

S A N I T Y F A I R

APING OUR ELDERS ○ JAY FRANKLIN STRAUSS

■ The most amazing feature of campus politics at the University of Cincinnati is that anyone takes the trouble to participate in it. Yet year after year, grasping fraternities combine with one or two homogeneous groups such as the Newman Club and the Dormitory in an effort to place their candidates in class offices which are without dignity, or in a student governing body which has never enjoyed the respect of the students.

The well-nourished existence of campus politics is due primarily to the oft-repeated fact that the University is of the "street-car" variety. Less than half its electorate ever troubles to go to the polls in an election, let alone organize in an attempt to elect some deserving candidate. As a result political power rests in the hands of an organized, selfishly interested minority, which in its political conniving imitates all the worst features of municipal or county politics.

■ The University is at present enmeshed in the entanglements of the two-party system. There exist two distinct combines, the Reds and the Whites. Party lines, however, are hardly definite. Each election, spring or fall, sees some disgruntled faction transferring its allegiance to the opposite party.

Just now, the Sigma Chis, Triangles, Beta Kappas, I. X. E.'s, Sigma Delta Rhos, Dormitory, Commons Club, and Alpha Rho Omegas are joined in the Red combine under aegis of Ged Brown, a ponderous individual to whom the Sigma Chis fondly refer as "Boss." The Dormitory, however, is maneuverable while the past year witnessed the Commons Club entry into this alliance.

The White Combine, which at present is enjoying almost a monopoly in student offices, unites the Phi Deltas, A. T. O.'s, Sig Alphas, Pi Kaps, Deltas, Phi Kappas, and Lambda Chis. Of this group, however, the Phi Deltas are opportunists, the Deltas are open to the highest bidder. It is possible, also, that at any time, Phi Kappa, carried in Henry Bachman's vest pocket, may swing over to the Reds.

Ted McCarty, an A. T. O., Lou Mendel, a Delt, and George Kramer, a Lambda Chi, are the would-be bosses of this group. Mendel, however, lost prestige when he

failed to swing the last Y. M. C. A. election to Sid Mullikin, while Kramer was the only defeated candidate in the fall elections for class officers.

These two combines after tedious and innumerable nocturnal sessions present, each autumn and spring, their candidates for class offices and Student Council, respectively. The machine candidates are unopposed save in a few cases where an independent man invariably runs a poor third. The combine candidates are chosen of course for their vote-getting ability. Thus athletes, football men preferred, are usually elected to the presidency of the several classes and of Student Council. No regard is given the ability of the man to perform the duties of his office—such as they may be.

A few undergraduate groups remain aloof from the combines. Thus the sororities, after several disheartening experiences, have withdrawn from the two machines, while the Betas have maintained a policy of isolation. The S. A. M.'s are not party members but Bernie Levin is willing to trade.

It is easy to understand why such independent groups as the Betas remain aloof from campus politics. In the first place the class offices carry little prestige and only a few political plums. Presidency of the Junior class, which fell this year to Spencer Booz of the Red Combine, is the most desirable campus office since the incumbent appoints the chairman of the Junior Prom. The Senior class president holds in his power the appointment of the committee on graduation announcements and invitations while the president of the Sophomore class appoints the chairman of the Sophomore Hop, but these are minor rewards.

■ As for the Student Council, that worthy body is the butt of much campus humor. The University students and their governing organization are ruled by an unwieldy and unintelligible Constitution 18 pages long which few of the members of Student Council have ever taken the trouble to read. Proposed revision of this revered document is proceeding under a committee which is remarkable only for its lack of training for the task.

The personnel of Student Council is not such as to add further to the dignity of this organization. The majority of its members lack interest to a degree where attendance at meetings is forced, while the Council in session devotes little of its time to consideration of progressive legislation.

■ The remaining branches of student government can be covered briefly. The tribunals of the various colleges lack importance and have failed to employ even their constitutional power. The Engineering tribunal is the only one showing any signs of life and its outstanding action of the year was regrettable.

Woman's Student Government Association, an organization which functions among women students in a capacity

parallel to Student Council's, reflects indistinctly the political perversion of the campus. The Theta Phi Alphas, the only organized faction in the Association, succeeded this spring in electing their candidate, Margaret McEvilly, to the presidency of that body.

■ The juiciest political plums offered at the University are not at the disposal of men elected by the student body but fall to those students appointed by the governing Boards of Control of the *News*, *Cincinnatian*, and *Fresh Painters*. The Boards of Control of the *News*, and *Cincinnatian* are composed of the President and Vice-President of Student Council, the Editor and Business Manager of the *Publication*, the two faculty advisors, and the Chairman of the Board of Trustees for Student Activities while the musical comedy set-up is somewhat similar. As a result it is comparatively easy for the interested students to control the selections. Occasionally an upheaval, such as seems imminent this year, occurs, but in general, the vested interests have little difficulty retaining their hold on these offices.

The editorial staff of the *News* is at present independent and has no strings attached to it. The Business staff has been for many years in the hands of the S. A. M.'s but they sit upon a shaky and tottering throne. They are, consequently, in the market but the editorial positions of the paper will remain independent for another year.

The *Cincinnatian* seems due for a housecleaning that compares with the expulsion of the Lambda Chis from the *News* office in 1930. The Deltas have muffed the present year to such an extent that it is entirely possible that an outsider may be appointed editor of the *Annual* for 1934. The Sig Alphas, however, will have no difficulty in placing Duncan Frame as business manager of the yearbook for the coming year.

The *Fresh Painter* organization at present is being torn apart in a three-way fight between the Lambda Chis, Deltas, and Sig Alphas. That year-late satire, *Call Me Comrade*, was presented by the Lambda Chis and Sig Alphas but the Deltas will probably be represented next year either in the Student Directorship or Business Managership of the organization.

Mummers Guild, campus Little Theatre group, is controlled by the Phi Beta Deltas and Sigma Chis. This combination operates well and has succeeded in eliminating competition although the lack of rivalry is due more to absence of interest than to inability to defeat the machinations of the powers that be.

The appointive system governing the *News*, *Annual*, *Fresh Painters*, and *Mummers Guild* has proved surprisingly successful on the whole, despite the part played by politics. In general, men of ability have been selected for the various positions although the evils of fraternity succession have eliminated one or two

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RED TICKET PURITY LEAGUE

The facing page, a full-color caricature of a Student Council President casting his vote at the first simon-pure, straight-as-a-die election. The setting is that of McMicken Commons on one of those White Nights such as Dos-toevsky writes about. The fact of the clean election is such as the *News* editor writes about. But we all have our fantasies and such tush.