

# THE MERCER CLUSTER



"The South's Most Controversial Collegiate Newspaper"

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## Georgia Baptists Must Face Reality

by Johnny Turner

This is a very important day for both the Georgia Baptist Convention and Mercer University. As you probably already know, the Convention convened Monday and is scheduled to continue through Wednesday. This afternoon the Mercer University trustees' report on applications for federal aid is to be given. The trustees were instructed earlier this year to be prepared to report to the convention by the executive committee, following their applications for three federal construction grants.

The convention has voted three times in the past five years against federal aid for Baptist institutions, and this afternoon they will have one more chance. It is hoped that the delegates will consider a few facts and vote for the federal aid. These facts are not in any way secrets should be known by all the delegates since they were printed in the official publications of the G.B.C., The Christian Index.

The Executive Committee has on two different occasions overwhelmingly recommended to the convention sanctioning the use of federal loans by Mercer. Also Mercer has between 1956 and 1964 secured federal loans totaling over \$2,750,000 with the permission of the Georgia Baptist Convention.

The precedent has been set for borrowing federal money. The federal government has loaned the G.B.C. funds for the Georgia Baptist Hospital Nurses Dormitory, the hospital itself, the Baptist Village, Norman College, Shorter College, Tift College, and Truett-McConnell College. The convention spends approximately \$100,000 a year to amortize the debt on the Nurses Dormitory alone.

The delegates should also consider that any action of the convention which might penalize trustees for their decision would affect accreditation. Accrediting agencies such as the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and all those for professional schools, require that university trustees make decisions on all matters. The delegates should think long and

From the editor

## Act Now!

Within the past few months, movements have been organized and begun to stir and hopefully to eradicate student apathy of Mercer Students that has been so firmly implanted over the centuries.

Presently students are in the process of beginning a new student newspaper. This is good. For once someone has become upset and aroused. They are acting, voicing their opposition and disagreement of Cluster operations in a constructive manner. This the Cluster commends, not saying that we agree with your purpose, tactics or methods, but saying that we're glad that your posteriors are now in a vertical rather than a horizontal position.

Why do I commend this action and why have I allowed the situation to come to this point? After the campaign for office last Spring, I was elected with the understanding (I thought evident) that this new position would not change my philosophy, ideas or recognition of the many immoral and unjust acts committed in this nation and on this campus. Still today this position of editor has not clouded my eye to that reality. In fact in the position of editor, I've been extremely moderate in exposing my ideas and philosophy. I have tried to face issues and to make stands on those issues. I've taken great pains to cater to conservative as well as liberal viewpoints. Thus it is no regret to me about anything that has taken place this school year.

Mercer must become politically and socially active and has to confront national and international issues. Many schools in the Middle Georgia area are extremely inactive politically in the past, but they are now coming alive. A case in point is the situation at Georgia College in Milledgeville. Presently there are three student newspapers (*The Paper*, *The Power*, *The Humanist*) and the official college newspaper. Creation of these underground newspapers was necessary because the college newspaper was not political enough, and concerned of the student welfare. Also the administration at Georgia College has laid a firm hold on journalistic publications. This the Cluster takes a dim eye and

hard about this before they lash out at the trustees for accepting federal aid.

In 1968 the Doak Campbell Study reported that six Georgia Baptist colleges had serious financial needs which could only be remedied by an increase in the percentage of G.B.C. allocations for Mercer or acceptance of federal aid. The G.B.C. presently accounts for 3.5% of Mercer's operating budget which amounted to \$176,604 last year.

It is now a cold hard reality that Mercer must have access to federal money. The Georgia Baptists can either accept that fact or get emotional about it. They can not change the situation without spending money. Hopefully they will put aside their emotional objections and face reality. To do this would be to both their and Mercer's advantage.

## Apathy Continues

by Roger Bell

The freedoms and liberties of Mercer students are a curious animal. When compared to its brother at such schools as Bob Jones University, it seems rather friendly and domesticated. Yet, when compared to its first cousin at such places as Columbia and Berkley, it seems somewhat cold and unfriendly. However, the animal can be what the students wish it to be. To make it the "pride and joy" of the campus, there must be student involvement.

Student rights and liberties are so limited on this campus that the situation has almost reached the ridiculous. Most students are forced to live on campus. These same students are forced to purchase a meal ticket whether they desire one or not. Female students are forced to sign in and out of the dorm virtually everywhere they go. All students are forced to attend chapel once a week whether they want to or not. Students must sign an honor code, and then they are constantly haunted by informers and stooges. The student newspaper is subject to administrative censorship at any time. The student center has failed to live up to its name and proper function. There is little student involvement in regard to curriculum and university finances. This list could go on and on, but these restrictions on student rights are enough to exemplify the situation.

Once again we come to the way to improve the situation — student involvement. Students must organize discussions, dialogues with the administration, petition campaigns, peaceful or non-peaceful demonstrations; in other words, the student body must do whatever it takes to change this situation. Without the student involvement, little will happen and one day we might see that Bob Jones has become one of the South's most progressive universities. Can we afford to wait that long???

encourages the student movement. Condemnation is extended to these newspapers and to the enlightened people who are aware of the situation on the local and national scene, and who intend to do something regarding the situation. These underground papers are intended to eliminate the ignorance of students and to help the individual realize the rights that he is entitled to in an oppressed time. It is their purpose to promote humanitarian concepts on campus. Locally, the papers will focus on the faculty injustices, the disregard of women's rights, and the abuses of student rights inflicted by the college's administration. After the issues are focused definite steps will be sought to eradicate the injustices that prevail. Their undertaking cannot go unnoticed. They have begun to act.

Thus in regard to the campus, we have also got to quit justifying, criticizing, and playing this silly game of words. Middle Georgia is on the move and for Mercer to keep up to the pace we must act now! If anyone here at Mercer cares, don't wait a second longer!

# A Communication Gap

As the Georgia Baptist Convention is meeting in Atlanta this week, it seems appropriate to discuss very briefly Mercer's relationship with the Convention. So much has been written before that it seems ludicrous that anything new could possibly be said. Nevertheless...

It is time for people to think seriously about Mercer and about the Convention and to discard all stereotyped generalizations. This may come as a shock to my Georgia Baptists, but Mercer is not a hotbed of heresy and the average Mercer student is not a radical who heats his dormitory room by burning his draft card and pages from the Bible. Likewise, members of the Georgia Baptist Convention were born long after the Dark Ages and they are not purposefully seeking

## Greeks Are Great!

by Ted Kandler and Lynn Whatley

"Beyond the shadow of a doubt, the Mercer Greek System is great." In reply to a signed column by the editor which was published in the last issue of the *Cluster*, we, as Greeks, would like to express other facets of several of the points which he made. Since opinions expressed in a signed editorial are necessarily of a personal nature, not meant to present all sides, we wish to express a differing opinion.

We realize that there were certain good points in the editorial. However, we feel that the points were presented in such a way as not to encompass the general feelings of the Greeks. Because of the context, the statements were slanted and could not be looked upon objectively by the reader.

"If one is a Greek, he has really made it."

It is obvious that just because a person becomes a Greek he does not have it made on the Mercer Campus. The student leaders on campus come from the Greeks, Independents, and Unaffiliated segments. No Greek would ever attempt to argue that being a Greek is a prerequisite to success at Mercer either politically, socially or academically. One would expect that such a statement would least likely come from the editor because of his own achievements and perception.

At the same time, fellowship and friendship can certainly not be associated exclusively with the Greek Organizations. However, a fraternity offers a person the opportunity to choose the type of people with whom he wishes to associate. Joining a fraternity does not mean instant friendship. It means friendship that grows out of working together for common interest; out of a senior helping a freshman become adjusted to college life; out of a social function where everyone is enjoying himself. It is ridiculous to say that only fraternity and sorority people can enjoy this friendship. But it is just as ridiculous to criticize them for enjoying it as Greeks.

"Although I hate some of my brother's guts, they are basically nice guys."

Out of a group of sixty or so people it is indeed unrealistic to assume that everyone can get along with everyone else all the time. However, having "some of my brother's guts" is just not a factor within the fraternity. There are many times when we have misunderstandings, but there is a certain amount of respect that grows out of these disputes that results in a closer friendship. Hate grows out of misunderstandings that are not dealt with. The fraternity is conducive to an atmosphere in which the members can freely express their opinions and argue their likes and dislikes.

"The symbol of what Greeks stand for is uncriticizable."

The symbols or ideals of what a fraternity stands for are indeed "uncriticizable". However, we would not attempt to say that there is nothing wrong with the Greek System. We realize that there are some things within the fraternity system that need reevaluating and changing, and we want to change them in the light of these ideals.

"It is not a racist institution."

An individual Greek or an individual fraternity cannot be classified as racist simply because they are Greeks. Nor can an unaffiliated or Black student simply be classified as liberal because he is not a fraternity member. Racial, religious or political views within a fraternity are just as diversified as the individuals in the fraternity itself. This is the main reason why many white students, as well as Black students, have not been invited to join the fraternities at Mercer.

"You see it's my parents. Don't you understand?" The point made in the article about attitudes being fostered by the home is also true. Just as whites have been brought up with reservations against blacks; the blacks have been brought up with reservations against the whites. We do not think that either segment can say that it is not so. This would not be applied only to Greeks or Blacks, this includes Greeks, Independents, Unaffiliateds and Blacks. Many students, both black and white, have been brought up in a less prejudiced background than their fellow students, but many times we do not care to look at this aspect of the problem.

This has not been a recording! We as Greeks are tired of being told by non-Greeks what the fraternity system stands for. We know what it stands for and we know that the article by the Cluster Editor did not express what the Greeks really feel. Because we are interested in informing others about the Greek system, we welcome any Black students to discuss their ideas with us.

to destroy Mercer and Mercer's academic integrity.

Separation of Church and State has been a rallying cry of the Convention to prevent Mercer's applying for Federal funds. Unfortunately too many people are fighting for a slogan and are not looking at the problems and issues actually involved. Do people really think that the Board of Trustees will be supplanted by the United States Congress if Federal funds are acquired to help build a much needed infirmary? The principle of separation may be fine and necessary, but it should not be carried to an unwarranted extreme in its application. I feel that too many persons are not properly informed as to what all is involved in applying for and accepting grants from the Federal Government, and lack of information is always a dangerous thing.

Any institution whose primary concern is ideas will of necessity encompass many divergent viewpoints; it will have to encourage free thinking and not seek conformity. Lessons from history should tell us that the suppression of new ideas and thoughts rarely effect their demise (note what happened to Christianity when the Romans sought to outlaw it). The academic community must be free from all outside restraints on its teaching, for only then can true learning take place.

Most important of all, people should refrain from incorporating their own biases and prejudices into their theology; this same yet difficult and complex task would serve to alleviate many of the tensions presently existing between Mercer and Georgia Baptists. Let us seek to understand each other so that we might once again have the mutual respect and cooperation desired by both sides.

## On Capitol Hill



Given the strange circumstances surrounding the financial manipulations of Judge Clement F. Haynsworth, I was rather surprised at the endorsement of his nomination to the Supreme Court by the American Bar Association's Committee on the Federal Judiciary. Evidently, I was not alone in this respect, as Finkelshtein the following letter from a Professor at Harvard Law School points out.

A majority of the American Bar Association's Committee on the Federal Judiciary has approved President Nixon's nomination of Judge Clement Haynsworth to the Supreme Court of the United States despite the evidence that Judge Haynsworth participated in the decision of a number of cases in which he had a conflict of interest.

The fact that the chairman of the A.B.A. Committee, Lawrence E. Walsh, himself holds his appointment from President Nixon as special deputy to the Paris peace talks suggests that a majority of the committee does not recognize conflict of interest when it sees one.

Vern Countryman,  
Harvard Law School  
Cambridge, Mass.,  
October 15, 1969

What I found most encouraging about Professor Countryman's remarks was the support they have received from other legal academicians, as reflected in the following correspondence to Senator Quentin Burdick of North Dakota:

October 25, 1969

Hon. Quentin Burdick,  
Senate Office Building,  
Washington, D.C.:

We share, and recommend to you, the views concerning the value of the ABA Judiciary Committee's endorsement of Judge Haynsworth nomination to the Supreme Court expressed by Professor Vern Countryman in his letter to the editor of the *New York Times*, Oct. 21, 1969.

Dean Robert K. Rushing, Professor Ross C. Tidale, Professor Robert E. Beck, Associate Professor Alan Karibus, Associate Professor William Flach, Assistant Professor Lee Teitelbaum, Assistant Professor Joseph Goldburg, and Assistant Professor Richard Kuhns, University of North Dakota School of Law.

In closing, let me simply impart these words of wisdom, uttered by one of our most distinguished professors on campus. "Clement Haynsworth seems to be both morally and ethically disqualified to occupy a position on the bench of the Supreme Court. The greatest difference between him and the man he would be succeeding (ABE FORTAS) is that Fortas admitted his conflicting interests by returning his profits."