

Bama's Rule Of The Few

(Editor's Note: Last week The Crimson-White announced its support of an open-auditorium two party system on the campus. Today, after discussing plans for such a system with a number of Capstone students, we present what we believe to be an exceptionally fine idea, The Convention Plan, as devised for Alabama use by John Duddy)

Examine the history of student elections at the University of Alabama and you'll be looking at the history of nominees selected by the very, very few and elected by a closely-knit minority.

What's wrong with election by the minority? From where we stand, absolutely nothing. If one group can get together, choose its slate by means of equal representation, politick successfully and get the man elected, more power to them. Such action is a privilege of democratic life.

It is, we believe, as long as democratic representation is the basis for choosing the minority's slate of candidates. But when one group gains complete control of the minority, call it Theta Nu Epsilon or machine within machine, then members of the minority group become victims of dictatorial rule. Such is the case on the Alabama campus.

Threats and attempted coercion of the Capstone's fraternity-sorority leaders have kept the inner-machine in power here for many years.

Fear of harming his organization's standing on the campus has sent many a freshman fraternity or sorority member to the polls to vote the straight party ticket without bothering to consider the candidate's qualifications.

These are the methods on which Alabama's inner core of the machine thrives. These are the ways by which the minority within the minority will continue to dominate many fraternities and sororities on the campus until selection of the party slate is placed upon a democratic basis.

The Crimson-White realizes its plan is not fool proof. We are writers and not legislators. We submit Mr. Duddy's idea in the form of a suggested means of improving our campus way of life.

The Convention Plan

THE CONVENTION PLAN proposes a convention to be held at Foster Auditorium for the fraternity-sorority group on one afternoon and a separate convention of the independents on another afternoon.

Representation and delegation to convention for the independents could be by sections of the campus (i. e.,

Northington, Ridgecrest, the dormitories, private homes and boarding houses, and townspeople.) The independents could, on the other hand, make up their delegation from the counties of the state with groups represented from the other states included. They are at liberty to make up their own representation.

The fraternity-sorority group could have one delegate for each 10 members, if Alpha Beta Gamma has 60 members let that group have six delegates to the convention with six votes. The floor of the auditorium should be used for the delegates. The balcony would be open for anyone who is interested in the progress of the convention.

Let the entire convention be carried out as our national party conventions. Open the convention with the singing by some student of the National Anthem or the Alma Mater. Let another give the convocation. A temporary chairman will open the convention and call for the nomination and election of a permanent chairman. After he is elected, he should call the convention to order.

The fraternity and sorority groups should be seated alphabetically with their banners at the head of each row. The chairman should call the roll and the floor should be opened for nominations for the office of president of the Student Government association. After the nominations have been placed before the convention, let the roll be called again for the purpose of deciding which candidate will get the support of the convention.

We suggest that the SGA setup a committee made up of both independents and fraternity men and women to study the convention plan used by other colleges and universities. Let that group decide representation and delegation; then draw up a resolution and present it to the students for a vote and add it as an amendment to the constitution. Let the students decide if the plan is acceptable.

The committee could write to Duke university for information, who we have been told, has just instigated such a system. One of the law professors could act as advisor to this committee and assist in promoting a plan that is fair and honorable.

We are attempting to create an interest on the campus in student participation in campus elections. The one that is submitted here is just one of many that could help correct our smudgy elections that heretofore have bordered on the ridiculous. If any student, or any group of students has another plan, submit it to your student government association. They are there to serve you.