

Action.....

.....OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE NOBLE PARK HIGH
SCHOOL LIBERATION FRONT.

At the termination of the weekend Noble Park High School Students ceased to be oppressed individuals only to become an oppressed class: the student body of Noble Park High School. They file solemnly into the biliously pleasant surrounds of our school, dressed uniformly as a deterrent to individuality. Once within the cyclone-fenced enclosure they cannot communicate with the outside world unless they possess a small pink, and easily procured, lunch pass which remarkably resembles a library card. Passive students are deceived into believing that they can alleviate themselves from this mundane education process beaurocratically - orientated exams and consequently, through being promoted a form, have more say in the administration of the school. This is fallacy. Unfortunately, form 6, along with the balance of the student body of the school is almost devoid of any autonomous power.

General gripes rising from the above description, along with much dissidence with particular issues, has motivated the NPHS Liberation Front to compose, edit and publish this pamphlet. We, the above mentioned organisation, consider these must illuminate those situations which we consider to be unjust in our school and we are resolved to endeavour to radically change them by using all legal means at our disposal. It must be mentioned that we NPHS Liberation Front are affiliated with an extraneous organisation, 'Students In Dissent' but it must also be emphasised that this publication is the result of the efforts of Noble Park High School Students. Anything written in this sheet, unless otherwise stated is entirely original and written by Noble Park High School Students for the benefit of Noble Park High School Students. Our principle aim for 1969 will be for the establishment of an SRC.

Any student believing that his or her written material would be of use to the Student Body of the school is invited to forward contributions to:-

NPHS Liberation Front
c/o S. I. D.
120 Greville Street
Prahran. 3181

The experience of the past is transmitted to the people of tomorrow by the education system of today. Australian education is not functioning properly, and the following report published by the Students' Representative Council of the University of Melbourne which will be published as a serial suggests what might be done about it.

A useful approach to almost any problem is to cast it in the form:

- * What are we trying to do ?
- * How is it being done at present?
- * Is there any way of doing it better ?

Education is a complex business but it is possible to throw the important features into relief if it is approached in this manner. The multitude of considerations which determine the most basic values and aspirations of society are identical with those which must determine the means by which the society educates its young. It is therefore essential that the people administering the state education system have before them at all times a clear statement of the aims and objectives to which the system in their charge must conform. The statement should be couched in such a form that a constant check can be made upon the success with which the system is measuring up to requirements. There is no state in Australia in which the Education Department or the Government has published a statement of 'What it is trying to do' which would make it possible for the general public to assess the desirability of its aims or the success with which it is achieving them. It is very doubtful that the Ministers or the Director Generals of education have ever posed themselves the question 'What are we trying to do?' except in the most immediately practical terms. Will this type of thinking at the top is it any wonder that most State education systems appear to have as much purpose and vision as a chicken with its head cut off?

The last Royal Commission on Education was conducted in NSW in 1904-5. This was the end of an enlightened era of over fifty years during which time a large number of very comprehensive commissions produced excellent reports which provided a sound body of fact and widely representative opinions to guide the policy makers. There have been no sweeping or fundamental reprisals of the role of education in our society since that time. There has been a steady improvement in many areas, but development has been a matter of patching up the existing structure in response to periodic crisis or the wake of public opinion. There has been no attempt to look at the changes taking place in the economy and in social habits and from these to reconstruct the structure from the ground up if this is found to be desirable.

Australia is in the process of becoming what professor J K Galbraith has described as an 'Affluent Society'. Most Australians are free from want. Small groups (such as pensioners or the chronically ill) suffer physical hardship, but for the most the problem is not finding the next meal but deciding whether to buy a car or T.V. With comparative freedom from want has come greater leisure, for which we are 'ill prepared'. Already machines are doing some of the more routine and less pleasant jobs formerly done by unskilled and semi skilled labour, for which there is a decreasing demand. In the foreseeable future widespread reduction in working hours will be taken in preference to increase wages and salaries.

Many implications of these changes have been completely ignored, or at best gropingly recognised. Now that the fundamental cause on the available resources of the community, the need to feed, house, clothe etc - are being reasonably well met, it is time to take stock of what is left over and decide in what way this can most valuably be used. Our most pressing task is that of re-valuation of the benefits derived from the allocation of private and public funds to the various competing forms of expenditure.

There can be no doubt that we are in a position to do more than ever before to prepare the individuals who compose our society to make the most of the unprecedented opportunities for leading an exciting and satisfying life. The best means of doing this is through the schools.....

(To be continued in the next issue)