

Campus Echo

NORTH CAROLINA COLLEGE AT DURHAM

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Editorial—

We All Too Often Forget To Remember Our Traditions

For quite some time now, older members of the North Carolina College student body have been constantly complaining about the lack of traditions existing at the institution and devising methods by which traditions could be established and perpetuated. However, at the beginning of each year, the students who have not graduated have forgotten the majority of the things which they had previously designated as being "traditions," and what is more, there are available no records to refresh their memories. The problem of records seems to be most serious in the realms of student government.

In the process of revising the Student Government Constitution, the Committee on Objectives, which has been plagued for almost the entire year with this responsibility, went to the Student Welfare Committee in an effort to clarify some of the Student Government's powers. During a series of joint meetings of the two organizations, the records of the Student Welfare Committee revealed that many alterations and extensions of power had been granted the SG over a period of years of which the present student administration—and in all probability student administrations during the last two years—had no knowledge. For example, in 1949, the Student Welfare Committee approved a Student Code drawn up by the Student Congress which was designed to govern student behavior and social conduct. There is no record of any such code in the Student Government's files, and the students who were instrumental in its introduction have, of course, been graduated.

Last year the Student Congress passed a bill which would compel all freshmen to wear "beanies" during their orientation period. Not only has that piece of legislation been misplaced, but also, all legislation passed in the Congress for the entire year, 1952-53, vanished with the changing administration.

Current belief is that the present Student Government Constitution has never been signed and is therefore null and void. The converse has also been contended. The discouraging part, however, is that there is not one copy of this constitution in the SG files, and the only four in existence on the campus belong to Mr. Palmer, Dean Turner, and two other students who kept copies for their own personal reference.

All of these things can be interpreted to mean precisely this: no organization, especially one as important as the Student Government, can expect to operate efficiently and protect its own interests, unless the records—the past history of that organization—are accounted for and accessible.

With these facts revealed, there are two observations which are fairly obvious. First, if we are ever to establish traditions, which are commonly called repetitions of procedures, we must have available the records which first introduced these procedures. The records will at least remind us, if not inspire us. Second, if Mr. Palmer establishes some method by which the records of this year's activities can be protected until they are formerly turned over to the next prexy, and the next prexy does likewise, we shall be well on the road toward all-around efficiency.

Book Review

W. SHERMAN PERRY

The Devil's Laughter

BY FRANK YERBY

Frank Yerby's latest book is always his best book. One marvels at the fact that he can improve upon his style at all. But with each successive novel, he does improve. So it is with **THE DEVIL'S LAUGHTER**, a book which leaves the reader in a strangely grand and glorious mood.

If any writer of our age can catch the spirit of a turbulent era and transfer this spirit by pen to paper it is Yerby. **THE DEVIL'S LAUGHTER**, which has the French Revolution for background music, is written so vividly that the reader is not apt to forget this re-creation of the past for a long time to come.

Jean Paul Marin is the hero in **THE DEVIL'S LAUGHTER**. Like all of Yerby's star characters, he is much more eloquent than Milton's Satan ever could have been. And in keeping with tradition, Marin is a little bit of God and a little bit of Satan combined. With the strength of Michael, he battles his way through impossible situations, descending to the level of mortals only because of his weakness for three women.

A rich merchant's son with the laughter of the devil, Jean Paul is obsessed by his hatred for the nobility of France. But as he sees his country fast becoming an anarchy during the revolution, he pauses to wonder if the Third Estate is ready for a republic.

The Third Estate—the mob—is a part of the background music for **THE DEVIL'S LAUGHTER**. Here the music is always coarse and violent and forever meaningless. It is the music to which Queen Marie Antoinette had to listen as she was led to the guillotine by riff-raff who were not good enough to kiss the imprint her shoes made in the dirt. It was these Frenchmen and their ilk who helped devastate France. And the irony of the whole thing is that it was done in the name of equality.

Yerby always can be relied upon to create women of extraordinary beauty and charm. He does not fail to do so in **THE DEVIL'S LAUGHTER**. For the sake of complication, there are three fascinating females. Lucienne Talbot is the vixen, full of fire and hell and brains, who knows no wrong only because she recognizes no right. Nicole la Moyte, of noble blood, defies description, for describing implies limitations. Women like Nicole know limits only by dying. Fleurette, a blind girl, and more important a virtuous one, had no right to be born into such a corrupt world, although it is to be wondered if angels possess such passions as she.

Frank Yerby is not just a novelist; he is a poet. He is a poet in a much truer sense of the word than many who profess to be poets, for his words are liquid gold and his phrases are strangely close to music. He has proved this again and again, and nowhere more conclusively than in **THE DEVIL'S LAUGHTER**.



Perry

Peering Through The Bird's Eye

BY "BONNIE"

MOTHER-DAUGHTER WEEK-END

Just a reminder to all freshmen to notify their mothers that the annual Mother-Daughter week-end is not too far away. We hope that

many mothers will visit our campus this year and will remain to be honored at the banquet on Saturday night. A n o t h e r reminder . . . Let's put our best feet forward while our visitors are on campus and in the dormitories.



"Bonnie"

PROTECT THE VERDANT GREEN

The gardeners worked very feverishly during the Easter vacation and are still working, trying to put our campus in tip-top condition. The grass is bright green and the shrubbery is growing rather nicely. Let's have some school spirit, and let's show it by respecting our campus and keeping it looking neat.

DEMOCRACY OR MONARCHY?

It is just short of absolutely amazing to note the wide range of difference which sometimes appears in denotation and con-

notation of words. The particular phrase I have in mind is "Student Self-Direction." The occasion is as follows: On April 23, the Office of the Dean of Men released a circular entitled, "Mentorizing the Men Students," in which the residents of Chidley Hall were calmly and unceremoniously informed that all semblance of democratic government in their dormitory will be removed beginning next year. The circular stated, "The Men's Dormitory Council shall consist of eight students, the Residence Director, the Assistant Dean of Men, the Dean of Men, and any other persons whom the Dean of Men may see fit to name."

The circular further stated that the Dean or his designated representatives shall conduct all House Council meetings, and that the council shall serve as advisor to the Dean of Men rather than the Dean of Men serving as advisor to the council as has formerly been the procedure. In fact, there are many alterations which bear careful scrutiny by the men who will be obliged to live in Chidley Hall next year. I therefore, suggest that the men read this carefully and if you have complaints, lodge them now before it is too late.

Uncertainty In Indochina

By DUDLEY FLOOD

A current question of major concern is, "Will we become involved in an all out war in Indo-China?" It is certainly too early yet to attempt to answer this question positively. It is my opinion, however, that the Geneva Conference, which began April 26, may well supply a more definite basis upon which to anticipate the course of action that will follow.

It is expected that at the Geneva Conference, Secretary of State John F. Dulles will attempt to present the Reds with a free nations' front in hopes that the strength and unity of such a front will discourage Red support of the war in Indo-China. The outcome of this attempt is uncertain, but we may be sure that, at any cost, the United States officials do not intend to let Indo-China fall to

the communists. United States administrators seemingly have two objectives: (1) to make sure the French are prepared with equipment and men to stay in the fight and (2) to assure our allies as well as the opposition that the United States will maintain its present attitude of "grave concern" over developments in Indo-China.

The optimistic view of the situation is that the French may soon turn the tide of war. The big question is what will happen if they don't, if the communists should overcome the French as they now threaten to do, or if the French should draw out of Indo-China altogether? The Geneva Conference should give us a start toward the answer to all of these questions. Until they do, the answer is very uncertain, even to our national leaders.

RAMBLING REPORTER

The question asked by your **RAMBLING REPORTER** this month is: "What is your reaction to American intervention in Indochina?"

"It is high time that the United States Congress stopped utilizing the American soldier as a pawn. Why not let the smaller countries fight their own battles and at the same time, perpetuate their own independence?"—**Maurice C. McNeill, Senior, Smithfield.**

"Since America is part of the United Nations and a crisis in Indochina is almost inevitable, if it becomes necessary I think, that America should lend its forces to the cause. I do not feel, however, that we should allow another Korea to result."—**Benny Dix, Senior,**

East Chicago, Indiana.

"If troops can be supplied without increasing the draft quota or lengthening tenure, I am in accord. Also, if taxes must be increased to supply ammunition, I am not in accord with intervention." — **Althea James, Senior, Camden, S. C.**

"It will probably become necessary since almost everything short of violence has been tried."—**Louis Fields, Jr., Kittrell.**

"I feel that intervention in Indochina is analogous to a single man meddling in a marriage—nothing but trouble. It will inevitably result in another Korean situation."—**Andrew Graham, Jr., Gary, Indiana.**