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A New Breed Emerges

For many years the political situation in the State of Georgia has been completely dominated by the rural leadership. This election year has seen the basis for that domination abolished. For the first time in many years, the people of this State of Georgia will have an opportunity to elect able leaders on the basis of popular vote. This fact alone has accounted for the entrance into the present election of a "new breed" of political man.

This "new breed" offers a much needed and long desired type of leadership for our State. It is forward looking and progressive. It desires the best for our State in economic growth, both in sound agricultural improvement and beneficial industrial expansion. It seeks a realistic position on our racial problem. It demands a fair and equal representation constitutional form of democracy. It pledges honesty and truthfulness for our people in their government bodies. It offers to protect our sacred above all. It yearns to expand and improve our educational system by which our future is promised men and women with concern. It promises not only to meet the problems facing us today, but to seek to understand and prepare for those that the future will present. It is a new breed of leadership that offers not to follow reluctantly behind the people, but rather to challenge the people to move proudly forward with it, not meeting the future, but making our future.

The time worn and meaningless phrases of the past are not heard in the presentation of this new breed of political man. He speaks the words of a dynamic challenge as he offers the people an opportunity to achieve and accomplish the growth and development that our State has so long deserved. He speaks not only to a small segment of our State, but to all as he offers this challenge, for he realizes that only by cooperation and unity from all the people will they be able to achieve what the future presents.

It is this new breed of political leadership that the Mercer Cluster endorses with pride. One member of that breed is Dr. Edgar H. Wilson, a candidate for Lt. Governor. The Mercer Cluster heartily endorses the candidacy of this member of the new breed of leadership.—MLL

No Short Cuts To Honor

It was indicated last week that the Honor Council is not what it should be. It is here maintained that it is not and that the Council has failed "to fulfill its functions in a mature and responsible way".

The Council in its letter appearing on this page and in conversations during the week contends that my statements were indefinite and false, and that even if not false were irresponsible in that by not specifically naming the individual(s) at fault, all Council members were stigmatized.

I submit that even if only one Council member were shown to have behaved in an unethical, dishonorable or unthinking manner, then the whole Council must take the blame, for it is the organ that represents honor at Mercer. As good or bad as the Council is so stands Mercurian honor—and the Council can be no better than its poorest member.

At present many students have the lowest regard for the council because of the behavior of one or two of its members. No purpose would be served by dragging individual names through the mud. Those at fault know who they are. But the council as a body must bear the responsibility for its members.

The Council as a body must accept, too, the blame for having allowed certain procedural defects to be committed where they could easily have been avoided. Contrary to the belief of the Council, I am familiar with Articles V and VI of the Student Handbook and with the rules of procedure of the Council. I realize that nowhere in either of these documents is it guaranteed that the accused shall receive a fair trial. Yet I cannot believe that anyone would advocate denial of a fair trial.

But consider some recent circumstances as reported to the Cluster by defendants, witnesses and bystanders, who, in the interest of what the Council calls "privacy", shall remain anonymous.

One accused received notice of his trial about one and one-half hours before he was due to appear before the Council. Not much time to procure "defense of his own choosing!" Another accused received less than seven hours notice of his impending trial. Still not too much time for a defense. One defendant discussed his case with a Council member before the trial. The member with this extraneous evidence later sat in on the trial. Biased? Possibly. Another Council member discussed with bystanders, the character of one who was yet to be indicted. Later at the trial the accused was found guilty. Why did not this member disqualify himself? Another accused was told that if he denied guilt he would be expelled, but if he pleaded guilty he might get a light sentence. Intimidation? Possibly.

The examples could be extended. There are similar instances. This is not to debate the guilt or innocence of any accused. That is irrelevant. What is relevant is that many Mercer students now feel that a fair trial could not be had before the Honor Council. Students have lost respect for the Council. This, most emphatically is the fault of the Council, not only for committing the errors, but for allowing them to go uncorrected.

Granted the council has made progress in certain sectors in recent years, the fact that the Council is unaware of many of the complaints against it, the fact that the complaints are made to me rather than to the Council shows that the students do not have respect for the council and that the Council is out of touch with the students.

The Council if it hopes to correct this situation must come down to earth and build a better image. If the Cluster can help the Council to better fulfill its functions in a "mature and responsible way" it will gladly do so.—LM

An Experimental College

"MAN—THE GREATEST UNDERDEVELOPED AREA IN THE WORLD—IS THE BASIS FOR A NEW EXPERIMENTAL COLLEGE." So begins a two-page news release from the "New Experimental College" in Copenhagen, Denmark.

The release goes on to describe a three semester college that boasts, among other things, a faculty—student ratio of one to eight and "descriptive Certificates of Accomplishment . . ." in place of grades. The college curriculum is to be decided by the faculty and students when they meet together for the first time in the fall.

But perhaps the most interesting feature of this unusual college is that it plans to include in its international student body the college drop-outs" who were "unwilling or unable to yield to the social and academic status quo." These

students, the release says, are those who are often not considered academically qualified, in addition to the "uninspired or highly dissatisfied 'good students'" which the college also hopes to attract.

The college's proposed objectives recognize and offer an answer to one of the most repeated criticisms of American higher education: that our liberal arts colleges tend to develop a mob of diploma hunters instead of an intellectually interested student body. Because of this tendency many American students have become disgusted with their universities and, unfortunately, are branded academic misfits or malcontents.

Perhaps such an educational experiment as offered by the Experimental College will provide the answer, both for students who seek a better academic climate, and to our colleges which attempt to cultivate the intellect.

- Letters To The Editor -

Honor Council Replies

May 22, 1962

Editor

The Mercer Cluster

A very disturbing column or editorial (?) appeared in last week's *Cluster* concerning the Honor Council and the Honor System. In view of the grave innuendoes and implications therein, a reply is mandatory—neither to defend the Honor Council nor to justify the Honor System, but to correct the misleading and erroneous statements which were made.

The writer stated that the first question to ask is what the Honor Council is, and what it should be. He had never been a defendant, witness, or observer at an Honor Council trial; he had never attended (nor requested to attend) a business meeting of the Council; he had never sought information from the Council or its faculty advisors; and he apparently had not even bothered to read Articles V and VI of the Student Constitution. On some points he was uninformed, and on others he was misinformed. He proceeded, nevertheless, to provide inaccurate answers to his "first question," and the result was damaging and unfair criticism.

Had the writer taken the time to read the relevant articles in the Student Constitution (pages 34-37 in the Student Handbook), he would have learned that the Honor Council is not a "something" to promote honor—it is a body in which has been vested the "judicial powers of the Student Government Association." As such, it is charged with the responsibility of: (1) trying violations of the Honor Code; (2) interpreting the Student Constitution and Statutes; and (3) trying impeachments of the officers of the SGA.

The author expressed a genuine and timely concern that honor should be promoted and unsupervised integrity should be encouraged. Not nearly enough has been done. Responsibility for these things does not rest with the Honor Council, however, but rather with a standing committee of the Student Government Association. According to Article VI (pp. 36-37 of the Student Handbook), an Honor Committee, appointed by the SGA President, should: (1) "sponsor a continuing educational campaign for the perpetuation and development of the Honor System"; (2) "orient new students and faculty members to their responsibility to the Honor System"; (3) "propose to the Senate changes in the Honor System when it deems necessary"; (4) "provide a thorough explanation of the Honor System for the Student Handbook"; and (5) "provide each new student officer and each new administrative officer with an explanation of the Honor System." The Honor Council cannot fairly be charged with failing to perform a function which properly belongs to some other body.

A much more serious charge was that the "members, methods, motives and means" of the Honor Council are not above reproach. Such a charge is based on insufficient information or hearsay. If it is not, if the author has evidence of injustice, if he knows specific members who are not qualified to serve, if he has concrete and constructive suggestions for improvement, he should by all means present these things to the Council, its advisors, or the Student Senate. The Honor Council does not choose its members, but it can and would impeach any of its members if it were established by

sufficient evidence that such action was necessary.

There was an unsubstantial (and debatable) assertion that academic dishonesty is increasing, but there was not a word of criticism of the violators, not even a hint of indignation concerning the violations (which were wilful, flagrant, and continuous on the part of some persons). By some strange line of reasoning the Honor Council is blamed for the violations!

Furthermore, the Council is charged with "enforcing its rules and convicting the violators, obtaining the convictions by any means—some less than honorable". It should be noted, however, that: (1) the Council is not enforcing "its rules", for the Honor Code and the Honor System were devised by the Student Body itself; (2) the Council is supposed to convict violators and; (3) out of sixteen cases to come before the Council this year, there were only eleven convictions—in five of the cases (or one-third of the total) the accused was acquitted or the case was dismissed for lack of sufficient evidence. This is hardly the record of a body bent on convictions "by any means".

Another criticism contained in the column was that the Council moves in "mysterious ways . . . cloaking all with secrecy". But what are the facts? 1. Articles V and VI of the Student Constitution which pertain to the Honor Council and the Honor System are printed in the Student Handbook. 2. A further explanation of the Honor System is printed on page 29 of the Student Handbook. 3. The orientation for freshmen each fall includes a discussion of the Honor System. 4. Every student is required to read and sign the Honor Pledge. 5. The detailed case procedure (formulated by the Council and approved by the Senate of the SGA has been published in the *Cluster* (February 10, 1961 and January 12, 1962), and is provided to each witness and to the accused prior to trial. The case procedure should be published again in the *Cluster*. 6. Cases are reported in the *Cluster*, with names and details omitted. Recent cases have not been reported in the *Cluster*, but the reports have been in the hands of the *Cluster* staff for several weeks. Publication has been delayed for good and various reasons. No, it is not a matter of mysterious secrecy.

It is a very essential matter of privacy however. Out of consideration for witness and accused, the details of cases are supposed to be held in strict confidence insofar as the Honor Council is concerned. Surely the students do not wish to have the full details, including the names of the persons involved, printed in the campus newspaper. Surely no one believes that open, public trials (perhaps on the stage in the chapel) would be better than the privacy now afforded to the accused.

As the Student Handbook states (p. 29), "The Honor System places personal responsibility for academic honesty upon the individual student". Certainly the writer of last week's article was correct in his conclusion that every Mercurian should think "not about how to enforce or to circumvent the System, but about how to develop real honor and integrity under the System . . ."

The Honor Council pledges to the students, the faculty, and the administration continued efforts to fulfill its functions in a mature and responsible way.

We welcome suggestions for improvement.

The Honor Council