

The Mercer Cluster

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JACOB BEIL

death of the coalition

Out of the many paradoxes that come forth from an election, there is one so paradoxical in this election that it could have great bearing on the future of this country and especially its legislative future. Ever since 1938 and the Congressional elections of that year, there has been in existence a conservative coalition in both Houses of Congress composed of conservative Southern Democrats and conservative Northern Republicans. This coalition has been in existence ever since and has been very effective at times in stopping entirely or crippling liberal legislation. The coalition's first victory came when it stopped President Roosevelt's court packing plan. They handed him his first big legislative defeat and gave notice of their presence and power.

Through the administrations of four presidents and into the administration of a fifth, the coalition affected legislation through their power in committees or on the floor. It did not matter who was president or what his party was, for the coalition was in effect no matter who controlled Congress or the White House. Their power waxed and waned through various Congresses, but it remained. Since the 1958 Congressional elections, the Senate coalition has not been able to function very effectively because of the overwhelming strength of the liberals; however, the House coalition, maintained by disproportionate districts, archaic House rules, and Southern non-contested, seniority conscious members, has had a major effect in crippling, sometimes fatally, liberal legislation. Now this has changed.

President Kennedy was continually hampered and stopped in his efforts to carry out his program by the coalition. The new administration affected results only through the power and persuasion of Lyndon Johnson. Now as a result of the President's landslide victory there is a new House. Now there is, in reality, the fact that the House will join the Senate in having overwhelming liberal majorities. Forty new Democratic Congressmen have been elected as a result of the Goldwater debacle. These new Congressmen increase the already heavy Democratic majority of 7 to a heavy liberal majority of 140. These new Congressmen for the most part are very liberal and took their seats away from conservative Republicans. Thus the Republican portion of the coalition has been dealt a mighty blow. Such conservatives as Katherine St. George of New York and Bruce Alger of Texas and ultra-conservative Ed Foreman will not be seen on Capitol

Hill. Their seats and votes will be missed not only by the Republican minority but also by the coalition. On the Southern side of the coalition many Southern conservative Democrats were defeated in Alabama and other deep South states because of the Goldwater vote. These have been replaced by conservative Southern Republicans who really add nothing to the coalition because they lack seniority and cannot have ranking assignments because they are in the minority party.

These simple arithmetical majorities show just how badly the conservative Southern Democratic and Northern Republican coalition was defeated in the '64 elections. The coalition is dead for at least the next two years if not longer. What this means was simply stated by Missouri Congressman Richard Bolling who said before the election, "If we pick up only a dozen seats we will still have to make concessions to the coalition. But, if we net twenty, the whole ball game changes." The net gain as a result of the election was not twelve or twenty but FORTY. There is a new ball game in Washington to be played without interference or dilatory tactics by the coalition. What this means to the legislative program is extremely significant and profound. Such programs as Medicare, Federal Aid to Education and the other New Frontier legislation not passed in the past two Congresses and the Great Society program of President Johnson have sure prospects of passage. In history, this election could produce as much, if not more, profound effect as the election landslides of Roosevelt in the '30s had on the country.

The great paradox of this election is that the man most responsible for breaking up the log-jam of legislation is the very man in whom was centered the hopes and aspirations for power of the country's conservatives, Barry Goldwater. His defeat in the East, Mid-West and West enabled liberal Democrats to be elected over conservative Republicans. His victory in certain sections of the South enabled the defeat of arch-conservatives with long years of seniority and major committee assignments. These were replaced with a small band of conservatives with almost no effect in Congress. The paradoxes are many. For America given the "choice and not an echo" repudiation and thus the very man responsible for the future passage of liberal measures is the same man who was totally opposed to them. Odd indeed are the circumstances that make politics and produce victory and defeat for men, causes and bills.



THE LATEST IMPROVEMENT in Mercer's dining hall, the tray disposal belt simplifies matters for students clearing the Cafeteria of used trays. The long-requested screen, to shield the garbage disposal window from public view, has also been added.

Cafeteria Commended

The Mercer Cluster wishes to commend the Cafeteria staff on bringing in that mechanical tray-disposer. It has, we think, made things much easier and more pleasant; and we believe that it should result in more responsibility being shown by the students in clearing the tables of trays. We were especially pleased to see that a permanent screen has also been added, to shield diners from the rather unsightly picture of the garbage window.

We also wish to commend the Kitchen Staff for letting persons who have forgotten mealtickets to sign for their food, thus alleviating a problem (the person with ten minutes in which to eat, who has left his wallet in his room and is told he must fetch it before he can pass through the line with food) which has caused much bad feeling to be directed toward the Cafeteria staff in the past.

While speaking of the Cafeteria, the Cluster would like to make a few suggestions. (1.) At lunch and supper, have a pot of hot tea, some cups and milk available along with the iced tea; serve it like morning coffee to those who like a cup of tea with meals. Perhaps hot coffee with lunch and supper, for those who want it, would be a good idea too. (2.) Serve some head lettuce with the tomato when hamburgers are on the menu (if necessary, eliminate the slaw—few people eat it). (3.) Have a few bowls of jam available for the rolls at evening meal (this, we believe is now done occasionally; it is a good practice).

GBC Resolution Improper

Regarding the resolution which has been aimed at Mercer from the floor of the Georgia Baptist Convention, The Mercer Cluster would like to express resentment toward the idea of investigating Mercer, or any other Baptist educational institution in the state, for heresy, particularly, heresy in regard to so-called "liberal" interpretations of Scripture.

If the Baptist church is to hold free interpretation of the Bible as one of its basic beliefs, then the only heresy can be in holding such resolutions as that presented to the convention in anything but contempt, or in holding "accepted Baptist interpretation" as anything but an insignificant coincidence.

However, we can understand what seems to be the feeling of many Baptist ministers that Mercer is drifting away from religion in general and the Baptist church in particular. Believing this to be mainly a matter of "image", we suggest that to improve the image of Mercer as a Baptist University, the Christianity department should be given its own building, namely, the Economics building, which was formerly the Mercer seminary. Having a "Christianity building" gives a strong and favorable impression of religion being an important branch of study at a university. We would also suggest that a required course, or seminar, in Baptist belief and custom might be a valuable addition to the curriculum. This would not only tend, we believe, to appease critical elements in the convention, but, (more importantly), it would fill a definite blank space in most students' education.

PANHELLENIC SCHOLARSHIPS ARE OFFERED

Scholarships are presented annually by the Macon Panhellenic Council to upper classmen girls who achieve an A or B average. Sorority membership is not required, and the girl does not have to be following a specific course of study to apply. The scholarship is based upon need but is not necessarily for tuition. Since the scholarship has no strings attached to it, the recipient is not obligated to any specific use of the \$100-\$200 scholarship. For example, she may even use the money for her school clothes.

Preferably juniors and seniors are urged to apply now to Dean Helen Glenn, but the scholarship is not limited to just juniors and seniors. Joanie Bougher, a sophomore, applied during her freshman year and was presented this scholarship at the beginning of this year. Few people have applied for this scholarship so all girls are urged to apply if interested. One large scholarship or two small ones are presented annually.



"HURRY, WE MUST RETURN TO THE AD BUILDING BEFORE DAWN"



WHO
 Is the gentleman shown above Mercer Alumni will recognize him as one of their number. See next week's Cluster for more information.

MERCER BRIEFS

Three Mercer University faculty members attended the meeting of the Georgia Council on Teacher Education Monday and Tuesday at the Center for Continuing Education in Athens. Teachers attending were Dr. Bert Hamilton, Dr. Paul Cable, and Dr. Inez Smith, members of the Department of Education faculty.

Two freshmen enrolled in Mercer University's Walter F. George School of Law have been elected to the Court of Honor and Officers.

They are Craig Rowe Wilson of West Palm Beach, Fla., and James Croft of Tifton.