

# Negro Nazi Sprung by Breakthrough

Carol Schmidt

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Joseph Patterson is a Negro.

He is 14 years old and bright—an honors student at Miller Junior High School in Detroit.

Joseph Patterson is a self-proclaimed Nazi and a member of Breakthrough, a local right-wing group. Some people, including teachers and counselors at Miller, alarmed at his preoccupation with Nazis and threats of killing everyone from commie teachers he “spys” on for Breakthrough, up to Supreme Court Justice Earl Warren and Lyndon Johnson think that Joseph Patterson is emotionally disturbed. Breakthrough thinks not. Last week they went into Wayne County circuit court to have Mr. Patterson released from the Towne Mental Hospital where Patterson had been committed on a petition from the Wayne County Sheriff. Deputy Sheriff Leontyne Smith who examined Patterson at the Detroit Psychiatric Institute Children’s Clinic where he was referred stated in a petition dated June 15:

“When I talked to him, he has a notebook on which was printed ‘Heill Hitler, Heill Himmler, Heill Frick, Heill Rockwell.’ In an eager, rapid and almost hypnotic manner and speech he told me that these were all famous Nazis. He told me that he had been a member of the Nazi Party for the past year, was a member of their American Elite Guard.”

“He told me of his plans to organize a Nazi Youth Group. I have seen a copy of his ‘Constitution of the Young Nazis for States Rights’ in which he stipulates that members shall be anti-Semitic, anti-communist, anti-black Muslin (sic), anti-foreign (except German) and anti-gypsy. It also advocates monthly book burning seminars and maintaining a supply of legal arms.”

Two psychiatrists were also referred to examine him for the court, and they found him in need of psychiatric care, and he was admitted early in the fall to Towne hospital.

The commitment was with the consent of his grandmother, Mrs. Annie Gibbs, with whom Patterson and five sisters and brothers had been living. Their mother is deceased; the father’s whereabouts is unknown.

“Breakthrough didn’t even know he had been committed,” James Carey, one of the top aides to Donald Lobsinger, said in a pained voice outside of the courtroom. “Obviously he had been a political prisoner.”

Lobsinger, Carey, and a man who said he was Harry E. Chope, no longer an active member of Breakthrough but chief counsel for the “Citizens Committee for the Preservation of Constitutional Rights,” sat up front in Judge Carl Weideman’s courtroom, Nov. 1 and listened to Breakthrough’s usual attorney, Lawrence S. Davidow, present the case why Patterson should be released. Judge Weideman referred affectionately to Atty. Davidow as “a scoundrel, but then the great unwashed should have representation too.” He turned in a more serious manner to the youth who was seated with his grandmother and said:

“I have read what this boy is supposed to have said, and if he should be in a hospital, then Stokely Carmichael and Rap Brown should be committed too.”

He counseled the youth that he was “a fine lad,” but he should watch what he said publicly, and maybe take more of a back seat in Breakthrough affairs. “Go back to school and get a good education,” he continued, in the manner of the Great White Father.

The fine judge also suggested to Atty. Davidow that he investigate the boy's complaint that his letters while in Towne hospital were not mailed, adding, "I'll make a lawyer out of you yet." He urged that the group "Check into the administrator of that hospital. I understand he has a membership in some civil rights group."

"Will do, nodded Lobsinger, and escorted Patterson out of the court. Charles Wells, administrator of Towne hospital, belongs to the American Civil Liberties Union and is a former member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

The principal of Miller denied that the boy had ever made any threats against anyone, to his knowledge, saying only that some of his teachers had asked that he be referred to the Detroit Psychiatric Institute for an examination.

He affirmed Davidow's statement in court that Patterson was an honors student, and added that the request from the teachers occurred long before the Breakthrough rally in the City-County Bldg. in the early fall in which Patterson made his first public appearance for Breakthrough.

At that rally, reported in the *Fifth Estate*, observers such as Frank Joyce and Pat Murphy from People Against Racism, and Al Harrison from the Afro-American Unity Movement, who had had difficulties gaining admittance into the rally, were greatly disturbed at Patterson's halting talk.

According to Miss Murphy, this dialogue occurred between two women.

"That boy who's speaking is certainly having a hard time, isn't he?"

"Well, yes, but you have to understand he's only 14. Oh dear, you can make it, Joseph," she breathed half aloud to the faltering, stuttering youth far below her at the platform.

At this point Harrison walked out, followed by Joyce and Miss Murphy, to cries of "Commie" and "Mau mau." Harrison was attacked in the halls. At that time they and other observers had commented privately that the boy had seemed to be mentally ill, and Lobsinger's use of him could only worsen his condition.

Patterson himself said he was glad to get out of the hospital and doesn't believe he is sick. Asked if he would continue to work with Breakthrough, he answered, "Of course."

At this point Lobsinger advised him to stop the conversation, and Patterson said to this writer, "Oh, you're that racist reporter," and walked Obediently away with Lobsinger and his entourage.

His grandmother commented, "He's a good boy. I'm glad he's home."

# fifth Estate

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