

# MERCER CLUSTER

Mirror of Students' thought and action



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## AN OPEN LETTER

September 20, 1947

Miss Laurie Shannon, Acting President,  
Pan-Hellenic Council,  
Mercer University,  
Macon, Georgia

Dear Laurie:  
There have been many conflicts in campus activities this week, some of it being between sorority rushing and Baptist Student Union activity. It is concerning this that I am writing to you.

I understand that your period of silence began September 14 and will extend through September 22. It has been this feature of your rushing which is of greatest concern, even though upon lengthy and thoughtful deliberation, I have become convinced that first-week rushing is unfair to both the sorority and the rushee, for neither can adequately decide about the other in such a brief length of time as this rush season.

It has been our experience this week that certain members of the B.S.U. who have responsible positions on the council, have been unable to perform the duties which they would like to do, because the performance of them would conflict with, or be an outright violation of, the rules governing silence during the week of rushing.

I would remind you that, though I am sure you are aware of the fact, B.S.U. had a social function last Monday evening, September 15, in conflict with a rush function of Chi Omega. This was entirely unintentional and unavoidable; we requested the time for the party through the office of the Dean of Women. If we had not been in conflict with Chi Omega, we would have been in conflict with the function of another of the sororities at a later day of the week.

The nature of B.S.U. activities for the first week of each school year is the introduction of the new student to the campus, the cultivation of a religious interest in each, and the development of a friendly attitude throughout the student body. If we had maintained a "hands off" respect for rushing, we would have miserably failed in our endeavor to do those things heretofore suggested. The purpose of rushing, however, (if I interpret correctly), is the selection by the sororities of the new girls (and some returning students, of course) which the sororities desire to pledge, and the acceptance of the sorority by the newcomer. In my humble opinion, a great deal of knowledge of and friendly intercourse with the new students would be a prerequisite for a component selection of prospective sorority members. Certainly, it is illogical and unreasonable to assume that a newcomer to the campus can make a thorough inquiry into and investigation of the nature of sorority fellowship, and arrive at the most desirable decision concerning the selection of a sorority which issued her a bid, in just one week in which she is permitted to speak to and visit with sorority members only at rush functions.

Such a system of rushing which is now practiced shows an utter disregard for the welfare of the sorority, for the intelligence of the new student, and for the interests and activities of other organizations, in that it prohibits a fair practice of friendly relationships, and restricts and minimizes the efficiency of other organizations.

I am aware that silence is imposed to prevent "hot boxing." Is there not, however, a great deal of such unfair rushing going on, in spite of silence, over the telephone and by male students? If there must be some kind of silence legislation, can there not be devised some plan which would allow organizations other than sororities an opportunity to serve the female students and enlist their interest and support? To all practical purposes and extent, a vast majority of the girls, both former and incoming students, are monopolized by the various sororities under the immunities afforded by the present rush rules.

These rules infringe upon and violate the principle of individual and organizational liberty. Consequently, they should be rectified so that they will recognize the sovereignty of each individual and organization, and allow an equal opportunity for all, especially non-sorority groups and individuals who do not plan to pledge a sorority.

I trust that you will make a thorough study of the problem, and take some measure toward its solution, so that there will be no such problem next year.

A copy of this letter is being sent to Jule Greene, Editor, The Cluster, for publication in the campus journal.

Sincerely,  
HUGH WAMBLE, President  
Baptist Student Union

## Freshman Rafting Approved By Student Council

Your student government held its first fall meeting in the Town Girl's Parlor last Wednesday. The business of the session was of vital importance to you.

Rafting rules have returned to the campus after a year's absence. Student assemblymen were told that the administration would cooperate and offer suggestions for raft-rules enforcement.

Student President Cloud Morgan stated that Council approved rules would be posted in prominent places about the campus, announced in chapel, and that fraternal and service groups would receive copies in order to acquaint both "rats" and upperclassmen with the 1947 regulations.

Your Student Activity Fund dollar will go further this year. A fifty cents per quarter cut has been made in the health and hospitalization appropriation. Most students have gotten little-if-any-benefit from the medical services offered. Now there'll be more for the things we really need.

## LEGION POST EXTENDS WELCOME

The Mercer Post of the American Legion extends a cordial welcome to the new students entering Mercer.

New veterans will be interested in knowing that Mercer has an American Legion post on the campus—Henry-Dickey-Wages Post 178. The post was named after former Mercerians who lost their lives in the recent war. Regular meetings are held the first and third Monday of each month, seven-thirty p.m., in the Legion room of the Co-op.

At a called meeting September 22, 1947 the following officers were nominated for the coming year: Essley B. Burdine, Commander; Raymond Harris, Vice-Commander; David Courtney, Adjutant; and John McTyre, Chaplain. The election of officers will be held October 6, 1947 at the regular meeting. At this time the floor will be open for further nominations. All members are urged to attend, and to take an active part in the program. Veterans interested in obtaining membership are also invited.

## ROTC Praised By Military Unit; Registration Falls Short of Goal

### Program Passes First Inspection

The Mercer ROTC program, commanded by Col. John Meade, has passed its first inspection by the Georgia Military Unit, and Col. Butler, commander of the Georgia Unit, has declared himself well pleased with the progress made at Mercer.

After many weeks of preparation by the staff composed of Col. Meade, PMS&T, Maj. Malcolm C. Johnson, Asst. PMS&T and six enlisted men, all veterans of foreign service, the unit is now carrying out its plans for furnishing new officers to the Army Equipment which has been ordered is now coming in and the courses of instruction furnished by the War Department to be used as guides will soon be given to the new officer candidates.

According to Maj. Johnson there are approximately 100 students now enrolled in the program, about one-half being veterans who by virtue of their military service are placed in the advanced class.

Included in the program will be a rifle team composed of members from all the classes which will hold competitive matches with other ROTC units. A rifle range is now being constructed in the basement of Edgewood dormitory where the elementary class will fire small-bore weapons. The advanced members will study the mechanism of the 105mm Howitzer and the 90mm Anti-Aircraft guns furnished by the Army. They will receive firing practice during the summer at some army installation.

### Faculty Additions Made To Meet New Enrollment

The faculty of Mercer has been increased this quarter in order to meet the necessities of the student body which is larger than ever before.

Included in the additions are Mr. Theodore Boushy, Miss Mary Popkins, Mr. James Stertz, Mrs. Aline Owens, Mr. James C. Quarles, Mr. Oliver A. Rice and Mrs. Vernon Wallace.

Also among the new faculty members is Mr. F. H. O'Neal who will act as Dean of the Law School. He is a former Navy officer and until recently was the Dean of a Mississippi college.

Another newcomer is Dr. E. P. Vandiver who will take over the duties of the English department. (Continued on Page 2)

### DRAMATIC FRAT HONORS POPKINS

Miss Mary Brooks Popkins, who this quarter joins the Mercer faculty as an instructor in the Speech department, was voted honorary membership in the Zeta Pi cast of Alpha Psi Omega, National Honor Dramatic Fraternity. The first meeting of Alpha Psi Omegas' tenth year on the campus was held Wednesday afternoon in the speech classroom. Presiding was Tom Morton, who confidently predicts a successful year for this group.

### UNDERGRADUATES SIGNING TOTAL 98

Mercer's ROTC critics have won a dubious victory. The number of undergraduates signing for the program was a mere 98. University officials had expected the total to pass the 400 mark.

A survey of campus opinion gives several reasons for the small turnout of officer candidates. Most under graduates were misled by conflicting statements about ROTC. The program is not compulsory, and it may be substituted for PT. Many World War II vets on the campus will tell their 17 and 18-year-old classmates that the life of an enlisted man is not an enviable one during a war. The ROTC is a good means of escaping such a fate if and when the next war comes, they say.

Colonel John Meade, CO of the Mercer unit stated that, contrary to some opinion, he ministerial group on the campus was definitely not the factor behind the situation. The parents of most non-veteran college students missed both world wars, the colonel explained. They don't know what war is like and, as a consequence, cannot have the same desire to be prepared in the event of a third catastrophe. Because of this, their sons are not receiving training that will equip them to take their places in the nation as trained citizen reserves.

Here, in brief, is an outline of the ROTC program for Mercer undergraduates: if you are a veteran of World War II with less than two years military service, or have no (Continued on Page 2)

## CHANGES MADE IN LAW SCHOOL

Classes in the Walter F. George School of Law got underway this quarter with an enrollment of 128 students.

Dean O'Neal, who succeeded Dean Feilds as head of the school, announced that the case system of teaching would be employed. The case system involves the study of actual cases rather than the rules of court procedure. Students are required to take thirteen hours of study each quarter for nine quarters in order to graduate.

Moot court, which gives the students a chance to practice court trials and proceedings, will be held every other Thursday. Cubledge Snow, prominent Macon attorney and member of the law school faculty, acts as Justice during these meetings.

Several changes in the faculty of the school have been made during the last school year. Dean Feilds, who was in charge until last March, is now teaching at the University of Georgia. Ivan Rutledge resigned as instructor at the end of the spring quarter to take a job at Washington, D. C. These men have been replaced by instructors Quarles and Rice. Other instructors include McEwen, Barnes, Nedler, and Shi.



The Reverend James Gail Stertz, our Director of Religious Activities, was graduated from the Maplewood High School, St. Louis; then received his A.B. degree from William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo. In May, 1947 he was graduated from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary with a B.A. degree. He is a member of the Kappa Alpha Fraternity.