

# In The High Schools

Dave Watson (David Watson)

1969

## **“Hey: What’s That Sound?”**

Two High School Student Unions, in the northeast suburbs and at Cooley have been agitating for change inside their schools.

The Cooley High School Student Union recently printed and distributed its Five point program with the following demands:

- 1) The elimination of ROTC;
- 2) Begin draft counseling
- 3) An end to the tracking system;
- 4) The establishment of a student court; and
- 5) The right to organize politically

Interested Cooley students can write to the union through me at the Fifth Estate office.

Also, in the northeast suburban area a student union has been formed. A student rights rally was rained out, but thirty-five students did meet at a local gathering spot to discuss the union demands and to decide on further actions.

Earlier, a leaflet had been passed out by students at Mt. Clemens and Lake Shore High Schools, with the following demands:

- 1) Democracy in practice: school policy should be made by those affected. Both in the classroom and the school, teachers should teach, not tyrannize.
- 2) Student Review: of all expulsions, suspensions, or other disciplinary actions. The rules are there to protect us, not to abuse our rights.
- 3) No Dress Code: appearance is a personal right. We should be able to wear what we would outside school.
- 4) Open school: All school facilities should be available to students for any type of meeting they would like—without teacher supervision.
- 5) Freedom of speech and press: no censorship\_ or discipline against students who have different ideas than the administration. We can write and pass out anything to our friends subject only to State Law.

- 6) Open classes: we should be able to take any class we think we can handle.
- 7) Draft counseling: that presents the real side of the draft.
- 8) Black history studies: with Black student structuring the course. (This, as all other points, is assuming No. 1 is in effect.)
- 9) Teacher evaluation: controlled by students, to be made public.

## **Distributor Busted**

Before the controversy of the Free Speech Case in Plymouth died down (see *Fifth Estate* May 15–29), two more underground press salesmen were busted by suburban police—this time in the nonentity of Clawson.

On May 20, Grant Dennison, a Clawson High School student who had been suspended earlier in the year for an “obscene light show,” and Richard Dorris, were selling the *Fifth Estate* in the school parking lot (which incidentally is across the street from the Municipal Building).

They were told by police that they needed a \$30 permit or they would be arrested for “soliciting without a permit.”

After applying for the permit, they were approached by a freck on the steps of the building. They gave him a copy, and were promptly busted and thrown into jail by the suburban piglets.

In jail, Dorris was told by the guards, “We know how to take care of boys like you.” They were planning on shaving his head, but he was released on \$100 bond by this paper before they could do it. Later, Dennison was bailed out, also by the *Fifth Estate*.

The next day, after returning to the jail to pick up personal belongings, the two were hassled along with some friends and told, “We don’t want no more yippeeing around here,” by pigs. All 65 of their *Fifth Estates* were confiscated.

Radical Education—Time for a plug. For high school students interested in getting a real understanding of what’s coming down in this country and around the world, the *Movement* newspaper (330 Grove St., San Francisco, Ca. 94102).

It has good articles on the black liberation struggle, the campus struggle, and the best articles on high school liberation I’ve ever seen in any general radical publication. Subscriptions are twelve issues for \$2.50. Do it now!

## **Student as Nigger**

Ninth grade students at Roeper City and Country School in Bloomfield Hills recently published “The Student as Nigger” by Jerry Barber, as a first step in organizing students. Printed in *The Positive No*, a student paper, it was promptly suppressed by administration.

The students there do not plan on letting that stop them.

## **The Pinko Press**

The Master Link, a high school newsmagazine from Southfield High School, has returned after a prolonged strike by members of Printers Local 435, with a new name.

Now The Pinko Press, billed as “Suburbia’s Only Communist-Inspired Newspaper,” it comes down on the suburban and general high school hypocrisy and bullshit in the tradition of Ambrose Bierce.

Included in the paper are put-downs on suburban “liberalism,” a far-out article on “drug abuse” (“In the interview we will refer to the youth as Mike, since Gary didn’t want his name used.”), and a fake column of Eric Hoffer (longshoreman-fool) called *Distortions*, in which the phony Hoffer writes on “The Myth of Martian Supremacy” and suggests that the United States send black people to Mars. Sounds like the real Hoffer.

## How the Schools Destroy Our Minds

“New research suggests that the human brain can never be ‘filled up,’ but that it can be trained to be rigid, to reject the unfamiliar, to run on well-worn tracks.

“There is reason to suspect, in fact, that training to these ends often has been a major unacknowledged goal of formal education. Nothing malicious or capricious about this: until recently, our society has been stratified and specialized.

“Look at it as a great stack of boxes. Individuals have had to be shaped and honed to fit into these boxes—fixed social roles, jobs and careers.

“People who would go right on learning—that is, changing—all life long might threaten the structure and stability of such a society. The schools served stability, helped fit individuals into boxes.”

—George B. Leonard, “What Your Child Can Teach His Teacher,” *Look*, 12/27/66.



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