

THE MUCKRAKER

THE INDEPENDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL STUDENTS' NEWSPAPER

Volume 1, Issue 8

February 11,

Circulation: 500

http://www.ravage.net/muckraker

FREE

MUCKRAKER

Speaks

The strongest impression my friend brought back from his half year in the States was of his school here: it was like a prison. He told me stories of police searching him, metal detectors, locker aids, and massive fences surrounding the school. The complete prohibition of smoking and an ultimate ban on leaving school grounds was enforced by the police outside, the teachers inside. The students had one right there: the right to be treated. One can't help but wonder whether the average age of its inhabitants, and the fact that they get educated there, is all that keeps such schools from not being synonymous for words like prison. Looking over the developments of the past few months we can't help wonder whether a similar fate awaits JFK. The question is, who is to stop this from happening? There are two types of people at school, the ones who attend it and the ones who run it, and it doesn't look like the latter group is the answer. It is exactly they who are implementing these restrictions. So that leaves the second group: the students. But what are we to do? The solution lies in looking at why those running the school are turning it into a prison: they see some of us as criminals or as not mature enough to take care of ourselves. So they try to restrain these "criminals" and protect other people from them. Yet they cannot do this to only a few people, and so consequently all of us suffer. The answer to the problem is to prove the "powers" wrong, just as the smokers did when they cleaned up the smokers' corner mess, in doing so, kept it in existence, and what the ninth and tenth graders did when they negotiated their freedom. It is we who must prove that we deserve our rights.

The Editors

As Russia with Love

By ADAM NAGORSKI

For one week in January, twenty-two JFK students broke free of the monotony of daily school life: They traveled to The Hague for the thirtieth anniversary session of The Hague International Model United Nations (THIMUN) conference. Nineteen students represented the Russian Federation in various committees and commissions, two defended Yugoslavia against charges of genocide by Bosnia and Herzegovina in the International Court of Justice, and one was deputy president of the Disarmament Commission. THIMUN is the world's largest high school level MUN conference. During the week of the conference, the 3500 student participants dress up in suits and dresses and represent their countries, debating over resolutions, writing action papers, and generally trying to solve the world's problems. In the process the students learn about the world and how crises arise and are quelled, to negotiate and compromise, and, above all, to argue *successfully* - the Portuguese delegate said it best when he addressed the General Assembly as "master debaters." Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, wrote to the participants of this year's conference: "Gatherings such as yours... demonstrate to young people that the UN's agenda is also their agenda; that the issues that concern the UN concern us all as human beings." THIMUN is a social experience as well: if being with 1500 students of the other sex does not entice you, the night life will. The Hague bursts to life when invaded by the crowds of MUNers. Conversations about world politics occur even in the evening at bars but most people go out to meet new people with similar interests. It is this combination of both the intellectual and social experiences that makes THIMUN a success.

9th and 10th Graders Battle ED Imprisonment

By VERITY OBERG AND SETH HEPNER

During the last two weeks there were a lot more ninth and tenth graders hanging around the school during lunch than usual. Did they all have some amazing amount of homework due next hour, was Penny closed, was the park under construction, or what? As it turns out, it was none of the above, but the result of a hasty decision made by the Educational Directorate (ED).

On Tuesday, January 20 the ED passed a resolution stating that all ninth and tenth graders would have to stay on school grounds during free hours and lunch from that point on. This decision was the ED's reaction to the recent scandals involving drugs and counterfeit money that have been popping up around JFKS. The idea behind this quick decision was that since most of the drug dealing happens off

the school's grounds (i.e. in the park), students should be kept away from there. However, since the ED could not legally restrict the leaving-campus privileges of the 11th through 13th graders, they decided to keep the ninth and tenth graders on school grounds, and at least keep them out of harm's way.

Or, at least so they thought. The students didn't exactly think this was the best, protecting idea it was supposed to be and during an assembly called by the administration on Thursday, January 22 they decided to fight the ED and its decision. The students' immediate reactions were split: some wanted to storm off campus in big groups, some wanted to stay on school grounds in lunch until the next meeting, and some didn't really care one way or the other. After much discussion, they realized that to storm off school grounds would be just as hasty a decision as the ED's. In the end, a majority of the students decided to wait it out and appointed a committee to combat the ED, consisting of Joey Ansoerge, Tom Pröstler, Jessica Barr, Jonas Renz, Jonnas Vasanth, Rénee Bochat and Linnie Sharma.

During the following week the committee went around gathering support for their cause. On Monday, they went to the faculty meeting, and received only positive feedback. The teachers also felt that the ED had made the decision too quickly, had not given anybody else a chance to give input, criticize, or complain. On Tuesday, the committee presented their case to the Parent Council. Said Joey Ansoerge, co-chairman of the committee: "Our speech and presence created a large turmoil, so that all other points were taken [off] the agenda." They did receive support, but only after weathering much "aggressive argumentation" from the upset parents. The next day, in a meeting with the chairperson of the ED, Mrs. Cook, the committee convinced her of their standpoint and discussed a clause in the ED's consti-

tution that makes it impossible, once the ED has made a decision, to re-discuss it before six months have elapsed. On Friday, January 30 Dr. Hersant announced that due to the maturity of the committee and its arguments, the ED postponed the implementation of the new regulation until the next ED meeting: March 10th. In other words, although all ninth and tenth graders may be currently allowed to go off campus, the ED's decision still stands. The ED has merely suspended the decision from going into effect until other committees (e.g. the faculty's Standing Committee, the Parent Council, etc.) have had a chance to give their input. If the ED decides to stick with its decision, however, it means a lot more than just a few upset ninth and tenth graders. Unnamed sources have hinted at the fact that if about two hun-

dred more students were suddenly confined to school grounds during lunch, there would be changes made to the lunch program and perhaps to the structure of the lunch hour, moving extracurricular activities to after school times slots. Apart from "discussing," "fighting," and "hoping" the ninth and tenth graders were quite productive in other ways during their two-week "imprisonment". Results ranged from a temporary Doner Delivery from Efe's Grill to free benefit concerts for the cause. The Doner delivery, organized by Paul Timmappel, Dion Schiedhelm, Christoph Roulet, and Linnie Sharma provided the ninth

and tenth graders with their daily Doner or Pizza and, more importantly, kept Efe's from going bankrupt. Concerts for the cause took place in lunch hours in the main staircase of the blue building, with ninth and tenth graders singing songs about freedom, injustice and oppression. This is the maturity which so impressed the committee, the ED and the Administration.

When asked what the further goals of the committee are, Joey Ansoerge replied: "I am hoping for world peace." Although the committee is currently still fighting for "the right of the students to leave campus" he seems to see its future as a bit more. In the mean time, he and the committee intend to fight for this right by writing letters to members of the ED, hoping, once again to convince them. THE MUCKRAKER congratulates the committee and wishes it good luck!



9th and 10th Graders enjoying newly regained freedom. Photo: Thilo Test

Lockers Galore and More...

CONTRIBUTED BY FRANZ WILD

Remember to take a good look at school before you leave for the Easter holidays. Okay, there's still some time to go, but still, something's going to have changed when you come back. If everything goes according to plan, and this is fortunately fairly diminitive, you eyes will be feasting on a brand new set of splendid lockers. No, not the ones that are two inches wide and are urine colored, but great big and proud cabinets which will hold your entire household. You'll just about be able to insert your own little sofa with a tv. for when you have a five year old. Now for some background. The Verein granted over 7500 DM to purchase the lockers. I had written them a letter making the proposal and requesting the grant. Thanks to some intense lobbying done by our Verein representatives, Mickey Bekasiak and Seth Hepner, we received the cash. I ploughed my way through some formalities that had to be settled and the lockers have now been ordered and will, I hope, be set up during the Easter holidays.

Now for some details. We ordered fifty. They're rather voluminous. They'll be a beautiful, majestic blue. We'll be able to have two people per locker. And all the rumours about putting the musicians in the green building are balded-dash. Now for the deal. We agreed to sell, effectively, fifty Verein sweat-shirts which cost 45.-DM each. I think I should remind you at

this point that a Verein sweatshirt is a status symbol and that it is extremely cool and fashionable to wear one. They are in fact of formidable quality, and embracing and comfortable. They express a certain pride in our school and I believe that we have every reason to be proud of this *finest* - and I'm being serious here - of institutions. They'll be on sale soon. So be patient and watch out for the new lockers, because they'll be here sooner than you might have hoped for.



Franz Wild poses with his pride and joy. Photo: Thilo Test

CLASSIFIED ADS

Need a ride somewhere? Don't like the BVG? Well, Kadir Kab service will drive you anywhere in Berlin for 5.-DM after school. Call me 5345205 or talk to me.

New Nintendo 64 for sale! Only 300.-DM (includes Super Mario 64, Mario Kart 64, Waveracer, Diddy Kong Racing and Star Fox 64). Two controllers, call Ben 812 2021 between 18:00 and 22:00.

2 year old CD-ROM for sale, MITSUBISHI Super Quad speed (x4). 817 4865

Attention! I am buying and selling lawn garden equipment such as lawn mowers, weed-wackers, chainsaws, and fertilizer. Ask for Otto at 816-4465

Drop classified ads in THE MUCKRAKER box!

Upcoming Performances at JFK:

March 5, 19:30, New Aula:

The Senior Talent Show!

March 6 and 7, 19:30, Old Aula:

Barbershop Chorus and Quartets Show: "A Time of Your Life"

OPINIONS:

"Eine besondere Schule mit besonderen Problemen"

BY ANDREA KAPPELKE

Vor einigen Wochen erlebte unsere Schule, was es heißt, eine „besondere Schule“ zu sein. Die Falschgeld-Affäre war ein gefundenes Fressen für die Berliner Tageszeitungen, von denen sich einige wenig um Fakten scherten (so wurde laut einem Bericht das Falschgeld auf dem Schulhof gekauft) und insbesondere „Der Tagesspiegel“ wenig journalistische Objektivität walten ließ. So begann der Artikel in der Ausgabe vom 16.1. mit einer Charakterisierung unseres „Hippie-Hausmeisters“, der drohenderweise ein Fernsehteam verschrecken wollte. Die „BZ“ brachte es immerhin zu einem Interview mit der Brezel-Verkäuferin, die berichtete, wie „ein Hippie-Hausmeister“ mit „einem Blauen“ bezahlte. Die „Berliner Zeitung“ pumpte gleich in der Überschrift zu ihrem Artikel vom 16.1. mit dem Namen unserer Schule, wobei das eine (nämlich der Straftatbestand an sich) mit dem anderen (und zwar der Lehranstalt der Täter) wohl kaum etwas zu tun hat.

Dank der einseitigen Berichterstattung aller Zeitungen, wurde der Ruf unserer Schule stark geschädigt, so daß nun die „Besonderheit“ der John-F.-Kennedy-Schule nun auf zweierlei Arten verstanden kann. Doch bestimmte Zeitungen leben nun einmal von vermeintlichen Skandalen dieser Art, wobei sich der Skandal weniger aus dem eigentlichen Vergehen zusammensetzt, sondern eher aus der Kombination „Prominentensohn“ und „privilegierte Schule“.

Wie häufig erschien dagegen einige Tage später folgende Randnotiz in einer Zeitung: „Gymnasialst gab fünf Raubüberfälle zu.“ So viel zur ausgeglichenen Berichterstattung.

BY ALEX McWILLIAM

One day after our last issue, JFKS decorated every newspaper in Berlin for two days. Ironically, they seemed to know more about our school than we did. All my attempts to "buy counterfeited money on the playground" failed and the real Hausmeister certainly didn't look like a "hippie-hausmeister". It also seems all my friends actually are "wealthy diplomats" (but won't admit it).

Most of you have probably read the articles or heard about them and argue that JFKS has nothing to do with it. This is an irrelevant fact to the reporters, but it shouldn't have been to Herr Schürmann. Der Tagesspiegel, the only newspaper that published an actual official statement quoted Schürmann saying

ing that "we are very concerned about the school's image". Schürmann repeated this on the emergency meeting of Friday to the student body. Although he may be saying the truth it was easily digested by the press and formulated it into a context that suggested an actual embarrassment due to the exposure of a common "fact" at JFK, namely that we have and/or are criminals. If this is true of not is another question but it fed the press. A clear stand against any suggestion of other criminal activities at JFKS by the press should have been given: "We have nothing to do with this!"

Voice YOUR opinion and respond to other people's views at the Muckraker Online Discussion Forum!

THE MUCKRAKER Online

<http://www.ravage.net/muckraker>

Dear Darrell

I have a drug problem that I need to talk about. I thought about going to Peer Helping, but I don't feel comfortable talking to people from school about it; counselors are too expensive. Who can I talk to? -Confused

Dear Confused,

There are many "Drogenberatungsstellen" in Berlin that you can go to. One nearby is in Steglitz, Koenigsbergstr. 11, tel. 7725071/3. You can also call the Drogennotdienst at tel. 19237. I

found them to be most helpful about referring people to a Beratungsstelle near them. You can find other help in the yellow pages under "Buergersevice - Drogen- und Suchtberatung." there is a whole column of places to call. Beratungsstellen usually don't cost anything and you are guaranteed privacy. I realize that you don't want to talk to someone at school, but Peer Helpers aren't your only option. You can also talk to a Vertrauenslehrer or a guidance counselor. Regardless of who you talk to it is important that you get help as soon as possible and I commend your initiative in already seeking help.



THE MUCKRAKER Komeedy Korner!

Although the Administration found this a 'tasteless' T-shirt design, we think that you are the best judges of that...

From the Book of Jeremy: Confessions of a Thought Junkie

BY JEREMY YODER

"DRUG SCANDAL AT THE JOHN F KENNEDY SCHOOL!" screams the muck-flinging Berlin press (THE MUCKRAKER only rakes it). What once was a peaceful campus dedicated to the higher arts of learning now staggers under a sky-rocketing crime rate. Instead of the bell to end periods, students wince at the screeching police siren. Rumors of a "Kennedy Mafia" strike fear in the hearts of parents. Teachers complain of frequent busts interrupting class. Conservative estimations claim that 10% of the student body actually work as undercover agents for the police. Tragically, this school, once the cream of Berlin, sank into a haven for the underworld.

In the spirit of these tragic times I'd like to confess: I was busted last Friday in front of the library. I got body-slammed by a gang of seventh-graders who actually worked as undercover agents. I didn't mean to hurt anybody, but after I started, I just couldn't stop. Everybody tried it. But I got hooked-I couldn't stop thinking.

I don't know how I got started. I've spent countless of sleepless nights deliberately conjuring several sound excuses out of thin air. Maybe it started when I read a book. I don't recall the name of the book, but one day as I was slacking in the library, I noticed these shelves. No-one probably believes me, but I noticed these shelves contained books. I knew what books were-I saw one once on TV. I think the show was something about illiteracy among today's youth.

In a fit of misguided delirium, I decided that discussions on the lack of decent American peanut butter on the European side of the Atlantic leaned towards dull conversation. Before I had an iota of

an idea-remember, I didn't think at the time-that I might damn myself into a wretched conscious survival, I started reading. As the words penetrated the thick crust encasing my brain, something within me stretched, yawned and stretched again. That was my consciousness waking up after a long hibernation. Every night since then, instead of plunking myself in front of the boob-tube like any other healthy thoughtless couch potato, I speculated over the meaning of the universe. In short, I got mentally stoned every night. It's actually a rather groovy rush. I discovered the meaning of Velcro and the solved the perplexing AP grading system. (The system works on the concept of subtracting as many points from the student's grade until they fail.) Thinking gives one a false sense of ego: I began believing that I was the most omniscient thing on two legs. "HA! HA!" I triumphantly thought to myself, "I've got more brainpower than YOU! One day I shall rule over all you TV viewers! You shall be my slaves! Your remote controls are nothing to my BRAINPOWER! HA! HA! giggle-giggle-smicker. Since my bust I fortunately stopped thinking and my ego sank to the healthy depths.

I regret having experimented with thinking and getting hooked. I'm ecstatic achieving a completely thoughtless state of mind again thanks to mental therapy. Since the school already nears the status as first Maximun Security School, I didn't think that my confession would do too much damage. I hope my confession prevents others from making the same mistake. Naturally, the tubfools eagerly sucked up my confession. Tomorrow headlines will scream: "THINKING STUDENT AT JFK!"

OPINION FROM THE MUCKRAKER ONLINE FORUM:

"The name and reputation of our school has suffered GREAT damage because three arrogant kids could not grow up! They are criminal individuals that are not only being related to counterfeited money, but also international drug trafficking, blackmailing, compulsion, burglary, selling of stolen goods, and armed assault! Nobody can help those three misguided individuals and they should be kicked out of school as fast as possible, before even more scandals erupt.

Personally I don't know in what ways is involved, all I know is that at least two of them had more money than I could count, but on more than one day, they had about 1000 (!) Deutschmarks with them and treated money as if it was nothing. I am sure this money COULD not have been earned properly. Interestingly enough the same two were actually never selling bags of drugs, so they must be leading figure behind the scenes..."

- "an 11th grader"

Opinion From The Muckraker Online Forum:

"... All of the [accused individuals] are at the initial point in their lives. Some of them had plans for the future and definitely ALL of them did not want to end up as criminals. Of course this is NO excuse and it shouldn't be. But would it be better to stick them in jail for a couple of years and rob them of their diplomas? Imagine you would be in their position 5 years from now, just coming out of jail: What can they do except for return to criminal activities or be "Sozialfaelle"? Don't get me wrong: They have to receive a punishment for their deeds, but one that makes sense and doesn't rob them of every chance in the future.

... Although they shouldn't be applauded for their acts or be declared heroes, a little sympathy might help them, especially because nobody really cares too much about them (definitely those in prison)." - Chaim Kahane

Feeder Feature: Frau Schwarzer

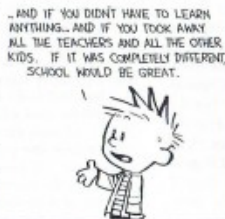
BY INGRID SCHAEFER AND CLAUDIA GUSKE

Frau Schwarzer rules the kitchen at JFK.
 Q: Wie lange arbeiten Sie schon an JFK?
 A: Na eigentlich von Anfang an, seit es hier etwas zu essen gibt. Vorher war ich im Altersheim.
 Q: Essen Sie selbst etwas von dem Essen, das Sie mitteilen?
 A: Wenn die Essensausgabe vorbei ist, können wir gucken, ob noch ein Rest da ist.
 Q: Was halten Sie von dem Essen, das hier angeboten wird?
 A: Ich persönlich finde es abwechslungsreich. Meistens. Und wenn die Kinder esles essen, was ihnen



Photo: Petra Haerter

angeboten wird, können sie auch satt werden.
 Q: Wer entscheidet, wie der Speiseplan zusammengestellt wird?
 A: Ich suche aus, was es so gibt und mache dann den Speiseplan.
 Q: Was essen Sie gern?
 A: Ich esse am liebsten herzhaft. Also ich bin z.B. kein Freund von Nudeln und Tomatensauce - ich mag lieber sowas wie Sauerbraten und Rotkehl. Aber ich stelle den Plan nicht nach meinen Wünschen zusammen!
 Q: Kochen Sie gerne?
 A: Also zu Hause backe ich eigentlich lieber.



THE MUCKRAKER is an independent student newspaper. The opinions expressed here in no way reflect those of the administration of the John F. Kennedy School. It is printed at Koperservice in Steglitz-Möhring, T. Reetz. THE MUCKRAKER is funded partially by The John F. Kennedy School Verein and partially by business' advertisements. Calvin and Hobbes® reprinted with permission of Universal Press Syndicate. All rights reserved.

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