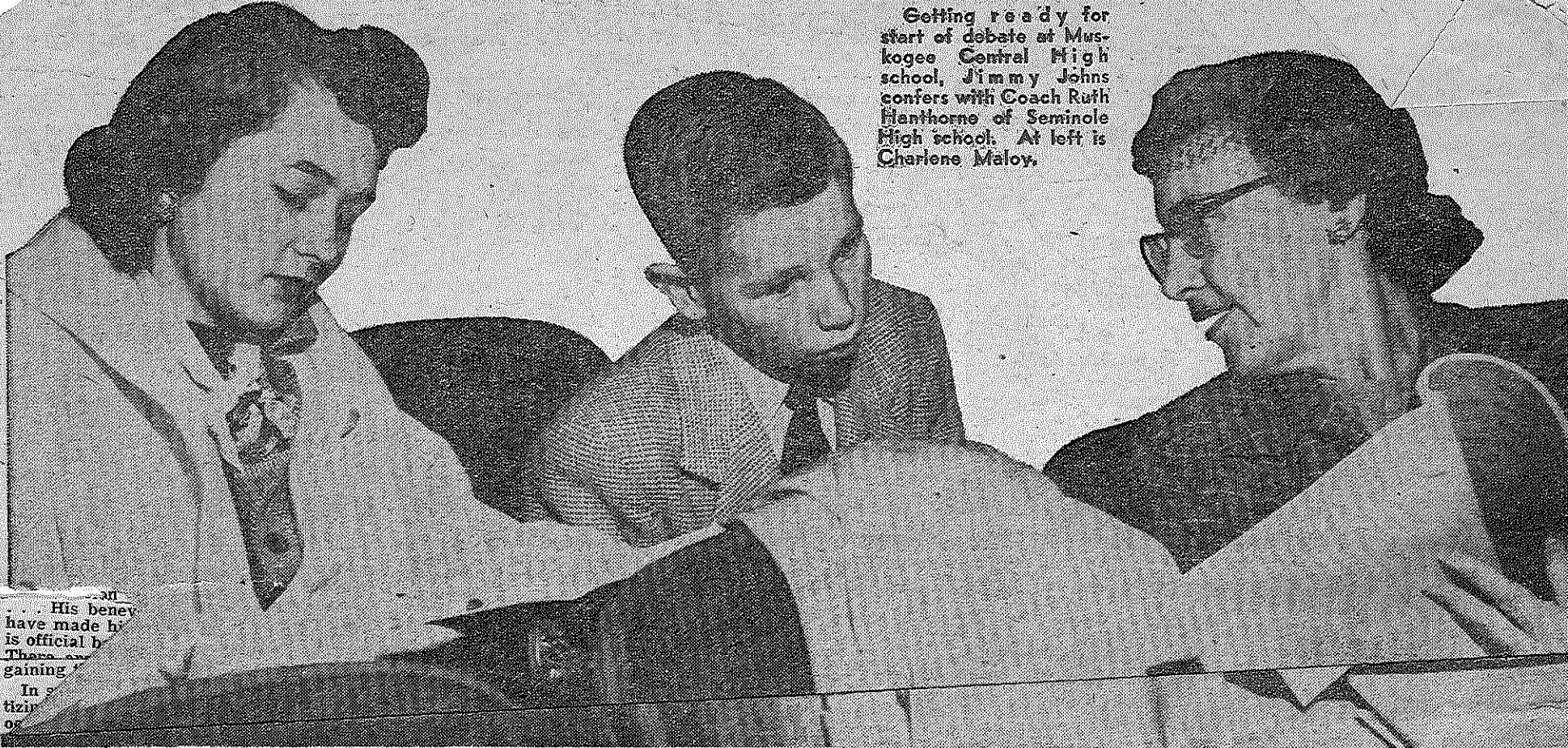


Getting ready for start of debate at Muskogee Central High school, Jimmy Johns confers with Coach Ruth Hanthorne of Seminole High school. At left is Charlene Maloy.



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# 'LITTLE NATIONALS

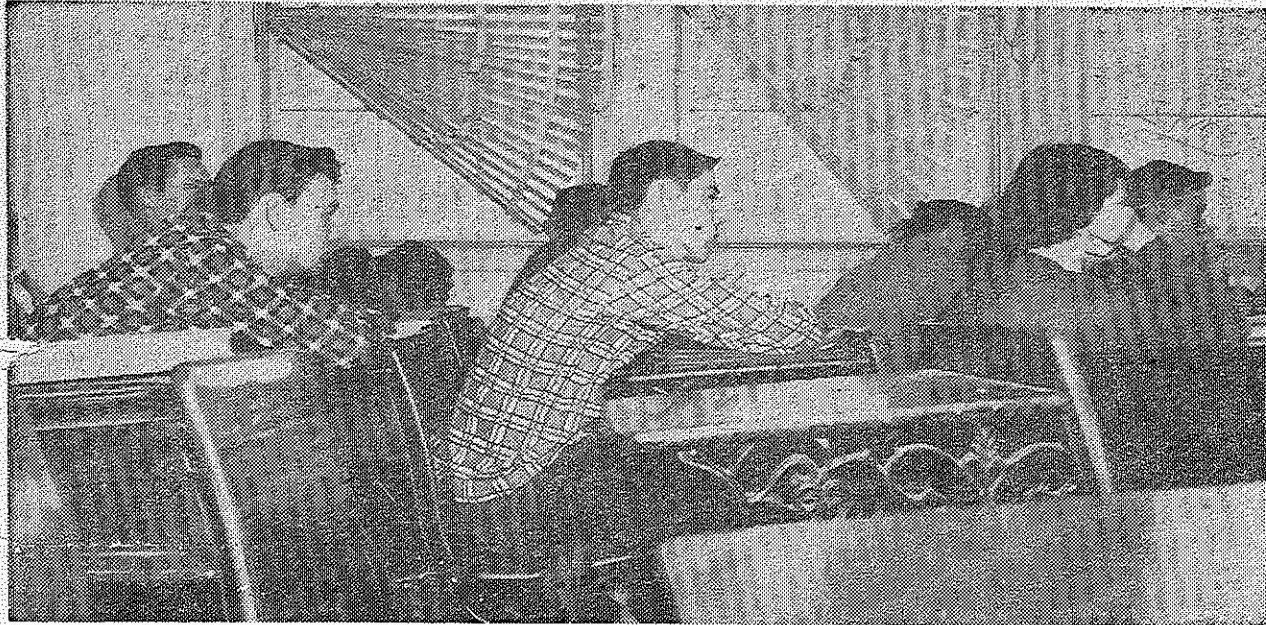
Story and Pictures  
By SAL VEDER  
Of the World



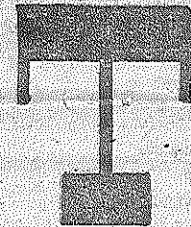
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Between debates two members of the Monett, Mo., High school team study notes in the virtually empty Central High auditorium. At left is Don Johnson, a junior, and at right, Darlene Adams, a senior.



Proficiency of student speakers at the "little nationals" held at Muskogee, is evidenced in attentiveness of student audience who heard the pro and cons of electoral college.



THE young man and seated him in the room, a girl center of the room, shuffled some and said . . .

"Ladies and gentlemen, the electoral has long outlived its usefulness . . ."

The young lady didn't say it like you'd think a high speaker would talk. She said it with calm dignity and fullness characteristic of good professional speakers.

But she was only one among many speakers, all going to be competing in the famed 6th annual "Little Nationals" speech tournament held at Muskogee's Central high school under sponsorship of the Rotary club.

Throughout two days the more than 200 students from 100 schools in six states competed in debate, reading, poetry, dinner and extemporaneous speaking.

"These students represent the best speakers in the state," said tournament director J. W. Patterson, of speech at Muskogee Central. "It is designed to train leadership. There are special programs for handling the tournament. There certainly is no reason why we shouldn't have special programs (such as this tournament) for those who will be leaders of this country."

Patterson pointed out that this form of expression is one that average high school students do not get.

"This competition furnished by the 'little nationals' provides experience in an easier manner and allows students to 'search' for the best within themselves," he declared.

Patterson, after meeting with the student speakers from Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana, Kansas, Missouri and Arkansas in the auditorium and later during classroom debates, said the group brought forth the "best yet" in the six-year history of the tourney.

The judges—teachers, college students majoring in speech and professors—had their comments to make.

Sonya Hively, Northeastern State college speech major and former little nationals contestant, thought that "competition was very keen . . . there are some outstanding speakers." She, however, felt that competition was not quite as sharp when she was in the tournament.

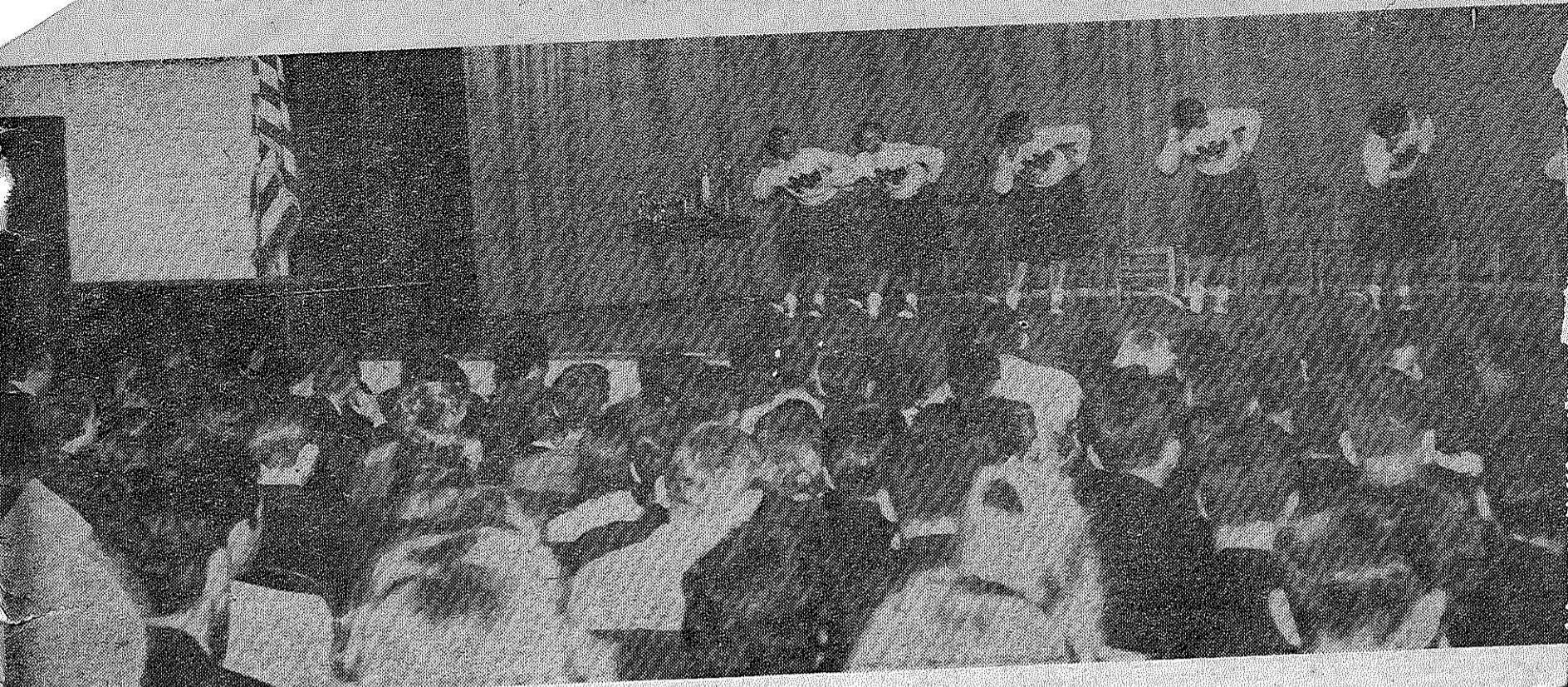
Said Mrs. Alma Doughty, listening to her first debate contest: "It's good and quite professional. The students who had here are very smooth speakers."

The only area tournament of its kind in the United States, the little nationals are a prep ground for the annual national tournament to be held this year at Philadelphia, Patterson said. "I'm quite proud of the record our speakers make."

Quoting Bruno Jacob, secretary of the National Speech League from Ripon, Wis., Patterson said "that if the same level of proficiency in the national tournament will be the same as that of the little nationals."

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Before start of "little nationals," cheer leaders strut their stuff on stage of Muskogee's Central High. Audience is composed of more than 200 student debaters from 30 schools in six states.



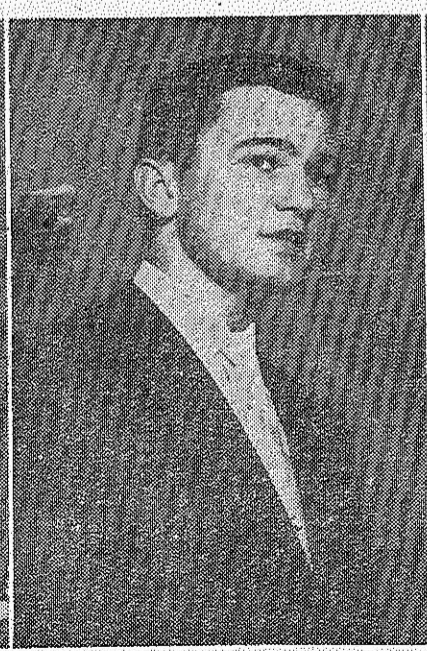
Smooth operation of "little nationals" is result of a hard working committee, some of whose members served as judges. Standing around Mrs. Russell Sorrells, are, left to right, Diana Bankston, Mrs. Bill Oglesbee, W. J. Patterson, Central High's director of speech, and Fred Dorward, student president of the National Forensic league.



At right: Comparing notes, while member of the opposing team presents argument, are members of the team from Picher High school. At left is N. B. East; at right, Ray Luckinbill.



Jim Hanner, Sand Springs, for two straight years has taken top honors, sparkling in oratory and extemporaneous speaking.



Appearing more like a young businessman, Robert Valerius, of Byrd High school, Shreveport, La., addresses student group during debate.



Arguing the question "that the president be elected by a direct vote of the people," DeLee Lantz of Cushing says, at right, "the electoral college has long outlived its usefulness . . ." and then continued to point up the "glittering frowziness of communism. . . ." at left.

