



**RALPH
BASS, JR.**

**John
BIRCH**

"Lynch St. Birch" read one sign that appeared on campus, March 30, 1939, the time of Mercer's last heresy trial. John Morrison Birch, senior and one leader of the student movement to purge the faculty of heretical teachers, was the brunt of this attack.

Birch along with 12 other Mercer students had become disturbed over the teachings of five Mercer faculty members. Organizing themselves into a "fellowship" group, they sent letters to 1,000 Baptist ministers in the state informing them of the heretical teachings of the faculty members.

These faculty members were accused of saying such things as "There were no such persons as Adam and Eve," "You don't have to believe on Jesus Christ to be saved," "The Bible contradicts itself," "It was not necessary for Christ to die to free man," and "The Bible is not divinely inspired."

This fellowship group was considered influenced by Frank Norris, the "pistol packing parson" of Texas, who was visiting the late Eugene Talmadge in the state about this time. Later Birch became a member of the first graduating class from Norris' seminary, the Bible Baptist Seminary of Fort Worth, Texas, and was sent as a missionary to China by the splinter Baptist group that Norris headed.

In addition to Birch, the other students included C. K. Everett, who spent one quarter at Mercer, later graduating from Southern Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky and now living in North Dakota; J. B. Pickern, a minister, now deceased, who was freshman student advisor at Mercer; Julian Dyess, a minister who was later graduated from the Baptist seminary at New Orleans; James Vinson, now a WMAZ radio announcer, and R. J. Price, who spent just one year here.

Also in the group was William M. Kirkland, who later changed his views concerning the accused. Kirkland received his Ph.D. from the University of Edinburg, after having gotten his M.A. from Columbia. He also attended Union Theological Seminary. Following his years at Mercer, Kirkland became an Episcopal minister and is now a rector in Charleston, S. C.

Three others, C. N. Larsen, C. J. Stred and W. J. Peacock, never finished their studies for a bachelor's degree at Mercer. Peacock did, however, require his M.A. in education from Mercer in 1952. Reid Lunsford, World War I veteran and ministerial student, was classed among the leaders of the group.

E. C. Sheehan, now pastor of the Mikado Baptist Church in Macon, was also among the 13 accusing students. Sheehan accused Welcome Talmadge Smalley, long time professor of English, of repeatedly bringing up the question, "Can a good man, Christian or not, go to heaven?" Smalley said Sheehan was the "only student who has objected to my lectures in my 26 years of teaching."

Smalley was among the five faculty members accused. Also in the faculty group were Dr. Josiah Crudup, then in the physics department, now president of Breunau; James E. Wallace, an assis-

(Continued on page 4)

Von Braun Speaks Alumni Day

A speech by an outstanding American scientist, the induction of the June graduates into the alumni association, and seminar sessions with alumni and graduates are part of the annual Alumni Day exercises for this weekend, May 12-13.

Dr. Werner von Braun, director of the George C. Marshall Space Flight Center at Huntsville, Alabama, will speak to the alumni, student body and guests of the university, Saturday morning, May 13, at 11:30 in the quadrangle, if the weather permits. Outside seating will be provided for the 2,000 persons expected to attend.

Seminar sessions will also be a part of the mornings' activities, with the seniors and alumni divided into business, education, law, ministerial and science groups. Each of these groups will meet on the campus at 10 a.m.

During the 11:30 alumni meeting, presided over by H. H. (Trot) Ware, Jr., class of '23, seniors will be inducted into the alumni association and will be presented with a certificate denoting their membership. Officers will also be elected for the coming year.

The annual alumni luncheon will be held around 12:15. Students, alumni and guests of the university will be served barbeque on the grounds. Alumni will sit in the university cafeteria at tables for the classes.

Special emphasis is given each year to the silver and golden reunions. This year the class of 1911 and 1936 will be recognized and certificates will be presented to them during the business session.

President Ware will present awards for meritorious service in alumni work to several alumni in the morning's program in Willingham Chapel and Thomas J. Holmes, director of university development and alumni relations, will make a special award.

Alumni are invited to attend the final performance of Moliere's "Tartuffe" to be presented in Willingham Chapel, Friday night, and also to attend the baseball game to be played Saturday afternoon.

The business group of alumni and seniors will be meeting in the faculty trustee room. They will discuss "Contributions of the Liberal Arts Education to the Businessman."

Members of the education group will discuss "Some New Ideas in Public Education in Georgia," while the lawyers meet in the moot court room of the law building and talk about "What the Lawyer Looks for in a Young Law Graduate and What the Young Graduate Expects."

The ministers are to gather in room 314 of the student center to discuss "Problems Relating to Ministerial Students, Local Churches, and Mercer."

The science division is set to meet in the biology building and discuss "Opportunities in Science and How to Take Them." Students and graduates are invited to attend these sessions.

Amendment

The Student Senate has passed an amendment to the Constitution of the Student Government Association which would allow student nurses to be represented by one senator. The proposed amendment which will be submitted to the student body this quarter concerns Article II.

Legislative Section 2. Membership. The

Harris Speaks Of Architects Of 'Good Society'

Dr. Rufus C. Harris, president of Mercer University, pointed out the affinity between the prerequisites of free society in Athens and free society in twentieth century America, when he spoke in Willingham Chapel during the chapel program recognizing new members of Sigma Mu scholastic honor fraternity.

Friday, May 5, seniors Eleanor Anderson Aultman, Barbara Ann S. Byrd, Dorothy Lee Cox, James Lyndon Findlay, Bobbe Smith Hickson, Elbert Lee Hill, Shirley Irene Jackson, Sandra Elizabeth Jones, William Lee Moses, Burma Lasseter Lockeridge, Nancy Maude Minter, Mary Alice M. Newberry, Paul Chambliss Tucker, Jr., Kenneth Erwin Walker and Henriette Vickers Wheelless were added to the membership of Sigma Nu. The fraternity patterns its membership qualifications after those for membership on Phi Beta Kappa.

Juniors Kay Elizabeth Kelly and James Carlton Brooks were also recognized at the exercise. Membership requires a 2.50 scholastic average during the senior year at Mercer, but third quarter juniors whose average is at least 2.67 are eligible for membership in Sigma Mu.

At this time Dr. William E. McCurdy of the Mercer faculty was made a member of Sigma Mu.

Dr. Harris remarked: "An unlovely strain in our national tradition contains both a distrust of intellectual activity and a refusal to recognize the moral obligation to respect intelligence."

Dr. Harris further commented on the transient nature of the Golden



Staff photo by Lawrence

Dr. Werner von Braun, director of George C. Marshall Space Flight Center, Huntsville, Ala., will speak Saturday, May 13, on Mercer campus.

Age of intellectual achievement in Athens. "That Golden Age, however, like all such ages passed on. Radical changes occurred in Athenian social action. Initiative and responsibility gradually yielded to both political and religious authority; confidence in the rational direction of individual experience and social institutions was lost."

Doctor Harris concluded with the observance that Christian heritage and progress as well as educational institutions were necessary to produce the transformed, mature and creative architects of the good society which we seek.

Full Week For Mercer Greeks

Greek week began at Mercer for the 1961 school-year on Sunday May 7th. All Greek Organizations on the Mercer campus were represented at two Macon churches, Mulberry Methodist and Highland Hills Baptist.

Greek week at Mercer is exactly one-year old.

The week focused on the constructive and social aspects of Greek life on campus.

The activities of the week were sponsored by the Inter-Fraternity Council and Pan Hellenic Council.

On Monday the presidents and vice presidents of all Greek or-

ganizations met. Ideas pertaining to the activities and events of the Greeks were shared by the heads of fraternities and sororities.

Tuesday pledge-trainers and rush-chairmen met for similar purposes. Wednesday the treasurers met to share financial ideas.

During the chapel break Thursday a slave auction was held—various faculty members were auctioned as slaves to the fraternities and sororities. When purchased, a faculty member must perform varying menial tasks for the Greek group who purchased them.

The informal dance Saturday night at the Y.W.C.A. marks the culmination of Greek week activities. Greek god and goddess will be named at the dance.

Tartuffe

Appearing in the title role of Tartuffe is Dwight Honeycutt, senior from Columbus, Ga. Charlotte Benefield, senior from Atlanta, Ga., interprets Moliere's role of Dorine, the talkative French maid. Clayton Stephens, sophomore from Sorerton, portrays the susceptible Orgon, husband of Elmire, played by Connie Berry, junior from West Palm Beach, Florida. Faye Rowland of Cordele, Ga., portrays the pompous Madame Pernelle.

"Tartuffe" by the seventeenth-century French genius of comedy, Moliere, is being produced on the Mercer campus for the second night by the drama department. Mr. Charles Love of the Speech and Drama Department designed the set and directed the final production of the season by Mercer Players.

Norma Jean Suleski, a freshman from Atlanta, is Flipote, maid to Madame Pernelle. Lynn Pearson is cast as Mariane, Tyron Elliot as Valere, Jimmy Jones of Macon as Orgon, the impulsive son, Eddie Harris supplies the "wise brother" of Elmire—Cleante; Leroy Bowen is cast as Monsieur Loyal and Jack Cauley as the Police Officer.

The play begins at 8:14 this evening in Willingham Chapel.

"Tartuffe", the masterly attack upon hypocrisy, involves a guest who woos his host's wife, the intimacy of an "aside," characters located under tables and in closets, and the mysterious strongbox.

The comedy of manners is an attack upon the hypocrisy of the seventeenth century world of wigs and elaborate dress, possessing attacks upon the universal attributes of hypocrisy of every age.