



PLATFORM

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Mountaineer Freedom Party was organized for the upcoming student elections in order to break the destructive cycle of apathy existing on this campus. We must actively involve all segments of the student body in the politics of student government. We are presenting a platform that directly confronts the problems affecting the students of this nation's colleges and universities.

The purpose of a university cannot be that of a "knowledge factory": a processing station, a vast placement center for corporate interests. Our present educational system is more oriented toward inculcating a certain set of beliefs than toward teaching people how to learn--how to think independently. But rather than the molding of students into obliging technocrats, students must be free to develop their own character as individuals.

Education must not be indoctrination or merely a method of social adjustment. Education must be a program of involvement--a long-term involvement of people in independent thought and the search for truth. The university must be able to truly educate people to participate in a free society, creating dynamic forces for change rather than simply training students to be integrated into a status quo situation.

Affirming **that** the ideal of participation in those decisions directly affecting us is the essence of true democracy, the Mountaineer Freedom Party calls for greater student control of those parts of the university relevant to their academic lives. We must challenge the underlying theories responsible for the misuse of education today. We must challenge the centers of power responsible for the remaining barriers to racial and sexual equality. And we must show that indeed students do have and are willing to make a great contribution to a non-authoritarian university community. An authoritarian college within a society that basically values money and power, conformity and success, established habits and the status quo, does not develop independent people.

Hence, in line with our general policy statement, we advocate reforms in the following more specific areas:

THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

EDUCATION, GRADES, CURRICULUM

The Mountaineer Freedom Party feels that it is time, indeed, long past time, to call into question some of the very basic tenets of our educational system. These assumptions have gone unchallenged for far too long, to the detriment of education.

The first of these assumptions is the idea that there is something sacred about Grades. Grades were originally supposed to be only a means to an end, that end being education, knowledge, understanding. Supposedly, they were to show progress and provide an incentive to the student. However, the means has now become an end in itself, and the original goal has often been lost in the shuffle. The idol has usurped the place of the god it was intended only to represent.

Grades and education are not entirely unrelated, but they are emphatically not one and the same. There is always a great danger involved in setting up a false goal in place of the true one, for we may thus lose sight of the true goal. So college students now worship at the altar of the great god Grades, not Education. The social pressure is all directed toward Grades. The result is a cutthroat, competitive, destructive system in which students will often lie, cheat, and steal to get a Grade, as a result of the enormous pressure put upon them. Students have committed suicide in despair over a bad Grade. As Lenny Bruce observed, "My 90 is worth nothing unless you get a 20, so I hope you get a 20, man. I hope you fail." College is a daily rat-race of trying to beat out your fellow student for the best Grade.

Why should education be a competitive process, like a game designed for children to keep their minds occupied? We feel that college students can manage without the game, that they are interested enough to learn for its own sake if given the chance. Let's give ourselves that chance. Let's try cooperative learning.

(1) We propose the institution of a complete pass-fail system for all courses. This is a necessary condition for changing the present system, but it alone will not solve the problem. Tests should be designed to test understanding, not to provide a grade spread by asking questions about insignificant details. Essay-type examinations should be encouraged. Smaller classes with more participation by students are needed. Compulsory class attendance should be abolished. This change will not be accomplished merely

by making a few changes in the institutions--it requires a conscious effort on the part of the students to rid themselves of long-held attitudes and to change from a grade-oriented to a learning-oriented frame of reference. We are confident that students can rise to the challenge and return to education's true goal. The rewards will be well worth the effort.

(2) Smaller classes require more professors. The University Administration and the Board of Governors should reexamine their priorities with regard to the relative merits of constructing new buildings as opposed to hiring more faculty, keeping in mind that what goes on inside a building is more important to the educational process than how that building looks from across the street.

A second major deficiency in the University is the depersonalized nature of our education. Part of this is due to over-crowded classes, but a much more serious aspect, in our estimation, is the fact that a student has very little control over his own curriculum. Once his major has been decided, the course of study he has to follow is all laid out for him in advance, with as little opportunity as possible for him to make the decisions that shape it. He is allowed a limited choice--for instance, whether to take Art 30 or Music 10, but there are always very narrow limits. He must take courses to satisfy Core Curriculum. He must have a foreign language. He must have certain courses prescribed by his college or department, both within and outside that department. By the time these requirements are met, there is very little time left to take courses that the student thinks he ought to have.

A great many of these requirements are courses which the student would rather not take if the choice were his. Students are apparently considered incapable of making an intelligent decision as to what they wish to study. Instead, they are forced to take what someone else thinks they should have. All students in the same category are processed almost identically. The University is mass-producing standardized products. This is, as Nietzsche put it, "the advancement of education at the expense of men."

We feel that the student should be involved to the fullest possible extent in shaping the course of his own education. The University should be producing individuals, not standardized products. We feel that the student himself is the best judge of what he wants or needs to study, and that he should not be forced to take something he doesn't want. The University might recommend certain courses or general areas of study, but it should not require them as a prerequisite for graduation. It is reasonable for

a college or department to demand a certain number of courses to get a degree in that particular major, but these requirements should be as flexible as possible, allowing the student wide latitude of choice. More specifically, we advocate:

(1) An end to Core Curriculum. We agree with its avowed purpose of encouraging a broader education, but we feel that Core Curriculum requirements are actually destructive of these ends by forcing all students into a narrow and arbitrary pattern. The institution of a comprehensive pass-fail system should encourage experimentation when combined with the elimination of excessive restrictions on curriculum.

(2) A student should not be required by the department of his major to take specific courses outside that major. For example, Political Science majors should not be required to take Economics 51 or Sociology, although the department might recommend them. Recommendations and suggestions should be clearly labeled as such and should not be allowed to become inflexible unwritten rules. The student himself should retain the final decision as to whether he should or should not take a certain course.

(3) College or departmental requirements should be as flexible as possible, again recommending rather than requiring. The student should retain the widest possible latitude of choice.

(4) A more personalized system of advisors is needed to help the student in shaping his education. Presently, advisors have vast numbers of advisees and are forced by necessity to use mass-production techniques. More advisors are needed in order to give individual attention to each student.

(5) A self-study report published by the University of Oklahoma has recommended that the university be organized so flexibly that it can quickly create new colleges addressed to contemporary problems, then dissolve them when need or interest wanes. We feel that this idea has merit and should be looked into further, with the purpose of determining how the idea might be applied to this university.

(6) Students must have a voice in determining the curriculum of their college or department and some procedure for initiating new courses. We propose the establishment of joint faculty-student curriculum committees in each department or college. These committees would develop and institute imaginative new courses from ideas introduced by the committee itself or submitted to it by students or faculty members. The committee would also have general authority over the curriculum of its department and would deal with related problems like overcrowded classes, etc.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The Mountaineer Freedom Party holds that in no circumstances should the University attempt to regulate or censor political thought or expression. A completely free and open dialogue is essential to the search for understanding. Any attempt to limit this, however motivated, can only harm the avowed purpose of higher education. More specifically:

(1) An organization should be able to invite and hear any outside speaker it wishes. The University Speaker Policy should not limit this freedom in any way. Organizations should notify the University of their plans if they intend to use University facilities but should not have to depend on University approval.

(2) The University must not undertake to censor student organizations. Requirements for recognitions should be as few as possible--and these few should not require a value judgment on the part of the Organizations Committee as to the proposed organization's merits.

(3) The political beliefs and activities of the students and faculty are their own affair and not the University's. The University has no business taking disciplinary action or expelling any student because they fear the student's activities will cause bad publicity or otherwise embarrass the University. Faculty members must also be free to express any view without fear of punishment by the University.

IN LOCO PARENTIS

The Mountaineer Freedom Party rejects completely the doctrine of "in loco parentis." The function of the university is to teach students to think for themselves, not to force upon them an arbitrary set of social and moral standards. The university must confine itself to academic areas and not interfere with the private conduct of the individual. A student should not be a second-class citizen, forced to live under prescribed rules of conduct. If this same person had chosen on his 18th birthday to abjure his position in the educated elite and become a truck driver or auto mechanic, he would have his full constitutional rights as a citizen.

We agree with David Nolan, who wrote "...one wonders if the administrators really care about the students, or if they are just fearful of adverse publicity the students might create. At the root of it must be an undeniably low opinion of mankind, for there would be no need of these all encompassing regulations unless one firmly believed that

the moment he is freed of restrictions the student would get drunk, high on pot, and mow down innocent pedestrians while fathering illegitimate children in the back seat of a speeding car."

We therefore call for an end to these ridiculous regulations, specifically:

(1) The regulation that "no student will be permitted to live in other quarters until after the residence halls are filled" is an unfair and totalitarian exercise of power which gives the University monopolistic powers over student housing. Although at present it is used only against freshmen and women students, it could also be used to force upper-classmen to live in dorms. University-owned dormitories should be forced to become competitive with private housing. All students, including freshmen, should be allowed to live anywhere they please.

(2) The University must not use its near-monopoly on housing to restrict the liberty of any student. A student's dorm room is his castle. He should have the same freedom from unreasonable search and seizure as private citizens. Students should, for example, have the right to keep and drink liquor and beer in their dorm rooms. Also, the University has no business charging extra for guests. The only restrictions on a student's right to privacy and right to use his room as he pleases should be those regulations reasonably flowing from health or safety considerations, or from a reasonable exercise of the University's right to protect its property.

(3) All restrictions forbidding visitors of the opposite sex in dormitory rooms are ridiculous and must go. Girls will have to rely on their own resources to protect their chastity.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

The Mountaineer Freedom Party rejects categorically the assumption that women are inherently inferior and incapable of managing their own lives. Women students are entitled to all the rights which men enjoy; and any attempt by the University to deny them these rights is unfair, discriminatory, and an insult to their dignity as human beings. We call for an end to all discriminatory regulations, specifically:

(1) The entire concept of women's hours is absurd and should be abolished. This absurdity is evidenced by the rule that "women students staying with friends or relatives

in the Morgantown area and senior women living in apartments are subject to the same hours as coeds living in residence halls and sorority houses."

(2) Women should be free to live anywhere they choose. The requirement that all girls live in dorms until they are 21 should be eliminated entirely. If a girl's parents want her to stay in a dorm, they can restrict her themselves. It is not a legitimate function of the University to intervene in this area and force every coed to abide by the University's arbitrary and antiquated standards.

(3) We call for a free visitation policy regarding men and women's dormitory rooms or apartments. Current regulations forbidding men to visit women's rooms or vice versa are more reminiscent of Medieval monastic arrangements than our contemporary social standards.

(4) Women should not be forced to become members of any organization that is used by the University "to regulate all matters pertaining to the student life of its members." The University acting through AWS must not infringe upon a person's individual liberty.

THE BLACK COMMUNITY

The University has the responsibility of offering a liberal education to all of its students regardless of race, color, or creed. But the black students on this campus feel that the University does not meet this requirement. A basic problem is the lack of communication between the black students and the Administration.

Why is there no active recruitment of black students except for athletic purposes? Why are there no black professors? Why are there not more courses oriented toward the black man and his interests? Why are there not more black employees working for the University? Why are there no blacks in sororities, fraternities, or other campus organizations?

The excuse that blacks are not interested in becoming involved is untrue. The black students who have constantly been rejected from organizations soon lose the initiative to keep trying. If the blacks had some assurance that there was an equal chance for them to be accepted in campus organizations, there would be a much stronger desire to participate.

The Mountaineer Freedom Party intends to give the black students a solid voice in administrative decisions. The myth that black students are treated equally and perfectly content with the University as it now exists is untrue. Therefore, the Mountaineer Freedom Party proposes

the following: (1) There must be a BUO representative on the Student Cabinet. We feel that the Black Unity Organization is able to speak effectively for the black community on this campus.

(2) The University Administration must take some initiative in the hiring of black professors. There must not be any discrimination in salary offerings--a problem that has existed on many other campuses.

(3) There must be a responsible recruitment program of black students from West Virginia and other states, adequately informing blacks of available financial opportunities.

(4) There should be equality for blacks in the line of social activity.

(5) The University should employ more black students, not on the basis of tokenism but rather because they are qualified to hold the positions.

(6) The University should not try to appease the black students on this campus by simply offering one black history course taught by a white professor. There should be a comprehensive series of courses dealing with the black culture--taught by black professors.

(7) The University should take it upon itself to hire black counselors for the benefit of the black students on campus. Black students feel that they cannot relate to a white counselor. The fact that he is white automatically prevents him from identifying with the problems that blacks encounter.

(8) The University must take the responsibility of assuring all its students of housing accommodations on a non-discriminatory basis. The Administration must make sure that proprietors on the list of University-approved housing do not discriminate against students.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

A cosmopolitan spirit is infused into our campus setting by the international students who come to the University to pursue higher studies. The problems of living in a culture not his own are constantly with the foreign student. The University must do all it can to help these students adjust to our campus routines. The Mountaineer Freedom Party suggests the following:

(1) More scholarships should be available for international students to increase their number and create a more diverse group of students. The international students should be able to compete for any scholarship offered to University students, including assistantships for Graduate students.

(2) We must end the discrimination against foreign students (and all students) in housing.

(3) We suggest the formation of an organization oriented toward the particular problems of graduate students. Since the vast majority of international students are on the graduate level, this organization might be more conducive to socializing than one geared only to undergraduates.

(4) We urge the opening of an International House where students can meet one another and form friendships. Considering the massive institution this university has become, the International House would be one place of welcome for the foreign student.

(5) There must be a closer working relationship between the student administration acting through the Foreign Student Relations Committee and the international students. We need greater support for the activities sponsored by the International Students Association. Contact between Americans and the international students is very important in establishing an understanding between ourselves.

THE MILITARY

When we speak of the presence of the military on campus, we must consider it in the context of its contribution to education. We have seen education defined as a form of "human liberation"--now we must ask if the goals of the military are consistent with this concept of independent thought and free choice.

However, in contrast with the true purpose of education, the military values more highly such qualities as blind obedience and the suppression of any individual thought. The key word for the military is "discipline"--discipline applied so that it dehumanizes a soldier. The man becomes a machine with predictable input-output reactions for various situations. Senator Fulbright has stated that the result of adapting to a warfare state is "the surrender of independence, the neglect of teaching, and the distortion of scholarship."

Creative and independent people do not develop in an authoritarian institution such as the military. In line with this reasoning, the Mountaineer Freedom Party recommends the following measures:

(1) The privileged position of ROTC in the University curriculum is a grotesque mockery of the ideals of education. The very idea that ROTC be permitted to serve as a sort of Core Curriculum "Wild Card" in preference to more intellectually oriented pursuits is absurd. We insist that the University fulfill its obligations to a free and open academic atmosphere by giving equal time to the search for peace. We call for a course(s) precisely equal to ROTC in credit dedicated to the pursuit of human understanding and brotherhood. We suggest that this course(s) include a study of the writings of Thoreau, Tolstoy, Ghandi, and others.

(2) If West Virginia University continues to cooperate with the armed forces in their campus recruitment programs, we feel that it is only fair and consistent with the ideals of a free society that the University provide a counseling service informing young men of their rights and options concerning military service.

THE BOOKSTORE

There seems to be a myth on campus that the bookstore is run on a nonprofit basis. While we feel that it should be, we are far from certain that this is actually the case. We feel that the bookstore should be run as a cooperative, for the benefit of faculty and students. It is rather difficult to imagine the bookstore not making a profit at the prices it charges, and whatever profit it does make goes by law into the general revenue fund of the state and does nothing for West Virginia University. We propose the following measures:

(1) Students have the right to know all the relevant facts. The Student Administration should undertake a thorough investigation into the finances of the bookstore---whether it makes a profit; if so, how much; and where the money goes. There should then be a full disclosure of all this information to the students through the Daily Athenaeum.

(2) Should it be confirmed that the bookstore does indeed make a profit, Student Administration should take the lead in trying to change this situation. The student body, under the leadership of an active Student Administration, has the potential power to bring about this change by adopting appropriate measures.

(3) The bookstore should be a real university bookstore serving broad intellectual needs. It should carry a much more extensive selection of books and periodicals to better serve the academic community. The bookstore's prime purpose should be to meet intellectual needs, not to make a profit. This should be the distinction between it and private enterprise.

THE MOUNTAINLAIR

The students of West Virginia University must have a voice in the decision-making processes that determine the policies which affect them. Thus far the students of this University have been denied this voice and have been subjected to the arbitrary decisions of cabinet committees that have failed to consult the student body.

In particular, we are referring to the new Mountainlair hours that have been set up in accordance with the recommendations of the Student Cabinet sub-committee. This committee suggested a student referendum by which it could determine student opinion. The referendum never took place; therefore, the committee's recommendations were arbitrary decisions affecting the day to day lives of the student body while failing to consult the students.

The committee was guilty of two glaring procedural errors which tend to call for a careful re-examination as to whether the Student Cabinet sub-committee was acting in good faith with the rest of the academic community.

First, the cabinet sub-committee was remiss in regard to keeping complete minutes of all their meetings. Thus, the student body has been left completely uninformed as to what went on during the six week period that the committee was examining the Mountainlair situation.

Secondly, the cabinet sub-committee recommendations were verbally submitted to Dr. Harlow and later written down--making it impossible for the student body to determine whether or not the final document was indeed the product of the Student Cabinet sub-committee or the product of Dr. Harlow and the Board of Governors.

The Mountaineer Freedom Party calls for (1) student referendums to gauge student opinion to assure that all future committees will reflect the wishes of this academic community.

(2) Complete and detailed minutes of all meetings of every organ of the Student Administration.

(3) All future recommendations being written down and made available to the students before submitting them to the Administration of West Virginia University.

THE UNIVERSITY AND SOCIETY

West Virginia the colony--the ravaged, the impoverished, the exploited--exploited by business interests more concerned with huge profit than human welfare. We have seen the systematic destruction of our people, our heritage, and our culture. The landscape has been sliced by strip mining, our air and water badly polluted, and our laborers subjected to inhumane working conditions. And where has the wealth of our state gone? Look at our low quality of education, the isolated communities of former mining towns, and the institutionalized poverty of Appalachia.

West Virginia's wealth has already left or is leaving via industries based out of state. The vast mining interests have cared little about the workers. In 1967, the removal of 2.5 billion dollars worth of coal cost the lives of 220 men. The unconcern of mine owners over the current "Black Lung" controversy clearly establishes their priorities.

An untold number of miners suffering from "Black Lung" have had their lives shortened; yet, they cannot receive any disability payments. The coal companies have ignored this problem and refused to install any corrective devices in the mines--finding it perhaps more economical to let the mine workers die than do the necessary research. Is this anything less than murder? Congressman Ken Heckler asks, "Which is more important--to close down a mine, or close down a man? The time has come when we must decide that the precious value of human life is far more important than the dollars to be gained from production."

The Mountaineer Freedom Party supports the West Virginia Black Lung Association and the miners in their fight for survival. The Bureau for Coal Research at West Virginia University cannot engage in safety research and has proven more beneficial to Consolidation Coal than to the people of this state. West Virginia University as a community of affluence and an educational institution must do more to serve the people of Appalachia, not the industrial elite.

Coal mining is the industry with the highest rate of frequency and severity of death and injury. But the workers have been unable to get safer mines because (1) the coal producers are only interested in maximizing profits, (2) the United Mine Workers has not pushed hard enough for safety legislation, and (3) the coal operators control the governmental regulating agencies. The Bureau of Mines has merely been enumerating safety violations and then asking the mine owners to correct them. The existing laws are not enforced and often simply ignored.

Dr. Buff, a member of the West Virginia Air Pollution Control Commission, stated in the Charleston Gazette on November 26, 1968, "I do not believe we should mine coal using 21st Century mechanical facilities with health and protection facilities for the men out of the 18th Century. Unless things are changed, the miner is signing his own death warrant when he enters the mine." The death of 78 miners in the Farmington disaster and the recent near-tragedy in Mine No. 7 in Mt. Morris, Pennsylvania, are stark examples of the result of this exploitation.

The same reliance on cost-benefit criteria as exhibited by the mining companies is also found in other areas of our economic life. The great need for revitalizing Appalachia's small communities, reforestation, soil and stream rehabilitation, and other long-term efforts are being neglected. And again, the University is not working for the best interests of the people. In working through the Appalachian Center, West Virginia University is emphasizing assimilation--the integration of the mountain people into our status quo society. But assimilation does not preserve a culture or enrich society--it merely fits people into the commonplace so that they lose any identity with their heritage. The current thought on urban development in this state (concentrating on the cities and ignoring the countryside) amounts to nothing less than the deliberate depopulation of rural areas without regard for cultural and family roots.

The emphasis of the Appalachian Center must be placed not on assimilation but on tackling the real problems resulting from a colonial economy. There is an organization on our campus called SAAP (Student Action for Appalachian Progress) which has done much to help students relate to these social problems through first-hand experience in tutoring. The Mountaineer Freedom Party urges the University-funding of SAAP through the Student Administration to a degree where its services can be greatly expanded.

But let us remember that the exploitation will continue until the people of Appalachia can be organized to stop it. The governmental and educational systems will be effective only when the people of Appalachia can be independent of the corporations, and the land will prosper when our natural