

EDITORS NOTE: The editor takes no responsibility for the facts stated in the letters to her, and the opinions stated herein are not necessarily those of the editorial staff of the C-W.

Machine Is Amusing

To the Editor and Staff:

I will not concern this letter with flowery congratulations on the excellent content of your last issue, for the controversy produced by this issue stands as strong evidence that your efforts were read and either damned or praised by most of the students on campus. Instead of hollow and unspecific praise, I would like to state a few personal opinions and project a few theories which I hope will serve to bolster you and your staff against the wave of violent and well organized criticism which is bound to follow such bold and worthwhile journalism.

I have been on the campus for nearly four years, and during that time I have been vaguely aware of the scabblings and dealings of the machine in control of what is laughingly called the Student Government Association. To me and to many 'Bama students, this machine has always been rather amusing, and I have looked forward to the annual elections, wondering how the machine would manage to outdo the preceding years' noise and foolishness. During the hectic election period I have roamed the campus chuckling at the painfully clever posters, the glad-handing although unopposed candidates, and the general atmosphere of power politics on an infantile level. When a poster blocked my path, I trampled it, and when a smiling candidate approached, I told him I was a janitor and could not vote. As long as the tumult and the smiling did not interfere with my activities I did not begrudge the machine its silly little games of government. I came to regard the campaign and the SGA as a kind of multi-color joke which, like the bad coffee in the Supe Store, had to be endured in order to gain a diploma. I know that my attitudes and behavior were shared by a large segment of the campus population. Why should we concern ourselves with a do-nothing organization?

Your recent articles have answered that question, and have further brought to my mind the opinions and theories mentioned in the outset of this letter. I feel that for the first time in four years a campus publication has attempted to arouse the interest and participation of the students here at 'Bama. I feel that the articles you have printed, exposing the sickness and ills of machine government, will result in the eventual rejuvenation of the SGA into a worthwhile organization representing the campus as a whole and not the few opportunist groups that have been in control for so long. You and your staff have made the C-W a vital force in producing a better University of Alabama.

It is unfortunate that the very words which have stirred the usually lethargic students into close scrutiny of their Student Government have offended the machine and its supporters. These people are shocked to learn that their nefarious dealings are not as secret as they had supposed. They fear that informed voters and individual analysis of the candidates will spell the end of their little reign of complacency. This fear will no doubt take the form of overt hostility towards you and your staff, and many loudly-shouted claims of foul on the political scene. I say that this is good, and that you and your staff have taken to task a group so steeped in corruption it can't even keep its endeavors quiet. I say you did not do this out of personal malice, but out of a keen desire to make the SGA and the campus a little healthier.

So, take heart bold editor and staff; you have done a worthwhile and effective job. You have contributed to the fall of the machine, and by so doing made a lasting contribution to the University. The effects of your articles will be immediately evident, but will contribute to a trend which will make the SGA something other than a Little League for aspiring tyrants.

In conclusion, machine candidates are human I guess but I wouldn't want my sister marrying one.

Claude S. Lineberry, Jr.