

New Milford High School

FREE

PRESS

"The streets of our country are in turmoil. The universities are filled with students rebelling and rioting.

"Communists are seeking to destroy our country -- Russia is threatening us with her might, and the Republic is in danger. Yes, danger from within and without.

"We need law and order.

"Without law and order our republic shall fall!"

Adolf Hitler, Hamburg, 1932

Editorial

THE NEW MILFORD FREE PRESS is something new in New Milford -- what has been called a high school underground paper. Our policy was very well explained in an article that appeared in a conservative N.Y. paper, headlined UNDERGROUND PRESS INCITES SCHOOL RIOTS. It went on to say that virtually every high school in N.Y. was suffering from school riots and protests caused by the underground papers. Despite the fact that they were outlawed, students continued to print them. Several principals suspended "ringleaders of the underground press groups". The suspensions were upheld in court, and the judge said, in reference to these violations of the freedom of the press, that "gross disrespect and contempt for the officials of an educational institution is grounds not only for the suspension but also the EXPULSION of a student. Their stock-in-trade is four letter words intended to shock the reader into attention. Obviously, the publications are irresponsible as well as obnoxious."

THE NEW MILFORD FREE PRESS is an obnoxious paper published by and for students of NMHS. Our policy, in short, is the reformation of those regulations that are in violation of our natural rights.

Our purpose is to provide an intelligent paper in which we can say anything we want to without fear of censorship by the administration. We will publish news and articles that the administration-controlled school paper can't print. We are attempting to build a base for a student movement to grow in New Milford, one in which we can fight for the freedoms inherent in democratic self-government.

To correct its faults the current educational system needs a radical re-organization starting from the basic principles and working up. A few of the most obvious things that we should demand:

1) THE ABOLITION OF THE DRESS CODE
The right of an individual to dress as he personally chooses is a basic freedom, and the rules governing it are the ones most often challenged by students who wear their hair "too

long" or who wear faded pants or short skirts. The school's policy of making people dress in certain specific styles originated in an attempt to train the students to "follow in the footsteps" of their parents and teachers, to prevent change -- the primary conservative attitude. This policy has continued into the present system, and is complicated by a half-unconscious wish on the part of the administration to force students into a docile, slave-like behavior. By forcing young people to act in pre-programmed ways the system is not only shaping them into conservatives but dehumanizing and degrading them. The freedom to dress and wear our hair as WE want tends to represent a chance for an expression of our sometimes latent discontent with the system, and thus can allow us to break away from cultural patterns and into a progressive growth.

2) FREEDOMS OF SPEECH AND PRESS.
These rights are not only self-evident, they are guaranteed in the US Bill of Rights. Yet the school insists on denying these rights to students. If we DID have freedom of speech we wouldn't have to be afraid of "punishment" or reprisal for expressing our opinions. If our point of view happens to be UP AGAINST THE WALL, MOTHERFUCKER!!, it's just as legitimate as WALLACE FOR PRESIDENT -- but because the omnipotent administration can't see straight, we get screwed.

3) ABOLITION OF SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS. The school is supposed to be an institution in which you LEARN not in which the teachers etc. satisfy their sadistic impulses by ruining people's lives. By expelling students the administration hopes to correct what they can only see as faults. The flaws in this "philosophy" are that rebellion is not a fault but a justifiable attempt to gain some sort of freedom, and that even were the validity of the administration's basic views to be accepted, punishment in such cases is never constructive.

4) A DEMOCRATIC STUDENT GOVERNMENT
In a democratic system, the issues that concern the students would be voted on by the entire student body

EDITORIAL (Cont.)

at regular assemblies for that purpose. The administration should not be permitted to overrule the student consensus.

These four reforms are just a few that are needed to make this school an even half-decent place. Among other changes we want are such obvious things as free study halls, liberalized smoking regulations, an end to the detention system, the abolition of grades, and voluntary attendance. The relaxation of rules in general would provide an atmos-

phere much more conducive to education -- which, as previously stated, is SUPPOSED to be the purpose of the school. Regimentation and authoritarianism inspire a rejection of the entire system, while freedom creates an atmosphere in which creativity -- the most important aspect of learning -- can flourish.

It is the expressed purpose of this paper to work for these reforms and to work for the freedom that every human being should possess, whether or not he agrees with the establishment's policies.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

Democracy is a way of life in which all people have the right to participate in the decisions which affect their lives. This way of life may only be complete when every institution of society is democratic, granting basic rights of free speech, free press, and free assembly. Our rights as students and members of the educational institution are being infringed upon.

Therefore we declare these as among our inalienable rights:

I. FREEDOM OF ADVOCACY

- A. Press -- a student newspaper free from censorship.
- B. Speech
 - 1. The freedom to express any opinion without reprisal.
 - 2. Any speaker sponsored by students be allowed on campus.
- C. Students be allowed to distribute any literature on campus.
- D. Independent student political organizations be allowed on campus.

II. FREEDOM OF PERSONAL DIGNITY

- A. The right for the individual student to dress and wear his hair as he chooses.
- B. Corporal, arbitrary, and unjust punishment be abolished.
- C. No forced self-incrimination.

III. STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL POLITICS

- A. Students be an integral part of the formation of school rules.
- B. Student petitions be allowed to circulate on campus.
- C. Student initiatives and grievances be acknowledged by the administration.

Martin Luther King: "To build a better America

WE NEED that \$2,500,000,000

**spent each month to rob an Asiatic people
of their unity and independence."**

THE STUDENT SCAPEGOAT

by John Bennet

Students and slaves have at least one thing in common: the way they are treated shows how miserable their oppressors are. The harm that students suffer from public schools is indicative of what is wrong with the rest of society. In fact, the harm that they suffer is often a direct result.

The use of "good grooming" codes throughout the country is a perfect example of what I mean. By authority of these codes, students are forced to conform to middle class standards of taste, regardless of whether they can afford or tolerate them. As future defenders of our civil liberties they are expected to surrender dutifully the right of a citizen to wear his hair the way he pleases. Anyone caught refusing to "dress right", of course, is immediately subject to a dishonorable discharge.

The official argument for clamping down on hair and dress styles is rather stupid. School authorities claim that long hair on boys tends to disrupt classrooms and hinders learning. They imply that students are more interested in gazing at each other than in following the lessons -- which doesn't say much for the lessons. . . .

What these people seem to be suffering from is overexposure to American society. In getting educated, getting drafted, or earning a living, most Americans must become part of organizations that they do not always clearly understand, have little or no say in, and are powerless to revamp -- organizations like most of our public schools, universities, industrial corporations, and military and governmental organizations. Repeatedly driven into such organizations by the lack of alternatives, if not by out and out conscription, they are continually subjected to directions from above and excessive demands for conformity. Since their own desires have little choice but to fit or quietly give way, their resulting frustration accumulates, becomes resentment, and cannot be contained.

To tangle with the source of their frustration, however, would not only be the healthiest thing they could do but also the most dangerous. They would risk getting thrown out and

branded with a bad record, both of which are tantamount to economic reprisals. In this atmosphere our basic institutions are held as sacrosanct and beyond reproach (when in actuality -- they require immediate, radical change). . . .

The American teenager is villified in the press, denied the right to vote, refused employment, deprived of civil liberties, exploited for his money, discriminated against in accommodations, and incarcerated without due process. He is bullied by the police youth authorities, drill sergeants, school officials, teachers, his own parents, and adults in general. As a student, he is institutionalized in what amounts to a tiny fascist state, in which the principal is a petty dictator; students are held incommunicado and without the right of habeas corpus; subject matter is censored; records are kept of every student's whereabouts; passports are demanded in the halls; petitions are subject to confiscation; mock elections are held for quisling government; participation in patriotic rallies is mandatory; physical education is militarized; the students are kept under constant surveillance and regimentation; rebels are quietly deported or held as hostages to keep their families in line; the likelihood of an insurrection is minimized by the variety of "electives", the glorification of football war, and the

internecine competition for grades; and the students are required to exhibit, in the words of the California State Education Code, "such moral and social qualities as the appreciation of the value of self-subordination and obedience to authority ...".

In the process of scapegoating its young people, our pecking order society perpetuates itself. It produces citizens in its own image. Like a slave who dreams of becoming a master they constantly desire revenge. Incapable of challenging authority above them, they wreck their revenge on those below. The result is a continuing cycle of authoritarian people -- a people increasingly servile and cruel, a nation of Uncle Toms and Simon Legrees.

That dress codes in schools are a

THE TEENAGE SCAPEGOAT (Cont.)

product of this disease should be evident by now. The school authorities who resort to dress codes were scapegoats once themselves. The authoritarian tendencies that they acquired from that unhappy experience were helpful to them in pursuing their present careers. . . .

And we have got to break out of that cycle that produces authoritarian people -- break it in as many points as we can. Before it is too late we have to take their favorite scapegoats -- the blacks, the communists, and the students -- away from them and keep them from finding any surrogates. Only in so doing will we ever be able to focus the frustration of the American people on institutions instead of human beings.

Since teenagers can be mistreated without arousing too much indignation from the public, school authorities have a difficult time restraining themselves. They pressure their victims to take out their frustration on themselves by struggling for high grades. But this only frustrates the students more. Seeing how restive the students are, the school authorities feel justified in clamping down even harder.

If enough of our young people were to abandon the schools for the therapy of a democratic environment -- but that would mean they would have to disobey their parents, which few are willing to do.

--John Bennet in NEW LEFT NOTES for June 26, 1967, a weekly newspaper of Students for a Democratic Society.

he opened his eyes
& fought his way to heaven

but god reached down
smiling

and knocked the shit out of him

--AG

"The will of the people is the only legitimate foundation of any government." -- Thomas Jefferson, 1801.

One of the primary purposes of this paper was to inform the students of New Milford High School of the condition of this country. The writers and printers, along with the distributors, wish to remain anonymous because of the consequences of being found out. (Namely we'd be screwed. First we would probably get a warning to totally cease all writing, printing, and distribution of the paper. When we refused to do so they would -- to employ the administration's euphemism -- "send us home." And we don't particularly want to get busted.)

The establishment must be entirely revised, but not completely destroyed. Our goals are to REFORM, not just to destroy. Our technical advancement has increased over 100% in the last ten years, while the practices of the establishment have advanced only 4 or 5%. We have to do something NOW!!

The smoking of a harmless weed puts us away for one to five years, and the government gets away with sending thousands of unwilling people to Viet Nam to murder or be murdered.

Why does the U.S. spend more money on Viet Nam and the moon than it does fighting poverty and restoring peace on earth?

The establishment tells us that shit, fuck, piss, crap, and bastard are dirty words, but I say that war, jail, kill, and conquer are the real dirty words!!

--DY

A FURTHER EXPLANATION: NMFP POLICIES

As we have attempted to indicate before this, THE NEW MILFORD FREE PRESS is a paper interested in reform but limited in its activities by the always-present threat of censorship by the administration. Thus we have chosen the only logical alternative to not publishing at all: to go underground, that is, to keep the identities of those of us who are producing the paper secret. Otherwise we would have to submit to control and censorship of the paper

NMFP POLICIES (Cont.)

by the administration -- and very probably suspension or expulsion if we continued to talk in the radical way we intend to.

We have a rather limited editorial staff at the present but are not attempting to prevent other interested people from helping. If you are interested in submitting articles, poetry, news, or anything else, send them to Richard Kovacs, 3 Clearview Dr., New Milford, who is receiving mail from this issue (but is not responsible and should NOT be blamed for the paper itself). Beginning next issue the FREE PRESS should have a literary section containing poetry (etc.) of a relevant nature. We encourage contributions to this, as well.

If you have radical interests and would like to help produce and/or distribute this paper, contact us as soon as possible. We need all the help we can get.

Future issues will be of a larger size, professionally printed, allowing the use of photographs and a generally higher standard of reproduction. The fact is, however, that we will have to subsist largely on free-will monetary contributions from students and people in the community. We would appreciate any contributions you would send us.

If you support free speech, support THE FREE PRESS.

**Martin Luther King: "If too chicken to
RESIST THE DRAFT
may you get killed before you kill
in this illegal and immoral war."**

**Martin Luther King:
"More BLACK POWER
means less sacrifice of Americans and
Vietnamese on the altar of greedy profits."**

OFF BASE

Ten forty-three.
In exactly TWO MINUTES
I'll ring the
FIRST BELL and
they'll all
stand still!

All, that is, except
your potential DEVIATE!
Your fledgling REBEL!
Your incipient BOAT-
ROCKER! THEY'LL try
to move alright!
THEY'LL have to
learn the HARD
way not to move!



So I'll SCREAM at 'em
and take their NAMES
and give them FIVE
DETENTIONS and EXTRA
HOMEWORK! NEXT time
they won't move
after the first
bell!

Because when they've
learned not to question
the FIRST BELL, they'll
learn not to question
their TEXTS! Their
TEACHERS! Their
COURSES!
EXAMINATIONS!



They'll grow up to accept
TAXES! HOUSING DEVELOP-
MENTS! INSURANCE! WAR!
MEN ON THE MOON! LIQUOR
LAWS! POLITICAL SPEECHES!
PARKING METERS!
TELEVISION!
FUNERALS!

Non-movement
after
the first
bell is
the
backbone
of Western
Civilization!

