



Revolutionaries Who Have to Be Home by 7:30 [With Comments]

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Revolutionaries Who Have To Be Home by 7:30

By NICHOLAS PILEGGI

The New York Herald Tribune shown on the opposite page is an underground paper issued by students at Stuyvesant, Hunter, and Brooklyn Tech high schools in New York City. This is Volume II, Number 3—the “Happy New Year” issue—and its uninhibited content is typical of the student papers now circulating in many big-city high schools.

In this article Mr. Pileggi reports on the revolutionary activities of today's high school youth in New York and elsewhere. Following his report are comments by five education leaders and a statement by the Phi Delta Kappa Commission on Education and Human Rights and Responsibilities.

Everywhere I hear the sound of
marching, charging feet, boy.
Comes summer here and the time
is right for fighting in the street,
boy

Hey, said my name is called
Disturbance.
I'll shout and scream,
I'll kill the king,
I'll rail at all his servants.

—“Street Fighting Man,”
The Rolling Stones
Gideon Music, Inc., 1968

Only nine months ago the first mimeographed flyer announcing the formation of the High School Student Union began circulating around New York City's secondary school lunchrooms, auditoriums, and classrooms. A drawing of a long-haired girl, wearing forbidden slacks and holding a torch over her head, ran beside the following text:

As you sit in that drab classroom, as you stare at the teacher who stares back at you from behind his mahogany desk, as you scribble obscenities on your desk of pine, no doubt you have many times wondered—What the Hell am I

doing here?—You probably think you go to school to learn, to broaden your mind, to understand.

The main thing that's taught us in school is how to be good niggers, obey rules, dress in our uniforms, play the game, and NO, Don't be UPPITY! Oh, we're trained in “the democratic process”—we have our student governments—they can legislate about basketball games and other such meaningful topics. Don't mention the curriculum—they'll tell us what to learn. Oh, we can express our complaints in the school newspaper—but the principal says what gets printed and don't embarrass the school's reputation. Not only are we forced to attend school in the first place, we have to carry I.D. cards at all times, walk on the right side of the hall, and if the teacher doesn't want us to, we can't even take a _____!

Since the formation of the New York High School Student Union there has been a proliferation of radically inclined high school student groups. Within the past year, growing numbers of militant black high school students have joined the Black High School Coalition (on February 21, the anniversary of the assassination of Malcolm X, more than 2,000 of them refused to attend classes). War and draft resisters have chartered school clubs and have won the right to counsel their fellow students in some schools. New dress codes allowing girls to wear slacks and boys to wear boots have been instituted after students petitioned the courts.

An incident on March 4, in which a

black student was suspended for distributing the *Black Student Union Press* at Taft High School in the Bronx, resulted in demonstrations, brawls with police, and seven arrests. It all started when 100 black demonstrators supporting the student were joined by some late-session students and snowballs, rocks, and epithets were met with nightsticks and shoves. District Superintendent George E. Patterson said the 16-year-old student, Ron Dix, was not suspended because of the contents of the publication, but because he broke the school rule against giving out unauthorized material. The publication contained a reprint of an allegedly anti-Semitic poem that had been read earlier over WBAI-FM by a black militant Brooklyn teacher. The purely black confrontation outside Taft, one of the first such episodes, coincided with brawls at other city high schools that week between black and white students.

As a result of various legal actions the Board of Education and principals have been tested on their right to keep intellectually qualified girls out of non-coed special schools; on their right to prohibit an 11-year-old boy from petitioning for the ouster of his principal, and on their right to force a 17-year-old Queens girl to salute and pledge allegiance to the flag. “I don't believe in God,” the girl said, explaining her refusal, “and I don't believe that there is justice for all.” A 16-year-old Louis D. Brandeis High School student filed suit in Federal District Court charging that school officials violated all his rights of due process, free speech, and freedom of the press. The boy had been suspended for circulating an underground newspaper in the school lunchroom. “We must wipe out this school of death,” one article in the newspaper began. “We must wipe out those teachers of death, we must wipe out this education of death. We're gonna get them. We are going to rise up and take them in our fists and throw them to the dogs and rats. We are going to send the pigs back to the farm.”

Perhaps the most significant legal

MR. PILEGGI is a free-lance writer who often deals with urban problems. This article first appeared in the New York Times Magazine and is reprinted here by permission. Copyright 1969 by the New York Times Company.

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victory came on February 24 in a U.S. Supreme Court decision that school officials could not interfere with students' rights to express political opinions in a nondisruptive way during school hours. The court ruled that high school officials in Des Moines, Iowa, had violated the First Amendment rights of three students by suspending them for wearing black arm-bands in school to protest the Vietnam war. While the court emphasized that the ruling was limited to the students' right of free speech and was

that even college-age radicals in complete sympathy with them must watch their step. A Civil Liberties Union attorney who has worked on several of their cases asks that he not be quoted in print, or even mentioned by name, for fear that some unexpected interpretation will be given his remarks by temperamental clients. Journalists have repeatedly encountered hostility in talking to young radicals. "You won't print the truth anyway," they say when refusing interviews. "There is no point in trying to explain

part of college life have suddenly materialized in the nation's high schools—in such places as Swan Quarter, N.C.; Boston; Youngstown, Ohio; Syl-vester, Ga.; Cedarhurst, L. I.; Mount Vernon, N.Y.; Los Angeles; Milwaukee; Westport, Conn.; and Chicago. In addition, secondary school students have raided the Sorbonne in Paris, thousands have demonstrated in the streets of Rome, and even Australia's new "switched-on" generation has begun making a target of the Sydney school system.

"We must wipe out this school of death . . ."

limited to nondisruptive conduct only, many attorneys feel that it will make it far more difficult for school officials to censor student publications, purge school libraries or curriculums of "objectionable" material, or discipline student protestors.

Just how many of the city's 200,000 secondary school students are involved in activist groups is not known, but on December 2, when all of the groups joined forces in their first city-wide action, a boycott to protest the make-up time clause in the solution of the teachers' strike, they demonstrated an extraordinary disruptive influence. The Board of Education said 35 percent of the city's 1.1 million students missed classes that day. Thousands of high school students participated in day-long demonstrations that brought arrests, rock- and bottle-throwing confrontations with police, and disruptions in subway service around the city.

Radical political activity among high school students has become, in fact, an integral part of school life. The aura of revolt permeates their music, fashion, and film. The clothes of confrontation (war surplus fatigues, jeans, boots, and hippie amulets) are worn even by those students who do not confront. With or without parental consent or encouragement, today's high school radicals find enough support among their contemporaries and enough recognition in the media to strengthen their resolve.

They are extraordinarily independent. Many of them, especially those aligned philosophically with the Students for a Democratic Society, are not only totally intolerant of anyone not sharing their point of view, but dictatorial, contemptuous, and smug. Their suspicion of adults is so intense

what we're about to the establishment press," one youngster said. "If you really want to write about the movement, why don't you write for the underground, instead of helping to sell underwear for the pigs?" said another.

The more militant of these young radicals operate within narrow ideological boundaries and are even suspicious of one another's motives and militancy. Most of them, however, have far more in common than they might care to admit. They are overwhelmingly white, the children of the comfortable middle class, the bright, scholastically superior progeny of hand-wringing executives, merchants, dentists, and school teachers. The city's black high school radicals are far less suspicious of adult community leaders than their white comrades and concentrate their efforts in the cause of Afro-American studies and community control and fighting racism among teachers. They are not seen in great numbers demonstrating against the war in Vietnam or petitioning in matters that have no direct relationship to the black community. Occasionally, the black and white radicals join forces on certain issues, but the city's young blacks must generally be counted as part of the larger black power movement, rather than the predominantly white leftist revolution.

Within the past year, New York high school activists have attended meetings of the SDS in Ann Arbor, Michigan; they were among the youthful demonstrators who battled police in Chicago during the Democratic convention; and they helped stage the "inhoguration" ridiculing President Nixon's own inauguration in January. The demonstrations, boycotts, and violent confrontations that have become a

The fourth edition of *The New York High School Free Press*, published "of, by, and for liberated High School Students," was about to go to press in the dingy West 72nd Street offices of an underground newspaper publisher. The students had been given the use of a small desk, the top drawer of a file cabinet, and an IBM computerized typesetter by Jack Banning, publisher of *The New York Free Press and Screw*.

"Sometimes I regret that decision," Banning said mildly one afternoon recently when none of the youngsters were around. "They're kids. They're noisy. They love big meetings and endless discussions, but they are relevant and they are sharp. When Howard Swerdloff [New York High School Student Union president] came and asked if they could use our equipment on weekends and at night, I said yes, because I felt it was necessary. The high schools were about to blow up. The establishment was trying to stop them from even distributing their leaflets near schools. I thought it would be better to let them blow off a little steam. We taught them to use the IBM typesetter in one day. According to IBM, adults take two weeks to learn."

Left alone on a winter Saturday evening to put out its newspaper, the union staff went about its tasks with a maximum of noise. The eight youngsters, all honor students at city schools, sustained themselves on fried clams, popcorn, ice cream, barbecued chicken, potato chips, oranges, apples, Fritos, halvah, candy bars, processed cheese, packaged cake, and peanuts, all in greasy paper bags spread out over desks, the seats of chairs, and on two-foot-high stacks of *The Free Press and Screw*.

The high school union's newspaper is a 16-page tabloid, supported largely by record company ads and filled with dramatic accounts of confrontations at various schools. The articles are writ-

ten by the student participants and stress personal involvement before objective reporting. The newspaper calls attention to the larcenous custodians in certain Bronx vocational high schools who leave only one roll of toilet paper in each lavatory and to the fact that there is never any soap available. It points to the practice in certain schools of requiring poor youngsters to leave a 10-cent deposit for the use of a fork with which to eat their federally financed free hot lunches. The newspaper also prints telephone numbers for students to call if they are seeking advice about birth control, abortion, draft counseling, demonstrations, or free legal assistance.

According to Swerdloff, the high school union has representatives at about 70 of the city's 90 high schools. Membership is picking up and the resistance of school administrators has helped.

"Howie, have some halvah," one of the youngsters called over to Swerdloff, who was pawing his way through the file drawer.

"A revolutionary never eats," he answered, biting into an apple.

"Free Press editor bites New Left apple," the other student yelled back.

"Dynamite!" Swerdloff screamed, snatching a letter from the drawer and waving it above his head. "We've got a distributor at Cardozo [a Queens high school]!"

Swerdloff is 17 years old and a mid-year graduate of John Bowne High School in Flushing, Queens. Twice suspended because of his affiliation with the Student Union and his insistence upon distributing newspapers and pamphlets in and around the school, Swerdloff found his graduation in doubt up to the last minute. He has applied to both Harvard and Columbia for the fall term.

"They have used the threat of withholding graduation to try to break the union," Swerdloff said, "but it hasn't worked. They pull out all the stops. They hint that you'll have to go into the army if you don't go to college. They work on your parents. They write letters to the colleges where you've applied and tell them you're a troublemaker. One principal wrote a second letter to Amherst taking back his earlier endorsement of a student."

Mark Rose, a 15-year-old Bronx High School of Science student and make-up editor of the newspaper, suddenly shouted: "A letter from Paramount Pictures! Listen to this." All watched as he began to read: "Be-

cause of the controversial nature of this movie we would appreciate your sending one black and one white reviewer to this preview and perhaps running the articles simultaneously."

Laughter and catcalls silenced further reading by Rose. Reginald Lucas, a 15-year-old High School of Science junior, suggested that Rose, a white, be sent as the newspaper's black reporter and that he, a black, go as the white. The suggestion was well received.

"Man, I'm groovin'," Rose said, moving about the room. "Yeah, I'm a brother. Man, I got soul."

Swerdloff stopped laughing to ask Dana Driskell, a tall, thin 17-year-old High School of Science senior (Bronx Science and Stuyvesant High School, considered to have some of the brightest youngsters in the city's system, have produced a large proportion of the movement's leaders), when his article on the teachers' union would be finished.

Driskell, seated at a desk too small for his long legs, gazed impassively at Swerdloff. Other students raced about the office shouting at one another, eating and drinking cider from the mouth of a half-gallon jug.

"Man! Man!" Swerdloff laughed, looking over Driskell's shoulder at what the young Negro had written. "You're even more bigoted than last time. How many times can you say 'racist teachers' in the first line?"

ment. He missed my point entirely by comparing me to Lenin. After that, we realized that the establishment has to explain us in their own terms, in terms of what they already know." (*The Times* had led off its article with the following: "Howie Swerdloff is organizing a revolution against American society in the high schools with the skill of a little Lenin.")

Driskell, who had finished his article in pencil on ruled paper, was seated at the IBM console, preparing to transfer his copy to magnetic tape. Suddenly he looked up and asked, "What time is it?"

"It's a quarter to seven," someone shouted.

"O.K.," he said, returning to the computer. "I'm supposed to be home at 7:30."

To keep high school students informed of matters in their own neighborhood revolutions at least two dozen student-run, uncensored high school newspapers and mimeographed pamphlets have been founded within the last year. Typical is *Neo-Dwarf*, the underground publication of Seward High School in lower Manhattan, which calls itself "the magazine of the second American Revolution." The cover of its first issue was a drawing of a policeman, nightstick raised, beating his way through the lettered sites of past confrontations: "Grand Central, Watts, Chicago, Harlem, White-

"Their suspicion of adults is so intense that even college-age radicals in complete sympathy with them must watch their step."

Driskell frowned at his editor. "I don't like anyone reading my copy with a pencil in his hand."

Swerdloff pretended to cry, and Mark Rose shoved a handful of chocolate-covered peanuts into his mouth.

"Everyone just writes what he feels," Swerdloff explained, "and it comes out true. Not the way things come out in the establishment press. I remember in September, when we first organized the union, *The Times* sent a guy to interview us. We spent about two hours with him. We wanted that story to be right. When it came out, the story negated the fact that there are other people in the move-

hall Street, Washington Square, Pentagon, Memphis, Detroit, Columbia." The six-page magazine is neatly typed and liberally sprinkled with lively drawings. It is turned out on duplicating machines and is "published bi-weekly, bisexually, and bilingually" by three Seward High students. "The *Neo-Dwarf* was formed out of desperation," its declaration of intent says. "We saw time and time again as the — piled up outside the publication office that not only was the *Seward World* [the official school newspaper] a trite, inane piece of —, but that all its articles and reviews had a tendency to —. Since

the radical factions in Seward Park had no outlet in the *World* we were driven to form our own paper in which something could be said.

"Our chief goal," the declaration continues, "is to propagate the idea of revolution in the United States. As for political affiliations, we have none and refuse to be influenced by any one of the many that now exist. We feel that our only obligation is to promote the social upheavals that we feel are necessary for the welfare of man. WE WANT THE WORLD AND WE WANT IT...NOW!"

Eric Darton, a *Neo-Dwarf* editor, wrote of last year's "Battle of Washington Square":

"Contingents A and C were dispersed within five minutes of leaving the park and at the intersection of Seventh Avenue and Perry Street there were many arrests and beatings. Contingent B however managed to continue up Seventh Avenue to 38th Street where, to avoid confrontation, they ran west to Ninth Avenue and narrowly missed getting creamed by the Tactical Patrol Force. . . ."

The *New York Herald Tribune* is a merger of *The Stuyvesant High School Flea* and *The Brooklyn Tech Other Other*. Less dominated by radical politics, *The Tribune* is filled with folk-rock record reviews, hip clothing store ads, poems, and notes on student arrests. The mimeographed *Illustrated Weekly Reader*, put out by students at Washington Irving, an all-girl high school, and Stuyvesant, is more issue-oriented. It alerts students to incidents

pending. Five youngsters had their lockers searched by an assistant principal who suspected they owned copies of the newspaper. Two students, one a Regents Scholar, were suspended for failing to divulge the names of student activists. A legal action filed against the principal of the Queens school by the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee has charged him with violating the students' constitutional rights, and his "overreaction" to the critical articles was made the subject of another article.

"It's beautiful," one 16-year-old revolutionary said happily. "They play pig-hawk-Nazi and we play oppressed-dove-nigger. As soon as we can show white kids that in this country all students are niggers, then we can take to the streets."

High school radicals are often incorporated into various adult-led protests whose goals they share. They fill out the ranks at peace demonstrations, help bait police at confrontations, and even join in the zig-zag street maneuvers of older quasi-guerrilla groups like the United States Committee to Aid the National Liberation Front and the street-fighting arm of SDS, in whose downtown Manhattan offices the high school union has free desk space. They have learned through participation the use of scouts equipped with walkie-talkies and bicycles to march through midtown Manhattan, block traffic, wave Viet Cong flags, turn over trash cans, and hand out

manipulated by adults into violent actions in which they would be the first victims.

"The danger in all this," one city official said, "is not the self-imagined revolutionaries from middle-class homes. The real problem this spring is going to come from the thousands and thousands of 14-, 15-, and 16-year-old kids, especially black kids, who don't want to be in school in the first place. Spring in the high schools is always a time for chaos, but with several new elements trying to capitalize on the situation we could have real trouble. It takes so few to close down a school, and the schools have simply not responded in any meaningful way to the problem. High schools are the single most potentially dangerous situation the city faces this spring. If one school goes they can all go, and there are 90 of them spread throughout the city. We have already spotted 30 possible problem schools, and on one day last week we were having trouble at seven of them.

"Whenever there is a conflict in a high school," the official continued, "the armies gather. Poverty groups show up because they must show they're doing something to indicate they have leadership. The press shows up, young radicals, community people, everyone.

"Inside the schools, antique principals, who were once excellent, can no longer deal with kids or teachers or anything. In one Brooklyn high school recently there were clashes in the overcrowded lunchroom between black and white kids, and it took almost an hour before the principal could bring himself to call the police to break it up. The result has been that the police can't trust him to notify them, so we've got 40 cops standing outside the school all day long, taking abuse from both the white kids and the black kids, white parents and black parents. And remember, all you need to get the whole thing going is 10 kids fighting in the lunchroom, and you wouldn't have enough cops to stay on top of it."

The four speakers who addressed the High School Student Union's "founding conference" last September reflected quite accurately the four major areas of radical student interest. They were Norma Becker, chairman of the Fifth Avenue Vietnam Peace Parade Committee; Herman Ferguson, a former paid adviser to the Intermediate School 201

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such as "the science teacher at Irving who asked a student to sell her a *Weekly Reader*. After the student had sold her a copy, she took the student to the office, reported her for selling the paper in school, and demanded she be suspended."

In Queens, the principal of a high school was so incensed at critical articles about him in an edition of *The High School Free Press* that every student seen reading or carrying—or even suspected of possessing—copies of the newspaper was temporarily sus-

leaflets, while avoiding direct contact with police.

These sanguine children of the revolution, whose bedrooms are papered with posters of the movement, whose record players sing out against injustice and war, and who secretly practice the eerie yodel of the Algerian rebels in anticipation of house-to-house street fighting in Rego Park, constitute only a minority of all high school students. City officials are concerned, however, that these radical youngsters could be

governing board, a black militant who is still appealing his conviction of conspiring to murder moderate civil rights leaders; Mark Rudd, the SDS activist who led the Columbia University strike; and Paul Goodman, who was introduced as "an anarchist, author, and educator."

"The chief function of the present school system in every advanced country in the world, no matter what its political ideology, is to break spirit," Goodman told the youngsters. "Every decent sociologist who has studied the issue has said so. It has no technical function or educational function—that's all malarky. It is to process. It is to conform you. At that point, you should draw the line and try to preserve dignity. Organize power—the ability to make a strike seems to me rather better than burning the buildings down. That's why I'm for your organization. The buildings are certainly going to be burned down otherwise."

"Thanks a lot, Paul," one of the youngsters sneered. "But sometimes you sound just like my father."

Tom Hayden, a New Left activist and one of the founders of SDS, thinks that while today's high school students may have been influenced and encouraged by their college comrades, they are far more radical. "If you think you saw militant people at these hearings," Hayden warned the House Committee on Un-American Activities in December, "you've seen nothing until you see the seven- and eight-year-olds in the next few years."

Aside from accepting free office space and the use of mimeograph machines, telephones, and typewriters, high school radicals have insisted upon running their own revolution and claim independence from older groups. High school students have certainly been used on occasion to further the aims of adults (Ocean Hill-Brownsville teacher Leslie Campbell managed to turn a student rally at Washington Square into a far broader demonstration), but generally high school students are far too mercurial for political manipulation. Even the major high school groups, like the Student Union, the Black Coalition, the High-School Mobilization, the African-American Students Association, have difficulty getting the full cooperation of their own members.

"We're basically anarchist," one

17-year-old Bronx High School of Science union member said. "A lot of the college guys are in bags. They're Maoists or Leninists or even Stalinists. I'd say high school guys are more independent. That's what it's all about. We don't want any bags."

The typical high school activist offers varied incidents and issues as his reason for becoming involved in the movement. For Toby Mamis, the red-haired 17-year-old Stuyvesant

band confided, when Joshua left the room, that they had been intercepting obscene telephone calls and hate letters from adults directed at their son.

The prolonged teachers' strike and the polarization of black and white sentiment over community control of the schools also edged some of the youngsters into a more active role. Many students explained that while Negro teachers, radicals, and parents helped keep their schools open, union teachers picketed outside in violation

"We must wipe out those teachers of death . . ."

High School editor of *The Herald Tribune*, the procrastination and excuses on the part of school officials concerning draft counseling at his school first made him suspicious of the administration's motives.

"Two years ago, when I was a freshman, we started a Stuyvesant antiwar school for draft counseling," Mamis said, seated in the living room of his family's large West Side apartment as his mother, father, and several visiting high school activists listened. "We held our first meetings at the Free School on 14th Street. We couldn't meet at school because our application for a school chapter was denied, even though we had the signatures of more than 1,000 students and 20 teachers. Similar things happened in other schools, so when we all met at the High School Mobilization [the antiwar group] we decided that the whole structure of high schools is wrong."

Much of the Mamis apartment wall space has been turned over to posters, bulletin boards, and clip-pings that the Mamis children have gathered. It is Toby's 11-year-old brother, Joshua, who filed the suit for the right to petition in his school for the dismissal of his principal. Mrs. Mamis, an attractive brunette, said the idea of filing the suit was Joshua's. Both she and her husband had been prepared to support him in every way they could, but they were not prepared for the hostile reaction they have encountered.

"We can't seem to establish with people that Joshua's case is a Bill of Rights case," Mrs. Mamis said. "It is a matter of whether a child has the same rights as an adult. Adults just don't seem to comprehend that children have rights." She and her hus-

band of state law and shouted racist slurs and threats to all those who entered. "The strike really exposed many teachers for what they are," 17-year-old Elizabeth Owens, a member of the High School Coalition, said. "You knew it all the time, especially if you were black and stuck in a crowded school. They'd just sit up there and drink their coffee at their desks. They'd snatch hats off kids' heads. They'd never say please or thank you. They'd turn black high schools into prisons. When the strike came, and we saw those same white teachers out there cursing at our parents and at black teachers, we knew where it was at."

Margie Glenn, a 16-year-old student at the High School for Performing Arts, is not a member of any activist group. Her interests are geared toward furthering her career. Yet, she claims, her own ambition demands that she not rely upon the majority of her teachers, whom she says she has found either uninterested or incompetent.

"Teaching is the only profession where incompetence is not grounds for firing," Miss Glenn begins. "Kids today may not be well-educated, but they are sharp. They can spot phonies. Teacher material is not even related to students. The schools don't relate to life. It's like going to a movie and then you walk out and it's all over. Schools now kill the desire in kids to learn. It's based on what you need to know to pass the Regents. If it's not on the test, you don't have to know it. And in the whole set-up the only ones who are not considered are the kids."

George W. Castka, an assistant administrative director for the city's schools and the coordinator of student

activities at city high schools, readily admits the difficulty in reaching today's students.

"Kids today are just better informed and much more involved than ever before," Castka said recently, seated at a conference table at the board's Livingston Street headquarters. "Maybe we're reaping our own harvest."

"These kids are not hesitant about asking embarrassing questions. I was not brought up that way, but these kids are different—they question the whole structure. During the last demonstration, right outside this building, they protested the 45-minute make-up instructional time. One youngster from John Jay High School even walked right into my office, looked me right in the eye, and yelled: 'Castka, the 45 minutes has to go!' A few years ago that would have been unthinkable. In my day we just wouldn't have had the nerve."

As a result of growing student unrest, in mid-December the Board of Education announced the formation of a committee to recommend city-wide guidelines to enlist students in helping the administration make policy decisions. Seelig L. Lester, deputy superintendent of schools in charge of instruction, said at the time, "We're going to lay this whole problem on the table and kick it around. We're looking at the youth movement throughout the country, and the hope is to establish a dialogue before we have outbreaks."

Student activists, the editors of underground high school newspapers, and officials in the High School Student Union all laughed at the committee and rejected it as unrepresentative and a typical ploy of the board.

When told of the reaction, Castka closed his eyes and smiled. "So whom do you reach? The student activists are ephemeral. Where do we get them from? They work out of local schools, but whom do you get? Whom do you talk to? You pick Johnny Jones, and a week later he's gone. If we set up guidelines for this year, they may not be the guidelines for next year."

"Also, you mustn't forget. Is there time in the school week for students to be involved in depth in administering or participating in this thing? You know the disadvantaged can't get involved, because many of them hold after-school jobs. Those activists who are involved you find are not activists within the school structure. All of a sudden kids spring up, kids you've never heard of. They shoot up.

They develop a following. They attract attention and they're gone. But somewhere," Castka said, narrowing his eyes conspiratorially, "somewhere somebody's motivating them."

Bernard E. Donovan, the superintendent of schools, has expressed the opinion that "a number of adults with revolutionary tendencies" are behind the movement in the high schools. "There is too much printed material and general similarity for me to believe it is not being led by adults," he said.

There is a tendency on the part of school administrators as well as principals to lump peaceful student dissenters, political activists, radicals, old-fashioned rowdies, drug pushers, muggers, and vandals all in the same pot. In late January the High School Principals Association appealed to the Board of Education and the mayor to curb what it considered excesses of student dissension and disruption. Henry di Suvero, director of the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee, which set up a High School Rights Defense Committee, said the principals "deliberately tried to falsely link recent student protest with a cry of 'crime in the schools.'" Ira Glasser, the associate director of the New York Civil Liberties Union, also criticized the principals' report:

"The continued unwillingness of the principals to distinguish between violent disruptions and peaceful dissent can only contribute further to the atmosphere of repressions and also to the very violence they seek to avoid."

John Doar, president of the Board of Education, is not optimistic about reaching today's high school students. During racial clashes between Negro and white children at Canarsie High School early this month, he tried talking to some of the youngsters.

"They didn't have any time for me," he said. "My impressions were that the students were very, very suspicious, cynical, distrustful, and hostile, and it doesn't do any of us any good just wishing it away."

When pressed, however, on just what is being done other than wishing, Doar paused a moment. "The basic problem is that we haven't learned very much about how to deal with these kids, especially the minority high school kids. A lot of work must be done to reach them, but our administrators are so bogged down with paper work, report writing, and a

serious secretarial shortage that many of our people don't have a chance to spend the time needed to keep up with the temper of the time, let alone get ahead of it."

An independent fact-finding committee may some day discover that an acute shortage of secretaries was the underlying cause of the student revolt that closed the New York public schools in 1969. □

Comment

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Professor of Education and Sociology
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What I find most interesting about both Mr. Pileggi's report and the interest it has aroused is the apparently unanimous assumption that the status quo in the high schools ought to be preserved, and that its defense is the problem. Thus in his letter soliciting comment Mr. Elam observes, "What you say will, I hope, be suggestive to school principals who must cope with high school revolutionaries of the type described here." Aside from the fact that I would prefer that high school principals find my comments frankly obscene rather than merely suggestive, I would rather help high school students cope with the kind of school administrations that have precipitated the incidents recounted by Mr. Pileggi, or that would force a group of adolescents to go all the way to the United States Supreme Court to gain the right to wear an armband. The fact that these administrators now find themselves challenged causes me no anxiety, except on behalf of the students who may suffer Draconian penalties for their intransigence.

Since Mr. Pileggi does not consider in his article whether the protests he



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describes are directed against real grievances, the reader is left with the implication that the protests rather than the grievances are the problem. The closest school spokesmen come to seeing the grievances of the students is in admitting that the schools are often antiquated in their practices as well as their plants; and they cannot, in Mr. Castka's phrase as quoted, "reach today's students." Yet, even in seeing the question in such terms, he asks, "Is there time in the school week for students to be involved in depth in administering or participating in this thing?" The idea that the school week might be made more flexible in order to accommodate a real, open "rap" on the issues and feelings involved, with no prior deference allotted, seems beyond the reach of the schools, which certainly lack the means of correcting themselves even if they could respond less defensively to criticism.

For those school people who would like to see the high school—and a relatively good one—through the rather cool eyes of an outsider, Frederick Wiseman's new film, which Fred Hechinger described in *The New York Times* for March 23, may be useful. It is obtainable from the OSTI Corporation in Cambridge, Massachusetts.* It certainly suggests that the students need help in confronting this vulgar and ubiquitous institution which often insults them and preempts their tastes and manners as well as half their waking time. The High School Principals Association has included among its complaints the fact that student radicals were receiving legal advice from adults. If there were qualified members of the bar who were of high school age, their services might indeed be preferred to those of older lawyers as based on greater understanding of the issues involved. Since there are not, I can only hope that the dignity of the students can be successfully defended within the structure of our legal system, and deplore the fact that the schools should have become so firmly established as their adversary.

*Address Wiseman c/o OSTI, 264 Third St., Cambridge, Mass. 02142, for rates and permissions.

Comment

Ted Gordon

Youth Services Section
Los Angeles City Schools

Across my desk in the same week as Editor Elam's request for a comment came, ironically:

1. A "Board Policy Statement on Campus Disturbances." Excerpts: "... it must be understood that disorder and disruption of the school process will not be countenanced and persons attempting such actions will be held accountable. . . . We cannot abdicate our responsibilities for the maintenance of a positive educational



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program to the special interests of any particular group or organization."

2. From the Office of the Superintendent: "Emergency Procedures for Handling Disturbances, Disorders, or Demonstrations (1) by Pupils, (2) by Employees of the District, or (3) by Adults Who Are Not District Employees." Excerpt (underlined): "The final decision for determining the nature of the assistance needed is the responsibility of the school administrator."

3. From the Office of the Superintendent as an attachment to the above bulletin: "Policy of the Los Angeles Police Department for Handling Sit-Down Demonstrations in Schools." Excerpt: "The entire transaction shall be accompanied by ample supervision and photographic evidence."

4. From the Personnel Division: "Assault and Battery Leave of Absence for Certificated and Classified Employees." Excerpt: "Compensation. When an employee is absent because of such assault and/or battery, the employee will be paid his full salary (for the assignment in which serving when injured) for a maximum of one calendar year."

5. From the current "Minutes, Board of Education." Excerpt: "Reimbursement for Damage to Employees' Personal Property. (Eyeglasses, wrist-watches, clothing, vehicles. Total amount reimbursed: \$1,500.)"

6. A report of the California Asso-

ciation of Student Councils to the California State Board of Education. Sample recommendations: "Abolishment of teacher tenure. Student representation. Four-year course in sex education. School-faculty-student communication boards."

7. From the "Parents of Pico Gardens," a statement with these headings: Four Priorities. Demands To Be Put into Immediate Effect. Programs Which Must Be Put into Effect as Soon as Possible. Excerpts: "We want new bathrooms . . . a new cafeteria . . . a free lunch program . . . cross [sic] guards . . . insensitive attitude of the teachers towards the children must stop . . . a Spanish-speaking receptionist must be hired . . . more special reading courses."

8. A copy of Superintendent Jack Crowther's speech at a recent staff meeting. Excerpt: "It is quite obvious by now that whether we like it or not, the role of the school administrator is changing right out from under us. . . . We find ourselves in a time when the terms 'administration,' 'power structure,' 'rigidity,' and 'gatekeeper' are synonymous and equally odious. . . . We must acquire the new skills to match our changing role."

9. From the Division of Elementary Education: "Suggestions for Involving the School Staff, Parents, and Community Representatives in Educational Change." Excerpt: "Furnish leadership and direction in the planning of educational innovations and change."

New York, that's telling it as it is here in Los Angeles. Administrators, your choices appear in the last several statements. Militant "counter-campaigns"? Student representation and participation? Retraining and retooling with new skills in administration? Education change?

Comment

Arnold Salisbury

President, American Association of School Administrators
Chairman, Department of Educational Administration,
Western Illinois University

Thoughtful and concerned educators have always tried to keep all learning experiences of their pupils relevant to the needs of society and those of the pupils themselves. We have always tried to use our influence to create an environment in which

maximum learning by the pupil can occur.

However, some school environments and learning situations are such that not a great deal of relevancy exists and not much effort is being made to provide the type and variety of learning opportunities so desperately needed. Such schools provide fertile ground for malcontents and those who wish to create disturbances which tend to polarize the positions of persons involved on issues which may or may not be the points of conflict in the confrontation.



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Many disturbances of this type are initiated and promoted deliberately by persons who are "outsiders" to the situation and who may have some personal advantage to be gained. Such appears to be the case in some of the events being discussed. Also, we note that some of the difficulties are deliberately fomented by persons who just like to make trouble or who seem to have a hunger for power.

The great majority of dedicated and competent educators, however, need to continue to provide both the educational programs and the environment which will be most conducive to the maximum growth of the student. Those schools and programs which do not provide these positive learning experiences are in the minority but get all the headlines and publicity. The vast majority of teachers and school administrators are able and conscientious persons who have developed the best educational system yet known to man.

Certainly we can do better! However, let us not forget the tremendous progress we have made! Our past successes will not permit us to sit back with complete satisfaction and a feeling of "all is well," but will serve as a springboard to continued improvement of the educational opportunities for boys and girls.

Comment

J. Lloyd Trump

Associate Secretary
National Association of Secondary
School Principals

We dare not ignore student extremists. We must analyze their demands even though we know they may insist on other changes when their present ultimatums are met. I am equally certain that we must not be lulled into complacency by the often bland opinions of student council members and the "good" students that provide a comfortable impression that everything is fine in schools. The two foregoing extremes are separated by the great majority of student opinions, ranging on a continuum that at times produces student support for one extreme or the other. Mostly, the majority exhibits the conformity that limited enthusiasm or knowledge breeds. Typically, the majority of pupils attend school mainly to get a job or to get into college; usually they complain little.

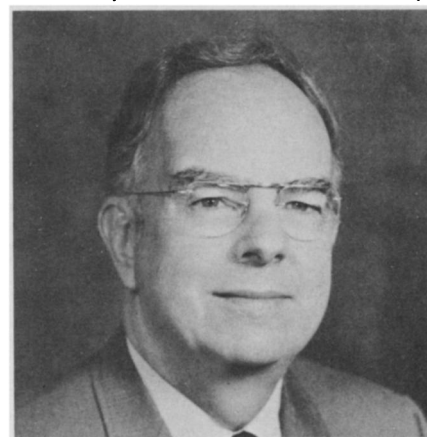
What causes the school revolt? Many high school students today know enough to lack confidence in the judgment of their elders. True, "a little learning is a dangerous thing." However, when the kids become creative in dress, dance, social relationships, and the like, they find themselves copied by their parents and other oldsters who try to outdo them, often becoming ridiculous in the process. The apparent adult interest in war rather than peace, in profits rather than service, in wheeling and dealing rather than legal methods, and so on, mirrors a hypocrisy that young idealists abhor. The schools contain similar unreasonable procedures, including especially their systems of reward and punishment, their overportrayals of certain ideals, and their willingness to accept and perpetuate adult mores that seem unreal to youth.

Completely different school programs offer solutions to the problems and dilemmas of the preceding two paragraphs. What school programs need is to attack frontally the dichotomy between the pupils' *real* world and the school's *make-believe* world. Their real world is the present in time and space—as the students understand that world. Teachers, on

the other hand, try constantly to interpret, and often glorify, the past and/or to prepare pupils for the teachers' own concepts of what the future holds. Most pupils need less information, fewer skills, and less time in the subject fields required of all so that each may follow where his special talents and interests lead—assisted positively by the school's program.

Motivation is the key word. The present systems of reward and punishment, teacher-dominated pupil planning, overemphasis on the future, and competitive evaluation get in the way. Instead, the school needs to evaluate each pupil in terms of his own past accomplishments, to organize learning so that each pupil is neither bored because he has had it before nor frustrated because it is always beyond him, to provide meaningful materials, and to make it easy for each pupil to understand what he is supposed to learn and whether or not he has accomplished the goals.

School programs should reduce the time required for listening to teachers' talk. Conversely, the school should provide more time and better places for pupils to engage in independent study, covering required content as well as materials of special interest, working both in the school building and away from it when community



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resources are better than the school's. The school program needs to help pupils to find avenues of social action in the community after helping them prepare for constructive efforts.

Teachers need time to keep up-to-date, to prepare better materials and guides to learning, and to improve the evaluation of pupil progress. The space available does not permit a complete description of what the school needs to do. I will send additional materials upon request.

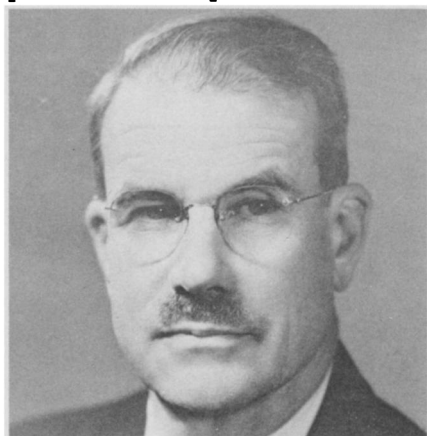
Comment

Robert J. Havighurst

Professor of Education
University of Chicago

In commenting on student unrest and activism in the high schools I shall first indicate what I suppose will probably happen to the students involved, and then list some of the things I believe would constitute a positive and intelligent response by school authorities to the situation.

The student unrest appears to be largely in the high schools of the big cities, and of a few suburbs which have complex population "mixes." Since those are also places of tension for adults, the student unrest and activism will probably be treated as one element in the complex of big-city social problems. Therefore it will probably be treated as a "law and order" problem, which means it will be tolerated within rather narrow limits, but far wider limits than might have been thought possible a decade ago. Then, probably, it will be suppressed by whatever measures seem most appropriate to the local political and educa-



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tional authorities. There will be relatively little argument over the use of police force and school disciplinary measures against high school disturbers. The high school students will be regarded by the mass of the citizens, the newspapers, and civic organizations as too "immature" to be able to use much greater freedom with discretion. Whether one likes these measures or not, they are likely to happen.

It is to be hoped that the educa-

tional authorities will also act to improve the high schools, not because the schools are to blame for the unrest and activism of students (problems of the urban and the larger social setting are responsible for this phenomenon), but because the problems of the urban and larger social setting can be partially solved through improvement of the high schools, with a lag of a few years.

The following improvements are suggested:

1. Bring high school students into more active and effective *advisory* roles dealing with the school program and its administration.

2. Make the high school social studies and literature courses more "relevant" to the contemporary social problems of war, poverty, and metropolitan area maladjustment.

3. In discussion with students, formulate a set of clearly defined rules for student publications, dress, and behavior on school property.

4. Develop a *system* of high schools for a big city which offers more *variety* than the present system. This variety should serve better than the present general and semi-comprehensive school the following groups: a) high-achieving students with high academic aspirations; b) talented students in the arts; c) socially disadvantaged adolescents who need a stable position in the working force.

Bundy Sounds Off On Crisis in School Authority

► Much of the current crisis of educational authority derives from lack of confidence in what teachers are doing at every level of our educational system, Ford Foundation President McGeorge Bundy comments in the foundation's annual report released in March.

Failure at the higher levels, he said, "may be more destructive than elsewhere, if only because of the disillusionment produced by visibly poor performances on the part of men as highly honored . . ." as professors.

"The traditional pattern of learning has been ripe for reform since 1900 at least," he said, "and the best efforts of the best committees have seldom done more than nibble at its edges. . . . I believe that the faculty is the right and necessary center of authority in the university, but the price of that authority is its responsible exercise in the advancement of the learning of all."

A PDK Commission RECOMMENDATION

Recognizing the complexities and frustrations of secondary school officers and faculty in dealing with current problems of dissent, the Phi Delta Kappa Commission on Education and Human Rights and Responsibilities at its meeting in Washington, D.C., May 3-6 recommended the document, Academic Freedom in the Secondary Schools, as a legal and philosophical guideline. The statement, which concerns itself with such matters as boycotts and demonstrations, armbands, underground newspapers, and personal appearance, is published by the American Civil Liberties Union, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10010. The commission also refers to its own statement on human rights and student dissent, which appeared in the April, 1968, KAPPAN.

Bundy said that today the average course of study in the average university of the first rank "is, in a quite fundamental sense, unaccountable: Course by course it may be the best that good men can offer, but as a whole it is far more the product of guild traditions than of a rational effort to make learning happen. That is a tale I can tell out of school with the conviction of close experience."

Summary of College Protest

► Student protest provides the theme for the March 21 issue of the *Urban Crisis Monitor*, a weekly information service publication of the Urban Research Corporation. In outline form, the *Monitor* presents a description of student protest activities which occurred on college campuses across the country from January 1 to March 15, 1969, plus reactions, investigations, and legislative responses which occurred as a result. The Urban Research Corporation is located at 5464 South Shore Drive, Chicago, 60615.