

CHOICE '68 (cont.)

The success or failure of this election will depend on the response of all students and only an interested and aware student response will make it the success that it should be.

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SUNDAY THE 7th. . . UNFORTUNATE

The past Sunday, I called an SGA meeting. However, at the time the meeting was called, I was unaware of the services to be held for the late Dr. Martin Luther King. Consequently, I centered my Sunday in honor of Mr. King, negating the planned SGA meeting.

Because of my hurried schedule on Sunday, I was unable to contact all of my SGA members. In fact, peculiar as it may seem, the sophomores were the only ones notified of the cancellation.

I write this article to apologize to the freshmen who took their time to come out. Under the prevailing circumstances, I don't regret my decision to attend the services, and would do it again if need be.

My apologies go to the unnotified freshmen who, unaware that the absence of the officers, nullifies a meeting, printed the SGA minutes which appear in this issue.

My thanks go to the the freshmen for their concern, and to the Nittany Cub Staff who relinquished the space so that I could clarify this matter in the same issue in which the minutes appear.

Ronald Batchelor
SGA President

THE ACADEMY STORY

As Art Buchwald searches for a new crystal ball, and Rat Brown sips champagne many people brace themselves for what the sociologists have predicted as the "long, hot, summer" of racial strife. The recent outbreak of violence at Academy suggests that the seriousness of the problem exists here in Erie, as well as in our larger sister cities. Reportedly, the problem stems from a disciplinary action taken by teachers. There are conflicting stories as to the initial blame of the incident. Some sources assert that Mr. Setcavage was in the wrong and others blamed the students.

Back tracking a bit, to September: a teacher who has an unsatisfactory military service record and who has been transferred from four different schools in the past five years had been instated at Academy. This belligerent "gentleman" stated more than once that the three things he hated the most about the world were Negroes, his wife, and girls - in that order.

During the course of the school year, repeated trouble with not only Negroes but also white students in Mr. Setcavage's classes were reported to the administration. Apparently little to curb the tensions stemming from this man was done at that time.

Finally, one student in particular, an unfortunate Negro, Kenneth Hardin, could not take Mr. Setcavage's bigotry. He became

obstinate in class until the afternoon of April 4th when, after some uncalled for harassment in class, he decided to see Mr. Di Nardo (the Ass't. Principal). Without permission he advanced towards the door of the classroom. Mr. Setcavage refused to allow him to leave. As disciplinary action Mr. Setcavage wacked Kenny with a yard stick while Ken was returning to his seat.

The events that followed are rather vague. Ken began to struggle with Mr. Setcavage and some repressed frustration on Ken's part led to a leg injury to Mr. Setcavage. When the school administration became aware of the violence in that classroom, Ken was told to leave school and not to come back. He was not given a chance to explain. The next day a petition (which has since been lost) was presented to Mr. Ferrare (the principal) requesting a meeting during the 1st lunch period to talk over the trouble with Mr. Setcavage, and the reinstatement of Ken until the problem could be viewed objectively. When the petition (signed by both Negroes and whites) was refused. The students began to react violently. Someone triggered a fire alarm and the students in the cafeteria began to throw anything they could see. There was no racial conflict between the students. There was merely a revolt against the unfair practices of some teachers.

No one was hurt in the cafeteria until panic spread and some people were accidentally cut or trampled. The situation was reported unfairly by the city news media.

It was learned that there were three representatives from Harrisburg sent to Erie, and they in turn were advised to investigate the incident. They uncovered not a racial unrest but a mounting tension between teachers and students, but the fact remains that it was Mr. Setcavage's unfair attitude and the refusal of the administration to listen to student complaints that setoff the Academy riot.*

*Editorial footnote: This report is the result of first-hand interviews of teachers and students at Academy High School by reliable Behrend students who are not directly associated with the Nittany Cub Staff. These students were dissatisfied with the reports given by the news medias, and decided to investigate the matter first hand.

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