinguished college and college man as well as a statesman. Joe Brandt has a distinguished career. He will be tackling the biggest assignment of his life but those who have known him during the past twenty years and who watched him succeed at everything has attempted have no doubt about his ability to do a bang-up job at Norman.

The University of Oklahoma was founded forty-eight years ago. During its nearly half a century of service to the state it has turned out many men who are well qualified to be president of the institution, or any one of the great universities of the country. The naming of one of its own graduates as head of the school should have caused no surprise and under these circumstances it would have been wise as well as unnecessary to have gone outside for a president.

Oklahoma has grown up. Her sons and daughters have attained national and international distinction in every field of endeavor and when possible their talents must be used at home. A graduate of the University of Oklahoma is governor of the state. Another is in the United States Senate. Four are members of congress. Seven are members of the State Supreme Court. Another sits on the Federal District Court of Appeals and one is a federal circuit judge.

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The Chickasha Express declared that Mr. Brandt’s scholastic attainment and his demonstrated executive ability fit him admirably for the position of president. The Express commented editorially as follows:

In September, 1917, a boy showed up in Norman to enroll as a student in the University. He had only $50 in his pocket, but he had a lot of good stuff in his head, including an ambition to succeed. During the next four years he supported himself by washing dishes, stoking furnaces and other similar jobs. Jobs he was awarded a B. A. degree in 1921 and at the same time won a Rhodes scholarship at Oxford University where he earned two more degrees, B. Lit. and M. A. Returning to the United States, he worked for the University in Oklahoma City and Tulsa. In 1928 when he was city editor of the Tulsa Tribune he was called to edit the Sooner Magazine and to head the newly established University Press. In this position he made a record that attracted national attention. In 1938 he went to Princeton to be director of the university’s publications.

Next August he will become president of the University of Oklahoma.

This is Joseph A. Brandt, age 41, who was unanimously selected by the university to succeed Dr. Bizzell, who will retire at his own request. His scholastic attainments and his demonstrated executive ability admirably fit him for the place. He is a man who has been respectful, has been productive in Oklahoma. He won’t have to spend any time getting the “hang” of things at Norman. Four years as student and ten years in an important executive position have told him about all he needs to know about the University.

In Norman where he is just Joe Brandt and around the University of Oklahoma where he is President, there was reproaching when the regents announced his election, the Norman Transcript notes. Approval by those who know him best is a strong point in his favor. It is said that he has the gams to sympathize with the athetic atmosphere, he will get a good start when he assumes his new duties.

Many thousands of Oklahomans deeply regret that great and good Dr. Bizzell has to give up the work which he has carried on with concipicious success so long. Fortunately he will remain with the University as a professor and president emeritus. We are glad his mantle will fall on a man so well qualified to be a worthy successor to him.

The Lawton Constitution in an editorial which was reprinted in the Holdenville Daily News expressed hope that Mr. Brandt will not have to face some of the difficulties encountered by President W. B. Bizzell. This editorial, under the heading, “Joe Brandt a Good Selection,” was as follows:

Announcement of the selection of Joseph A. Brandt to head the University of Oklahoma is being received with satisfaction by the people of the state. Particularly those who have known Mr. Brandt and followed his career as a journalist are gratified at the action of the Board of Regents.

Primarily, it is felt, Mr. Brandt has the ability and personal qualifications to make a good administrator and leader of the state’s greatest educational institution. He was reared in Oklahoma and is a product of Oklahoma’s educational system, as are the majority of Oklahoma people. While being a part of this comparatively new commonwealth he has had the opportunity, through travel, study and work in other states and countries, to gain a broad background of culture and education that should enable him to bring much back to his home state.

Mr. Brandt will succeed an able educator in the person of Dr. W. B. Bizzell. Under the latter’s leadership the University has made much progress during some of the most trying years in the institution’s history. It is to be hoped that Mr. Brandt will not have similar difficulties to cope with, and that the type of men who compose the Board of Regents at this time, it is not expected that he will.

We congratulate the Board of Regents upon their selection of Joe Brandt as the next leader of the state in wishing the president-elect a most successful administration as head of this great educational institution.

The Stillwater Daily News pointed out that former students have been called to numerous places of responsibility recently. The News’ comment was as follows:

Excuse us if we too said the newspaper horn too loudly, but did you observe the background of the new president of the University of Oklahoma?

Joe Brandt is a newspaper man. He is the kind of newspaper man that, should he lose his job as press, could step into almost any newspaper office and find a place on the payroll. It was his newspaper start which put Brandt on the path to national recognition as director of the University Press.

Because of the nature of their profession, lawyers long dominated the public service field. But the nature, by nature, are legal hair splitters and the people gradually are turning to fact gatherers. A former reporter represents this district in congress, and both the United States House of Representatives and the Senate are occupied with newspaper men. Seldom rabble rousing speakers, they learn to keep track of the balance.

And at the helm in England is a courageous writer and reporter, Winston Churchill.

We congratulate Joe Brandt on his new opportunity.

Clarence Frost, ’31ba, writing in his personal column in the Hobart Democrat Chief, called attention to Mr. Brandt’s reputation as a hard worker. Said Mr. Frost:

It’s difficult to express my personal elation at the appointment of Joseph A. Brandt as president of the University of Oklahoma to succeed Dr. W. B. Bizzell. I had been afraid that it wouldn’t happen, since Joe came to the front so rapidly.

But he didn’t rise any more rapidly than he should have. Rapidly is the way he walks, talks, and smokes a pipe. He is supposed to follow the doctor’s orders and cut down on his pipe stem chewing since the last time I saw him.

There is a number of angles to my personal pleasure at Joe’s appointment, not the least of which, of course, is the fact he is a friend. I’m glad that a former gentleman of the press should be accorded such distinction, and mainly, I’m glad because I think he deserves it.

At the moment I can’t think of a person who has worked harder and longer. I can’t think of one who has apparently enjoyed his work more. He has been a happy slave driver, playing the double role by himself.

Another reason I’m pleased with the choice of the board of regents is the state’s getting back one of its native sons who had to go away to take advantage of the opportunities. Oklahoma schools have lost many able leaders to the older and richer and more education-conscious states, including Joe. Getting one of them back is good for some satisfaction.

There probably are those in the State who don’t think Joe can handle his new job. There are those who didn’t think and don’t think he should do what he did with the University Press, and the same ones wonder if he could handle the directing of the Princeton University Press.

Applause from the Press

(Continued from page 8)

district judge. It is fitting and proper and will be an inspiration to alumni throughout the country, to today’s students and those who will follow him. His own returns graduates to head the institution.

It has been our privilege to know Joe Brandt for twenty years. He was an honor student at Norman and active in affairs. His years at Oxford were productive and added to his stature. His success as director of the University of Oklahoma has brought recognition and resulted in an offer to head the Princeton Press. His talents have been put to productive use and his ability as an executive has been acknowledged.

Joe Brandt is humble and democratic to the core. He will not let his academic and cultural attainments keep him from recognizing personal responsibility to the more than 7,000 students representing every degree of intellectual capacity, economic circumstances and moral background.

Brandt is not politically minded but he is devoted to the American way of life and will defend and support democratic ideals. He has deep religious convictions but he has the tolerance and support democratic ideals. He has

Anyone who works as hard at it as he does, can do his stint, especially if he's as qualified otherwise as he is. The regents will probably be wondering how they can keep him again in a few years.

Tom Phillips, editor of the Holdenville Daily News, in his personal column, "Tuning In," predicted that Mr. Brandt will become a nationally outstanding University president. Mr. Phillips wrote:

We do not know Joe Brandt intimately, but friends who do, assure us that the University Board of Regents made a very wise selection of a successor to Dr. W. B. Bizzell at Norman.

On paper Brandt looks like a "natural." Reared and educated in Oklahoma, he will be the first O. U. alumnus to occupy the presidency of the school. He is young enough to be progressive and his scholarship cannot be questioned. His record with the University Press which brought his promotion to Princeton University is ample evidence of his executive and administrative ability.

If we know nothing of Brandt's ability and record, we would be willing to trust the judgment of the University Board of Regents. Men like Lloyd Noble, Joe Loomey, Harry Wimmerly and Joe McBride and other members of the Board of Regents simply don't "fumble the ball" on the matter as important as the presidency of our great state university.

We predict that Brandt will become a national figure at Norman. His newspaper training, supplementing his formal education which includes a Rhodes Scholarship at Oxford, should contribute much to making him an outstanding university president. He served his cubsip on a small city daily and advanced in the newspaper profession to city editor of the Tribune at Tulsa.

"A Good Man and a Brave" is the title of an editorial published by the Frederick Leader:

Joseph A. Brandt, who has been chosen to the presidency of the University of Oklahoma, and has accepted the position, has many things to recommend him—not the least of which is his courage.

The history of the university reveals that its presidency is a difficult place to fill. The man who assumes its duties at once becomes the target of all the statehouse politicians who imagine that criticizing the head of the state's chief educational institution is as popular with the citizens of the state as bear-baiting used to be with circus audiences.

Having been connected with the University, Mr. Brandt knows how it has been made the object of political grandstanding by several governors and the manner in which the head of the institution must grapple with the Legislature to get financial support for it.

He is familiar with the fact, no doubt, that President Bizzell is retiring and taking a subordinate position in the school because he has become wearied with the capricious criticisms of the governor, and in the hope that a new president may get a better deal for the institution.

Dr. Bizzell has done a notable service for the University. He came to it after the regents had tried unsuccessfully to engage other educators, who did not fancy the job, nor the manner in which Governor Walton had accomplished the discharge of his predecessor.

He weathered an assault made on his administration by Governor Murray and it is not an occasion of wonderment that he does not relish a continuation of hostilities with Governor Phillips.

The Board of Regents seems to have selected the new president because of an intimate acquaintance with the qualifications he has for making a successful executive. These include his devotion to the institution from which he served many years as founder and director of the University Press, his tactfulness and his experience gained in public contacts as a newspaper man, as well as his educational background and undoubted culture.

In this the regents have done a good job. President-elect Brandt deserves the united support of all the friends of higher education in Oklahoma in his efforts to earn for the University the right to fill its place in the state's school system without political meddling, and he is entitled to the admiration of all for his courage in assuming the command of the state's battle-scared educational storm center.

Ernest M. Hill, '33u, a member of the United Press staff at Oklahoma City, declared in his United Press column "Off the Record," that the election of Mr. Brandt as president has been hailed as the beginning of a new era for the University.

Mr. Hill wrote in his column:

Brandt goes in as president next August 1 with the blessings of Governor Phillips, the University Alumni association, the Liberal element of the University faculty and a large majority of the students.

His associations with the Sapulpa Herald, the Ponca City News and the Tulsa Tribune have given him high standing with newspaper editors and publishers who have been pulling for him generally to succeed Dr. W. B. Bizzell, who has resigned effective at the beginning of the next school year.

Brandt's appointment was recommended to the Board of Regents and the governor by many persons. Two of the most influential men behind him were Frank Phillips of the Phillips Petroleum Company and the Rev. Francis Kelly, bishop of the Oklahoma City-Tulsa diocese.

While hundreds of alumni, faculty members and outsiders favored Brandt, it was the recommendation of Phillips and Kelly that impressed the governor most with Brandt's wide qualifications.

The governor remained purely outside of the selection of Brandt since the former University Press editor already had staunch admirers in Lloyd Noble, Ardmore oil man; Joe McBride, Anadarko publisher; and Harrington Wimmerly, Altus publisher.

They had known and worked with him and were sold on his capabilities. The governor was in a position to exert an influence on the appointment but remained quiet when he learned that the board agreed with him. The governor just sat tight and let Noble and the board work out the problem. Personally, Phillips was fearful that the Princeton University Press editor might decline the appointment.

As a graduate of the University and a faculty member for years, Brandt is well acquainted with the problems of the school. He knows, particularly, the faculty problems and the difficulties the University has had with the state legislature. He will take the position with a full knowledge of all the problems involved.

Mr. Brandt seems to be a "natural choice for the post of president," said the Eufaula Journal in the following editorial:

Boldding for the past decade because of insufficient funds and the lack of sympathy from many legislators, the University of Oklahoma should view the future with renewed optimism following the recent naming of Joseph A. Brandt, director of the Princeton University Press, as head of the University to succeed Dr. W. B. Bizzell, who will resign next summer after a 16-year tenure.

Brandt, a graduate of the University, former newspaper man and head of the University of Oklahoma press for ten years, seems to be a natural choice for the new post to which he has been appointed. He brought national recognition to the University during an era in which low legislative appropriations were the order of the day and is probably as familiar with the serious problems confronting the Uni-
versity as any man in the state. We believe the Board of Regents made a wise step in naming Brandt as the next president of the state University.

R. M. McClintock, writing in the Hugo News, declared that Mr. Brandt's working knowledge of Oklahoma politics and economy secured him as a newspaper man and as director of the University of Oklahoma Press, should he be of priceless value to the new president. Mr. McClintock said, in part:

He knows he is coming to a job where a new administration in the state capitol may change everything. He knows he will have to fight in each successive legislature for appropriations. He knows just how pressing are the needs for the University, both for adequate financial provision and for more for that academic freedom without which an educational institution is an empty sham.

Brandt will be assuming the headship of the university in the most critical period of its history. America isn't yet at war, but the passions that sweep across the Atlantic and the Pacific have already brought grave problems to all educational institutions. It will be ten months before Brandt actually takes charge, but in that time America may actually be in the war.

Already, however, the passions of war are making themselves felt on the University campus. And as those passions grow more heated, it will become increasingly difficult to maintain that academic freedom that education becomes more intellectual regimentation.

Formation here (Oklahoma City) last week of the Oklahoma Federation for Constitutional Rights is a case in point. University of Oklahoma faculty members were leaders in forming this organization. Its purpose is to protect even the most unworthy, if need be, against violation of constitutional civil rights. But those must defend, if the rights of all are to be defended, are people against whom there is a bitter public indignation.

And in times when passions run high neither Brandt nor any other college president would be able to deal with such vital problems without arousing bitter criticism. But Brandt, it must be remembered, is red-headed.

The Kansas City Times pointed out that in choosing one of its own graduates, the University of Oklahoma had moved in the same direction as the University of Kansas. The Times said editorially:

Joseph A. Brandt, who had once expected to spend his life as a newspaperman, will be the new president of the University of Oklahoma. By choosing him the University turned to one of its own graduates, a graduate with a record that had won a Rhodes scholarship. In this it was moving in the same direction as the University of Kansas, Chancellor Deane W. Malott also was called back to head the university he had attended as an undergraduate.

The University of Oklahoma again, like several others in recent years, turned to a young man who had distinguished himself outside the usual academic circles. Mr. Brandt was nearly thirty years old before he left the Twila Tribune where he as city editor engaged in the hurly burly of keeping up with edition times. He then joined the University staff as a publisher and made a record that attracted the attention of other universities (including Princeton that took him away). He had so impressed the Oklahoma Board of Regents that the offer of the presidency was almost a foregone conclusion.

Under Dr. W. B. Bizzell the University of Oklahoma has gone through a splendid period of progress. A continuation of progress can be expected from the young, aggressive Joe Brandt.

The Daily Oklahoman sent Kenneth C. Kaufman, O. U. alumnus and faculty member and book page editor for the Sunday Oklahoman, to Princeton to spend a few days with the Brandts and write an article about the president-elect.

The Oklahoman devoted more than two full pages to Mr. Kaufman's article and illustrations. The article described Mr. Brandt's success during his stay at Princeton and told something of the next president's attitude toward his new responsibilities.

"We have every right to expect that things will pick up at O. U. after August 1," Mr. Kaufman wrote. "Men will find themselves inventing new fields of activity; they will shift into high and attack their problems with a determination and an energy they didn't realize they possessed before he came. And yet he will never impress anybody as being an autocrat. He has the divine faculty of inspiring people with his own visions so that an idea passed onto them suddenly becomes a pet scheme of their own, one which they had been wanting to try out for a long time."

The Ponca City News, which once employed Joe Brandt as a reporter, extended its wishes and expressed that he should make a success of his new job:

Joe Brandt was popular as a student at O. U., popular as a newspaperman, succeeded as director of the University Press of two institutions and should make a success of his new job, the presidency of the University of Oklahoma. Those who know Brandt believe he has. This will make his task of fitting himself into his new job somewhat easier. After that, all will depend upon the new president. Our best wishes go with him on his new assignment.

Princeton's regret over losing Mr. Brandt was expressed in the Princeton Alumni Weekly for November 25, which published the following item under the heading "Publisher to President":

Announcement was made here last week that Joseph A. Brandt, director of the University Press, had accepted a call to the presidency of the University of Oklahoma. It will take from the Princeton scene a man who in barely more than two years has exerted a profound effect on the intellectual life of the community. His philosophy of publishing has made itself evident not only in the kind of books Princeton Press has brought out recently and in the tremendous increase in the number of books sold—but also in the place which the Press has come to occupy in Princeton life.

Most significant of all has been the way in which he has helped young writers to find themselves and to turn their thinking and writing into rich, productive fields of social value. When Mr. Brandt goes to Oklahoma next summer literally hundreds of Princeton people will feel that the town has lost one of its most useful as well as one of its most general citizens.

The Norman Transcript and Oklahoma Daily published editorials warmly commending the selection of Mr. Brandt. These editorials were quoted in the December Sooner Magazine.