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Former President Jennison warns inexperience may cripple Legislature

Improve Government Or Risk Faculty Takeover

Following the Sandspur's tradition of keeping the students constantly informed on all campus activities and issues, we hereby print the following speech which was presented to the Student Council on Monday night by former Student Council President Grant Jennison. We hope that this will establish a precedent whereby each year the Sandspur will print the President's final message to the student body.

THE EDITOR

It is the privilege of each outgoing Student Council president to prepare and present a President's Report; I speak of this as a privilege because to be able to present publicly one's personal observations on the Rollins student body, on the college entity, and on this legislature and its activities does, indeed, constitute a duty of a pleasurable nature.

This particular "pleasurable privilege" has two major parts; the first and shortest is a synoptical review of the year's activities and a historical briefing. The second is an area of personal comment based on four years at Rollins — three as an Independent, one as a Greek, one as a Council representative, and one as President. In this time I feel I have learned as much about Rollins College as I have about myself.

ON THE YEAR

In this, the first year of our newly authorized and independent form of student government, the accomplishments were necessarily as wide and as varied as the spectrum of problems we faced. The first and perhaps most significant was a product of our predecessors, although the honor fell on us. Our present system of student government, which had been in a three year trial period, received its final approval, with congratulations, from the faculty. Well-organized and with great structural strength, this sophisticated organization offers to the student body nearly limitless opportunities for individual development, personal expression, and service to the school. And, at the same time, it provides for 1) an efficient vehicle for the communication of student ideas, desires, and suggestions. 2) levels of channels of communication and meeting grounds for the working out of common and individual problems among students, faculty, staff, administration, alumni, and trustees. Our thanks to those who four years ago were willing to work for what they knew was really worthwhile. The spring found us new to our jobs, new to the legislature, and without an office. The reorganization of the Union basement left the legislature hopping from the Alumni House to the radio station, but the new office is a credit to the organization and to its independence of action. As to the "recreation lounge" which shares another major part of the basement: now that we have had time to see that it is a failure, perhaps the Union can, next year, utilize the leadership which built the room to make it into something worthwhile which will be used by more people.

Then we went on to the appointments to various offices and committee heads. The basic student government groups (Union, courts, publications) did well. However, others fell short, namely the Traffic Committee, the Rules Committee, and the Fiesta Committee. More on these later.

The next problem was the great conflict over the payment of Sandspur salaries — a needless conflict which was detrimental to all concerned. These detrimental

effects are yet extant. After salary time, the bloody heads rose again for the appropriations conflict. Here the battle proved a credit to the durability, patience, and sense of right of the legislature. Although the Sandspur won what she desired and probably needed, the legislature affirmed itself well. Final result — the student association fee was raised to \$45 yearly, while we spent nearly \$40,000 and went well into the reserve bank account.

Attendance at the meetings was greatly increased — credit a much larger interest in student government activities. The attendance of social group pledges is an excellent idea which ought to be emphasized. Undoubtedly, the student government branch which did the best job and proved the greatest credit to our organization was the judicial section. Congratulations and thanks to all those who worked on and with the courts. The Traffic Committee was revamped and a traffic court established, and we finally awoke to the fact that we are not alone in this world and that the problems we face have been faced by others at other times in other places. Therefore we joined the Southern Universities Student Government Association — one of the year's best accomplishments. Something new was added to the realm of student government activities this year, as we held our first Parents' Weekend. With nearly 200 parents in attendance, the weekend was a great success, and everyone agreed that it ought to become an annual affair.

Elections came next and proceeded well, with 70% of the student body at the polls. (Next year be sure to get voting machines.)

ON THE HISTORY

When reviewing the history and development of our various forms of student government, it is interesting to see that our problems seem to recur in cycles. Reading presidents' reports from the past 15 years, we see that the cycles seem to run in length like this — traffic 2½-3½ years, Pelican 4 years, Fiesta 3 years, dances 3 years, Beanery every year. But each time these problems seem to be less and less serious — an indication of progress. But the point here is that these and other problems in their various forms are with us to stay for quite some time. The problems change slightly, so that we seek and find new solutions, and this search must go on without disheartening. The fact to remember here is that the faculty and staff remain year after year, so that they see these dialectical movements and can do much to aid us if we will just seek them out.

ON THE LEGISLATURE

I had the privilege of working with a legislature which was quick in mind, intelligent, definite, confident, and lazy. Basically this laziness was because the members were unwilling to spend the needed time on our problems. Why would they not spend the time — because they did not know how to spend it! Perhaps the largest problem was a lack of knowledge of the legislative process and the ways of making a committee work profitably. Before our government reaches maturity, our members must know the questioning, investigating, analyzing, and synthesizing processes of problem-solving. Perhaps I should have tried to train them, but I was learning at the same time, and the legislature expressed no interest in learning. You cannot just come to the

meetings on Mondays and condescend to give your reactions to and opinions on the matters brought before you. This is not just a place to air your gripes — you must work constructively or your government will stagnate. Either make this government go and move ahead, or forget it and be content to just struggle along. And at that time you will lose all the opportunities you now have. We have so much authority and responsibility placed in our student government that if we do not perform well, we will fail miserably, because there is no back-up organization. And if we do not succeed and succeed strongly, we will lose all that we have.



Grant Leigh Jennison, Former President, Student Council.

I cannot urge you strongly enough to take steps toward training yourselves in your new jobs. A retreat at the Pelican, at Sanlando Springs, or at the Anderson Mansion (where is not so important) — just get away from the campus and find out what you are doing, what you want to do, and how to do it, because you do not know now. Bring in an outside speaker and set up discussion groups — the deans will gladly help. And you will not believe what these sessions, even if for only one day, will accomplish.

ON FINANCES

We did not scrutinize quite closely enough the financial affairs of our government — especially the appropriations. Usually, I repeat, usually, everyone is honest. But you must watch closely. And watch also for that margin of error in publications budgets — it is necessary, but do not let it get too large. Check, too, to see if all of the Union allocations are necessary. And ask just how far need the Student Association go toward subsidizing academic departments of the college — for instance, the Theatre, to which we gave a sum of \$3,000. We do not give to the Athletic Department, and yet we are allowed to go to the games.

ON SALARIES

I feel that a program of salaries for leadership positions on campus is absolutely necessary — but our needs a revision. Many other schools have faced this problem, and S.U.S.G.A. can be a great aid in helping to gather material for helping solve this problem.

ON COMMITTEES

Women's Rules — After a year of relative inactivity, inefficiency, and inability to co-ordinate ideas and programs, the Women's Rules Committee now shows good promise, due to the combination of this position with the House Council chairmanship. A greatly frustrated Campus Improvement Committee should keep in mind that the problems with which it deals usually concern

money—a commodity which, for various reasons, the college lacks. The perpetually perplexed Beanery Committee progressed satisfactorily, but one of the disappointments of the year was the Traffic Committee. The committee rose to a fine start in the spring and last fall. The revised rules were good, and the traffic court seemed as though it could and would function well — I still believe that it can and should. However, due to a lack of pushing on my part, and a lack of ability, desire, and maturity in the chairman, and a lack of proper faculty cooperation and assistance, the program fell through. The immediate causes were a lack of enforcement of the rules and the fact that 40% of the tickets were given to faculty, administration, and staff members—all of whom took advantage of their impunity. The proper channel is here for a strong, active, problem-solving group, and Mr. Tiedtke is vitally interested in this situation. The Traffic Committee will be one of the major trouble areas you will face next year. Your committee will need your help for many long sessions and you must enforce your rules or the faculty will take over. As I said earlier, if we fail in any way, we will lose what we have.

ON FIESTA

What can I say, really. By now, we are all aware of the need for a revision of Fiesta. The rapid degeneration of student interest and participation, despite greatly increased expenditures, is clear evidence of the desperation of the situation. The reason for Fiesta's inferiority are many, including confusion of purpose, malignant growth patterns, and deterioration in the ability of the leaders to discover what most of the students really need and want and to see what is in the best interest of the school. A petition signed by nearly half of the student body, who felt strongly against the compulsory payment for Fiesta tickets, attests this fact. Fiesta seems to fall short in both of its stated objectives—that of earning money for scholarships and that of providing a worthwhile, enjoyable weekend for fun. The Student Association, in effect, pays the scholarships, and with the great chorus of complaints, the students certainly are not satisfied.

What to do—Unless this group quickly takes a positive, forward step toward revising or replacing Fiesta, the faculty will do it for you. This is no simple warning; it is a fact. I repeat, where student government fails, it will lose; and Fiesta is failing. There are several groups and committees on campus which are actively and properly analyzing the problem, but it remains for this organization to set up its own committee to co-ordinate the actions and findings of the others and to make some of its own investigations. Then, this legislature, as this is the only student group that has the power, must see that the new Fiesta committee follows your recommendations and adopts the revised plans of your choice. How to guarantee they do is very simple: by controlling the purse strings. Remember: The Fiesta Committee is a subcommittee of the Student Government organization and is as much under your control as are the Beanery, Campus Improvement, or Traffic Committees.

ON THE COLLEGE

Rollins is one of the very good schools which has every physical and environmental potential of

becoming a truly great school. I do not mean great in the sense of being a leader in the field of education or of producing so many scholars or scientists per hundred students. I mean a school renowned for its development of the "total person"—that individual who is in complete contact with all phases of the life that surrounds him, that person who can find some good in and benefit from each experience he has. This individual, necessarily, cannot be basically intellectually oriented. Therefore, I am saying that we should aim at and for those individuals whose desires and approaches are in accord with what we are best suited to provide — a true liberal arts individual. I do not propose that we gear ourselves to the C or C+ type student, nor am I presenting a tribute to academic mediocrity, but I think we ought to forget about the intellectuals, as they would rather forget about us. We cannot cope with the technical schools or space universities, so let us do what we can do best, and work for the total individual.

Another thought which concerns me is the Administration's over-emphasis on what we, the students, can do for Rollins. We are here basically for what Rollins can do for us — for our advancement — and the school's only reason for existence is to educate and develop us. I must qualify this selfish-sounding statement by saying that most of the things that are for the students' betterment are for the school's betterment, and vice versa. But the Administration's constantly turning to what we can and "should" do for our school leaves the student body feeling, and perhaps rightly so, quite ignored. A person feels no interest in or liking for someone or something that he thinks ignores him. President McKean is so in love with the idea of Rollins College that often he forgets that Rollins College is its students.

Nor can one feel positively toward a school whose administrative officials promote so strongly individual projects which are of interest to so small a segment of the student body. Art and art museums, music festivals, and Latin America involve so great a portion of the Administration's time and yet do so little for the school that one wonders why the emphasis on them is so heavy and costly — one wonders, that is, until the realization comes that these areas constitute the better part of the knowledge of some leaders and therefore their emphasis provides the only reason for these people to remain at Rollins College.

Please don't misconstrue these comments as the malicious verbal wanderings of one grown cold toward Rollins. To the contrary, my liking for the school grows stronger each day. It is this liking which has brought me to say some of the things I have said, so that, I hope, Rollins may grow greater. These comments are also partial repayment on the debt I owe to the college for all it has done for me — I hope they will help the school as much as the school has helped me.

A few notes of thanks—
to everyone who has been so helpful—
to Cam Jones and all she stands for—

to Penny Moore and all she can't stand for—
to Roger Hammond and all he won't stand for.

Good luck to the new legislature and the executive.