

# The Mercer Cluster

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MANAGING EDITOR



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Letters to the editor are published if signed. Signer's name can be withheld for legitimate reasons.

## How Do Students Feel?

Many people in the state of Georgia have been surprised at the strong stand taken by students at the University of Georgia to maintain an open, even if not segregated, university.

We at Mercer have not yet been faced with this same predicament. As students at a private institution, we will probably not encounter this problem as the University of Georgia students have.

But just how do we as students in a segregated, private liberal arts college feel? Would we leave if negro students were permitted in Mercer? Have we as students a position?

Perhaps SGA could take a poll. The results would be interesting and would give the Mercer family and the state of Georgia an idea of where the Mercer student body takes its stand.

## 'Tis Good To Pay Tribute

Dr. Dowell once explained that he was the "culprit" who was responsible for originating Founders' Day. But it is a good thing to take time out and review our past; to pay tribute to the dedicated men and women who contributed to the building of our institution.

There were the early leaders—Billington M. Sanders, Jesse Mercer, Adel Sherwood who devoted their time, talent, money to the establishment and development of this school. For these men and their foresight we should be grateful.

There were the leaders who guided the institution during the days of the War and who led to the establishment of Mercer in Macon. To them we owe a debt.

There were the presidents here at Macon who have worked for the bettering of the university through expansion in plant facilities, increase in endowment and improvement of the quality of the faculty. To those who've contributed their time for this, we, too, are obligated.

Yes, it is a good thing for the Mercer family to gather together once a year and pay tribute to those who founded our institution.

## Mercer Can Profit From Alumni Day

Today the Mercer Alumni Association is meeting to vote on proposed changes in its constitution to allow Alumni Day to be held during school year instead of after spring quarter.

We hope the association approves these plans, for there are very definite advantages to having this alumni day program during the regular academic year's sessions.

Relations between students and alumni can be built and strengthened by such a program in the school year. Heretofore, it seemed as if Mercer recognized two groups, its student body and its alumni. Before graduation seniors were members of the student body; after graduation, they cut all ties with the student body and became alumni.

There are advantages to having the alumni on campus during the year. Lawyers can meet with law students; teachers can confer with students who contemplate entering the public teaching profession; doctors and dentists can discuss problems with our pre-med and pre-dental students; ministers can bring up problems in their groups with the ministerial students that can bring the ministers into an awareness of what they will face outside the college atmosphere.

Social groups will be given the opportunity to entertain their alumni, in the proposed program planned by the joint committee of members of the alumni association and student body.

We as students can profit from Alumni Day; our institution can also profit from the strengthening of the ties between these two groups.



JOHN WEATHERLY

## An Eventful Week

We have had a very eventful past few days—set off by Judge W. A. Bootle's order that Miss Hunter and Mr. Holmes be allowed to enter the University of Georgia. After allowing a stay which is denied by Judge Tuttle and the U. S. Supreme Court, we are relieved to learn that Gov. Vandiver is aware of the subservency of state power to federal power. We are heartened to learn that he chooses not to be "a party to defiance of federal law" and thus refrains from throwing the area effected into chaos through a path of resistance and defiance trod by Gov. Faubus and Gov. Davis.

These things that he could have done, he did not do, and for that we may be grateful. After a state of the state message marked by little content concerning the specifics of the problem, but coming out favorably for children, he moves to which he urges the legislature to eliminate since cut off funds to Georgia under a '56 statute current developments turned it "from a source of hope to an albatross." But Judge Bootle saved him from having to strike out their law by ordering Vandiver to keep the university open. He didn't like to be told what to do. But he had called school closure "the saddest duty" of his life.

At most of the crisis, Georgia students were friendly toward the pair, but a riot caused their temporary suspension Thursday morning.

Meanwhile, back at Mercer an effigy of Judge Bootle, a former dean of our law school, is found dangling from the arch at the entrance of Tattal Square Park. President Harris comments that "I would seriously doubt that any Mercer student would do it." At Georgia students conduct themselves on the whole with the degree of order hoped and asked for by their university, their student leaders, and the Governor himself.

Such are the stream of events. The air is a little clearer now. The state is "off the hook" and free to enact local option and pupil placement law such as they have in North Carolina which would provide for the barest minimum of integration. The state can stop meeting the ideological fervor of the Negroes (reflected in Hamilton Holmes statement that he and Miss Hunter "should conduct ourselves so we do credit to our race and change the stereotype of the Negro" with sheer emotion. And in doing so she will probably learn that a lack of "massive resistance" is not met with "massive attendance" on the part of Negroes. It has been true for North Carolina for some time now.

And as the dust settles we find Mercer, Emory, Agnes Scott, and other Southern church-related schools in an interesting position. As private schools we cannot be touched by court order, under the present interpretation of the U. S. Constitution. So what is to be our future? As secular schools give way to desegregation either through court order or the shifting tide of opinion, we may remain as the last "strongholds of segregation," static, unwilling to buck local custom. We may do so as Southern private schools. But we are also caught in the stream of Christian tradition. And this tradition calls into serious question the exclusion of qualified Negro students purely on the basis of race and local custom. This will probably make a difference in the long run. (Students at Duke are working actively to desegregate their school. Georgetown College in Kentucky desegregated through the actions of its president and trustees in the early fiftys.) But how long will it take and under what circumstances? The question has been put this way, "Can we by grace what Georgia is doing by law?"

RALPH BASS, JR.

## Where Does Mercer Stand?

Just what is the official position of the administration on admitting students of another race to the university? As far as I know the trustees—if they have the authorization—have not come face to face with a defined public standing on this matter. As far as I know the Georgia Baptist Convention has never stated finally what its position is. During the recent session in Savannah, the convention moved to maintain "open schools." What relation does this have to their own schools? The state of Georgia has just passed through an intensely critical period. The state university

has removed the bars that denied admittance negro students. A secular institution of high education in our state is now integrated; how Mercer as a Baptist or Christian or church-related institution going to face the problem?

As a student I would like to know the position of my school on this issue. As a Baptist I would like to know the position of my denomination now on the matter of opening the doors to Mercer to students without regard to race. As a Christian I would like to know how this church-related institution stands.

## LETTERS TO EDITOR

### Otto's Chapel Talk

Mr. Ralph Bass, Jr.  
Editor, Mercer Cluster

Dear Sir:

On the fourth of January Dr. Robert Otto spoke to the attentive masses in chapel concerning the controversial subject of integration or, perhaps more correctly, the twin subjects of integrationists and segregationists. Dr. Otto, I think, was well within his capabilities in discussing openly the friction and misunderstanding that exists between these two groups. I personally was glad to hear Dr. Otto's appeal for increased understanding between segregationists and integrationists for it gave me the excuse that I seemingly have been waiting for in order to share with others some of the facts I have recently learned concerning this crisis which faces us today.

The topic I wish to discuss is the extent to which and the measures by which the Communists have induced and exploited our racial turmoil.

Race friction generates a great deal from intolerance—not from what today is called "discrimination." Two world wars in quick succession bred a maximum of intolerance which the Communists quickly turned to their advantage. The method used by the Communists has been the employment of a subtle and crafty form of psychological warfare which has enabled them to gain control of the minds and direct the actions of educated, prominent, well-meaning people to the extent that they have become mere puppets

dancing, usually unknowingly, to the tune of the Communists masters.

The Communists begin their psychological warfare by confusing the people they dupe with misinterpretation, semantics and pseudo-science. For instance, Webster's College Dictionary 1956, defines the word "discriminate" as "judge (respecting merits)," and "discriminating" as "showing good taste." The Communists, however, have taken these words and twisted their meaning so that to the average person "discriminate" does not mean "showing good taste" but means, instead, an attempt to brow-beat people because of their race or religion.

In the field of anthropology, the Communists have collected a group of scientists—some actually under communist discipline, and some merely duped—to issue scholarly sounding treatises that there is no difference due to race. At the same time, they have, by using prominent sociologists, put out a propaganda which purports to prove that all differentiation of race and racial characteristics is bad.

Politically they have used all the prominent figures they could obtain—and they started with the President and worked down—and persuaded them to insist that all races must be driven together socially and educationally by force of arms if they deem it necessary.

These are some of the general areas in which the Communists breed corruption and turmoil in America. If the kind editors of the Cluster will permit, I should like to continue this discussion in additional letters, having constantly in mind Dr. Otto's appeal for "understanding."

Sincerely,  
Richard A. Stephenson

