

Homecoming plans Are Biggest Ever

Homecoming this year is still on the drawing boards of administrative and student committees. Plans already announced include many extras.

Six days of festivities include the ball game, parade, dance, barbecue, worship program, pageant, and dedication of the student center. Homecoming is not usually this big.

UNIQUE POSITION

We are in the unique position of celebrating the 125th anniversary of the University. We are at the culmination of the first phase of construction and renovation improvements. And we are celebrating a yearly event.

Everything possible is being done to make this the biggest event in Mercer history. Announced plans indicate just that.

Special Interest Groups Needed on MU Campus

Mercer is bubbling over with groups, organizations, clubs, forums, teams, councils, committees and the like.

Besides 12 social organizations, there are seven religious organizations and 21 honoraries, professional groups, and clubs. Now who said, "There isn't anything to do at Mercer." (If you really wanted to, you could go to a meeting every night, be on several hundred committees at once and have every chapel announcement apply to you.)

Despite this exciting challenge to join and participate, we have a small complaint. Where are the special interest club? The science department has them. There are activities for music lovers and young actors. This is where it ends.

The professional clubs may serve the purpose to an extent, but they cover too large a group. The need is for organizations which will provide actual entertainment, companionship and room for expression for small enthusiastic groups.

CLUB NEEDS

We need a club for those interested in art; one for literature enthusiasts. Why not a French club? Is anyone interested in the classics? This type of activity arouses more individual interest, more active membership and is, pardon the expression, more fun.

The requirement of interest or ability makes a smaller and closer group and generally frightens away those who'd like to have their picture appear on every page of the Cauldron.

If you can't find a club to suit your need, start your own. It's been done.

Something that Shines On Most Campuses

We ran into a guy from Tech last week. He is a senior at the engineering school.

Something glittered from his right hand.

"What's that?" we asked.

"This is what's commonly known as a senior class ring, stupid!"

We recoiled quickly, and apologized for the apparent insult.

And we determined to take a course at Mercer in the subject.

Dr. Glover's Chapel Speech

Out of all the trumpeting and blowing that has come from the Supreme Court's decision of May 1954 and from the ringing of paratroopers' heels in the streets of Little Rock, one of the most penetrating analysis was presented in chapel Friday by Dr. Willis B. Glover, Mercer history professor.

Printed here are excerpts from that speech.

My subject this morning is some political aspects of the race problem. Many voices have been raised in defense of the Negroes. Many others have risen in defense of the pore white trash who are afraid their daughters will marry niggers unless forbidden to do so by law. But hardly a voice has been raised in defense of those who stand to be hurt most in the present crisis. I propose this morning to speak a word in defense of the South. I am a Southerner by birth and a Southerner by choice, and I don't want to see the South destroyed just as she arrives at the possibility of the greatest age of creativity in her history. The South I defend has been spoken of as the most rapidly growing industrial area in the nation. The South I defend has in the last two generations produced in the University of North Carolina, the University of Texas, Duke and Vanderbilt four universities worthy to take their places by the University of Virginia among the most respected centers of intellectual life in the nation—and other Southern schools are rapidly approaching this level.

A major source of confusion regarding this very pressing problem is that we have tended to approach it either on the level of superficial regional sentimentality or on some high moral level, and have thus obscured the immediate, practical, political problem. Though I recognize that politics can never be entirely divorced from ethical considerations, the question at this stage is essentially political, and I propose so to treat it.

The Supreme Court on May 17, 1954, decided that laws which prevent Negroes from attending tax supported white schools are unconstitutional. The decision does not specify that all segregation is illegal, but merely that Negroes cannot be legally discriminated against in state schools. Any court which interprets the fundamental law of a country normally bases its decision on the basic political tradition of that country and the moral sense that pervades the society. There can be little doubt that the Supreme Court was in this case interpreting the constitution in line with the moral sense of the national community. The reaction of the national press and the two major political parties has been unmistakably clear.

If the nation as a whole did not approve the decision, we might amend the constitution and thus circumvent the court. Even what passes for political leadership in Georgia has not thought this possible.

Now if the federal government could be easily bluffed, this big talk might work. But they didn't bluff worth a hoot in Arkansas, and they might be so inconsiderate as to call a bluff in Georgia. What will we do then? In Arkansas not a single shot was fired and the Arkansans are Southerners too. Do we really want to risk a contest of arms with federal troops? Am I talking nonsense? Of course, it's nonsense, but it is all we have got out our political leaders.

It is a fact that the intergration of all or most Georgia schools any time in the near future would seriously endanger the social fabric and might produce a reign of terror which only the strictest military occupation could cope with. Nobody wants that.

It is a further fact that most Georgia Negroes do not desire to attend white schools in the face of the feeling against it. Many are content now, and others would be content with improved Negro schools.

Let's look at one more fact. The minority of Negroes who would make a sustained effort to get into white schools would not threaten the life of those schools or the fabric of social life in Georgia any more than Negroes in Georgia Pullmans and on Georgia golf courses do. The Negroes who would make the effort would be few in numbers and above average in intelligence.

For one thing, the probability is high that segregated schools would be preserved in Georgia as long as the social organization of Georgia communities makes that the most feasible way to provide public education. Segregation has remained for generations in Northern communities where it is not enforced by law. It may be, of course, that the continued evolution of Georgia society will some day end segregation, but that is not an immediate problem, and will not in any case be so serious if the conditions that make segregation desirable have disappeared. Actually, the ardent segregationist who would make an intelligent appraisal of all the facts might well conclude that the honest acceptance of the Supreme Court decision while Georgia is still free to restrict its application to cases of sustained individual demand is probably the best chance we have to maintain segregation as the general pattern of Georgia life. It is those who want forced intergration as soon as possible who ought to support the policy of Talmadge and Griffin and Faubus.

Another result of a policy similar to that of North Carolina would be that Georgia would be operating within the law. The psychological effect of this on our sense of self-respect is important. The only way to preserve states' rights is through the exercise of these rights in a legal and responsible manner.

If these judgements are wrong and if an honest attempt to abide by these decisions of the court creates an impossible social situation, then and then only should we consider the radical step of abolishing the public schools. A situation calling for such action is possible, but not probably. The idea of abolishing public schools rather than let one Negro in a white school is foolish sentimentality. Our whole political system is based on compromise. Even in race relations we have settled many issues in the past by compromise, and it will not disgrace us to seek a reasonable compromise now.

My primary concern in this crisis is not for the Negroes—their lot is improving, and I think it will continue to improve despite the Supreme Court's decision. The effect on the strength of the nation of Southern unwillingness to abide by the law is of more concern; and the demand of some Southerners that the whole nation back down in face of threats of armed resistance to law is ridiculous. But my main concern is for the South, the South as a region, and the white South in particular. If the South retreats from this political problem into a haze of cheap sentimentality and bravado campaign slogans, she is headed for disaster. Southern higher education, Southern economy, and Southern politics have already suffered real damage, but the possible damage is far greater than we have yet experienced. It is not the Negroes or the federal government or the Yankees that will be the primary victims of the light-headed sentimentality of Southern political leaders, but the South itself—the South as a region, and particularly those white Southerners who have something to lose.

MARTY LAYFIELD

Sputnik and You

It would seem that the topic of conversation these days is Sputnik and the Russian transcontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). It also seems that this is a good time for we Americans to consider the real meaning of Sputnik or as someone put it, "That doggie in the window."



Since this is the week set aside as American Education Week, we have even more reason to stop our frantic movement and consider this formidable challenge hurled at the US by the Soviets.

I believe all of us will agree that the Administration's realization that the country has a deepseated concern for the future scientific position of our country.

A look at several figures shows that this concern comes none to quick. Last year, there were only 4,320 newly-qualified science teachers graduated in the U. S. This is a 52.5 per cent drop from the 9,096 graduated in 1950. Another fact is that of the 1956 science graduates only 59.4 per cent entered the teaching field.

Almost the identical situation exists in the mathematics field. There were 4,618 graduates in 1950, 2,544 in 1956. Of these 2,544 only 66.3 per cent became teachers. Another question is: How long will they remain in the low salary teaching field?

What is the significance of all this in our progressive nation? The extraordinary conclusion is that only as America challenges its young people to accept a place in the brilliant drama ahead will we begin to reach the once held heights of stardom. Only if we reconsider past decisions about our educational setup and draw new conclusions in the light of the historical events of our times can we find ourselves gaining the final triumph and victory.

The world awaits our decision and we dare not delay long in giving it to them. The leadership of the West has been threatened by a sinister peasant holding fantastic power. Sputnik II is a symbol of this power. The situation cannot remain as it is for long. Our own apathy has aided in the creation of this breathless moment.

The challenge has been hurled! It strikes at the very roots of life and destiny! The time for action is now!

BUDDY HURT

A Suggestion

by Buddy Hurt

What with all the change being wrought in the Mercer campus, it is not out of place to suggest one in the catalogue.

This suggestion—a polite one, I might add—has to do with students and courses. Let us take an example.



For your work in the lower division of Mercer, you are required to take a math course. Your choice is limited.

You may take Math 10 (basic) or Math 11 (college algebra) or Math 12 (trigonometry). It is a very long shot that you many not need any one of them. And there is a problem.

Many high schools, particularly those in the cities, offer college algebra courses. Almost all offer trigonometry. So a student can very easily come to Mercer and not need any one of the schools lower math courses.

The same situation exists right on down the line. The rules can handcuff you in your foreign language or even English.

You may have had one year of a foreign language in high school. And you might have learned it well. If so, a 50-type language course is where you belong. But back you go to 12.

It is probable the whole set-up is based on the assumption that you didn't learn what you should have in high school. If you did, you get the dubious privilege of sitting through it all over again.

If there's anything quite as exasperating as being told what you already know, I haven't come up against it. It is surely more exasperating to sit through a whole quarter of being told what you already know.

It is a quarter lost. A quarter when you could have been taking something worthwhile. A quarter when you could have been learning something. A quarter when you wouldn't have wasted your time.

Admittedly only a few students are affected by the book's lock-step type regulations. But it would be so easy to change.

The Mercer Cluster

MERCER UNIVERSITY, MACON, GEORGIA
NOVEMBER 15, 1957 VOLUME 38, NUMBER 8

ALAN M. WARR
Editor in-Chief

BUD CAMPBELL
Business Manager

BUDDY HURT
Managing Editor

JULIA WILLIAMS
Asst. Business Mgr.

Editorial Department: Executive Editor, John Kaufman; News Editor, Mary Etta Clark; Staff: Betty Bryant, Tommy Holland, Norman Cavendar, Jane Oliver, Bonnie Perry, John Currie, Dot Thompson; Sports Editor, Cliff Hendrix; Staff: Gertrude Crouse, Sammy Letson, Furman York, Jerry Bray; Society Editor, Charlotte Moore; Services Department: Manager, Jerry Dodd; Staff: Alan Smith, Jerry Pearce; Secretary, Roma Martin.

The Mercer Cluster is published weekly, except during holiday and examination periods, by the student body of Mercer University, Macon, Georgia, under the authority of the Student Government Association. It is written, edited and published by the undergraduate student body of Mercer University. All uncredited opinions in it are the opinions of the student editors, and not necessarily the University's viewpoint. All letters to the editor must be signed; names will be withheld on request. Letters do not necessarily reflect the policy of the paper or the opinion of the editors. Letters should not be longer than 300 words. Address all letters to Editor, The Mercer Cluster, Box 8, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia.