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THE NMA&M CONSCIENCE
NOV. 7, 1968
special HUT issue

In Issue #3, we used rather str... criticizing NMA&M President Corbett for his role in closing the Hut. Many persons thought we were being unfair to the man. In order to rectify this supposed injustice, we are printing Corbett's side of the Hut issue:

May 28, 1968

REGISTERED MAIL
SPECIAL DELIVERY

Rev. Robert Allen
Presbyterian Synod of New Mexico
823 Pennsylvania NE
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Dear Reverend Allen:

A leader in the Presbyterian Church here in Las Cruces, who is not a member of the staff of New Mexico State University, has suggested a letter be sent to you, describing an important situation in which the Presbyterian Synod of New Mexico has an interest.

The administrators of New Mexico State University have become increasingly disenchanted with the actions of Rev. James Nielsen, who is in charge of "The Hut," an off campus coffee house sponsored largely from funds arising through the Presbyterian Church.

Rev. Nielsen's actions appear to be predicated on the United Christian Movement (1967) New Organizing Principle as stated in literature received at the University. To quote, "to bring about social change through the reformation of the university." Further quotes explain the basis of the United Christian Movement. "The first assumption the UCM makes is that its locus for work is the university -- which may sound trite, but at least it centers attention for priorities of time and money better than its SVM forebears did in taking on the whole world."

"When UCM calls for the 'reformation' of the university, it makes no special call either for reform or for revolution. The system, says the UCM, needs to be changed; it is obvious that the wrongs of the system are everywhere about us. But such change comes about in a variety of ways, and the UCM cannot predetermine the response."

Recently, under date of May 6, 1968, the national columnist, Henry J. Taylor, published an article, "How to Destroy the USA." In the article he talked of a 16-point program for the destruction of the United States. Point No. 15 is pertinent to the problem related to the program of "The Hut." To quote Item 15 from Henry J. Taylor's article: "(15) Draw the churches into politics. See that the churches gradually liquidate their influence as a spiritual power, and thus as a stabilizing force, having ministers and church leaders make the historic mistake of using the church itself as a political lever."

The latter quote appears to describe the activities of Rev. Nielsen very clearly. For some reason, unbeknownst to the administrators of the University, Rev. Nielsen believes it is his bounden duty to reform this University. It is believed he does not have the background in university life, nor the experience, nor the training to set himself up as a judge in these matters.

New Mexico State University has long had a reputation of graduating very stable, substantial citizens, most of whom become professionals serving in quite valuable ways. The movement to interrupt the University and its organized life, led by Rev. James Nielsen through his "ministry" at "The Hut" is disruptive, to say the least.

Specifically, the following are points which are very strong against Rev. Nielsen's continued service bordering the University.

1. At a State high school principal and counselor conference held with University faculty and administrators in November 1967, Rev. Nielsen, while serving on a panel, stated that numerous of the girls of New Mexico State University were finding it necessary to go to Juarez, Mexico for abortions. Later, I invited certain of the campus ministers and University officials to a luncheon and Rev. Nielsen was asked about this particular statement he had made while serving on a panel. When he was pinned down in regard to the number of girls who had taken the action indicated, he could not give a number, and finally said he thought he knew of at least one case. This has significantly damaged the reputation and prestige of the University with the principals, counselors and parents of potential students.

2. In July, 1967, the Senior Vice President of the University was alerted to the fact that Rev. Nielsen probably would lead an effort to defy the University authorities in terms of compulsory ROTC enrollment for freshman and sophomore men students. In fact, he was directly quoted as to the plan which he intended to follow. First, he would lead students to refuse to enroll in compulsory ROTC, and if the University dismissed such students, he would then lead demonstrations on the campus.

3. Confidential reports indicate that individuals have been allowed to enter the Hut and participate in the activities of the Hut while under the influence of Marijuana. At least on one occasion, liquor was taken into the Hut and used there. Rev. Nielsen checked out, according to his own admission, 25 keys to various students. This means the Hut could be open all night and anything could go on there without Rev. Nielsen knowing. In fact, on at least one occasion neighbors complained because of the loud noise and disorderly conduct taking place in and around the Hut.

4. Rev. Nielsen has failed to carry out his own... administrative

community as persons. . . to establish a rapport with these persons that he might be able to minister to them as persons."

5. Recently, during the "Ten Days in April" when, nationally, the Students for a Democratic Society were attempting to encourage students on the various campuses of the Nation to "boycott" classes in order to protest the Viet Nam war and other non-university affairs, a small group on this campus (estimated to number approximately 30) held such a meeting. It was noted that one of the first to arrive was Rev. Nielsen, and he stayed with this group from approximately 9:30 a.m. until noon.

6. Particularly, Rev. Nielsen is doing little, if anything, in developing programs of religious content in his ministry at the Hut. At one week-end retreat, religion was hardly mentioned and not a single prayer was said.

7. In one case, a program held at the Hut, under his cognizance, was announced by posters on campus. The discussion topic was "Administration Lies About Viet Nam." Apparently there was no intention to present the two sides of this issue.

No one would deny Rev. Nielsen his right to do anything he would desire to do which is within the law. However, freedom without responsibility is destructive and Rev. Nielsen is leading certain of the students of this University into practices which are believed to be inimical to their professional development as university students, and later as responsible adults.

Rev. Nielsen's service here is detrimental to the University. Also, the program of the Hut, as described above, is detrimental. The Hut is looked down upon by the vast majority of the students with whom I have talked. It is requested that the support for this project be terminated.

Sincerely,

R.B. Corbett
President

This letter requires no further comment. Nor does it deserve any.

On page 1, line 1, the words you can't read are "strong language in." And the bottom line says, "stated purpose, to quote, 'know the . . . administrative.'" No one's perfect.

THE BLACKS AND THE LATE HUT:

After the Hut was closed, a number of NMA&M's black students were asked for their reactions. Here is a sample:

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE CLOSING OF THE HUT? "It is not right, because the Hut was the only

place where blacks in this area could go and party exactly the way blacks like to, and dance to the music of the blacks, while the campus is more or less dedicated to the whites." "Personally, I think it was a dirty deal." "I think it is lousy that the Hut was closed." "I think it is unfair for us to be deprived of our one and only entertainment spot for the weekends. It's hard enough for us to try to maintain interest in the campus social life as it is, and now without the Hut, there just might not be any such thing as a social life." "It made me mad enough to burn Hadley down." "The Administration is full of S.O.B.'s."

WHY DO YOU THINK IT WAS CLOSED?

"Because they feared that too many Negroes gathered there and trouble would start (which was actually stupid because there hasn't been any trouble yet)." "Because of the white kids." "Because of the interracial activity." "I truly believe they closed it because of black and white dating which I don't dig anyway. Or on second thought, maybe they closed it because they were afraid of too many black people together. If that's the case, why not close Corbett Center? There's a lot of whites there, huh?" "It was our only means for a decent type of social life on this campus." "Because some of our administration is too narrow-minded to realize that blacks can engage in wholesome entertainment as civilized people do." "Because of the interracial mixing of Negro men and spanish & white women." "Because of the interracial relationships." "Because the administration is inherently afraid of seeing more than two black people together and more afraid of seeing blacks and whites together."

WAS THE CLOSING OF THE HUT

DIRECTED TO ANY ONE GROUP PERSONALLY? "Most of the people that went to the Hut were blacks." "Yes, it was directed toward Negroes." "Yes! Negroes." Most of the others simply

said, "Yes."

Thus it is obvious that NMA&M Administration has succeeded in further alienating the black students on this campus, although it seems hard to believe that our Administration can be so insensitive to the problems of the blacks here.

NEXT SIE MEETING:

The next SIE meeting will be on Sunday, Nov. 10, at 7 p.m., in Room 12 of the Corbett Center. The program will include a discussion of student problems with ASNMA&M Officers.

THANKS TO THE ROUND UP:

NMA&M's #2 newspaper, the Round Up, came out against the closing of the Hut. That took real courage -- Corbett knows who puts out the Round Up.

SAVE THE HUT!

Students & faculty are organizing a committee to buy the Hut for student use. They need money and advice and moral support. Donate any amount you want and send to Box 3827, Las Cruces. Or contact Art Gallegos, chairman of the Save the Hut Committee, 524-7625.

LIBERALS AND FRIENDS:

You haven't been sending us much bread lately. Send to Supporters of the Conscience, c/o General Delivery, Las Cruces, N.M.

Thanks for your love, Flower.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT:

We have been asked to print the following message:

THERE WILL BE A PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATION TOMORROW (FRI., NOV.) TESTING OUR CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT TO DISSENT AT NMA&M'S HADLEY HALL (ADMIN. BLDG.) FROM 10 A.M. UNTIL 5 P.M., OR ENDING EARLIER IF OUR RIGHT TO PEACEFULLY DISSENT IS INFRINGED UPON.

ALL STUDENTS, INCLUDING ATHLETES, ARE ENCOURAGED TO SUPPORT STUDENTS' RIGHTS TO PEACEFULLY DISSENT.

IT HAS COME TO OUR ATTENTION THAT:

Pressure has been put on faculty members to disassociate themselves with the United Campus Min-

istries.

At least one faculty member was told by his dean that it would be wise for him to get off the advisory and local operating committees, and it was suggested that his job might be in jeopardy. It has been made clear, directly and indirectly, that those who oppose university policy will not be on the faculty for long.

Shortly before the Presbyterian Synod's council came down to investigate the Hut, there was a meeting of the advisory committee at which all but one of the faculty members on that committee resigned. Almost the entire local operating committee of the Hut resigned also.

When Dr. Corbett found out that people were aware of this pressuring, he called in some of the faculty and told them that there had been a serious misunderstanding, that there had never been any pressure applied, and that he was not against the United Campus Ministries.

Dr. Corbett, in order to isolate Rev. Nielsen and the Hut, has tried to destroy the United Campus Ministries.

He went to the Episcopal bishop and tried to get that church to withdraw from the United Campus Ministries. They were firm in refusing.

Through papal knight Frank O. Papen he got an audience with the Roman Catholic bishop of this diocese. The Catholics declared themselves to be in support of the United Campus Ministries, the Hut, and Rev. Nielsen.

He contacted the local Methodist power structure and induced them to withdraw from the United Campus Ministries for a year's study. Dr. Corbett expressed pleasure with the actions of the Methodists in this matter.

Dr. Corbett is not satisfied with the findings of the Presbyterians concerning the Hut and Rev. Nielsen. He has indicated

that he will pursue his battle against Nielsen by taking the matter to the public. If, by that, he means that he will make the facts public, we will be glad to help.

SIE MEETING COMMENT:

The letter on page one was read by Rev. Nielsen at Sunday night's SIE meeting, which was called to discuss the closing of the Hut. The majority of the emotion packed meeting was violently pro Nielsen and pro Hut.

The letter from the Presbyterian Synod gave a rather fair evaluation of the situation. The Synod realized what may be Nielsen's faults, yet defended his value in the university community. The other two objective points of view came from two faculty members, Dr. Coburn and Dr. Wilson. Both realized the positions of the parties involved and tried to lend a calming influence to an electrically charged atmosphere.

Col. Downing, an elder in the Presbyterian Church, obnoxiously voiced his opinion: the Hut should be closed because Nielsen did not perpetuate religious ideals and did not preach "Jesus Christ" sufficiently.

Rev. Bishop, a local Presbyterian minister, repetitiously said he dislikes CRAC meetings and racism, which he feels are synonymous, and anti-Viet Nam talks, which were held in the Hut. For these reasons Bishop was in favor of closing the Hut. Is it any wonder Corbett had little trouble influencing the Presbyterian church to close the Hut with two such broadminded representatives of the community involved?

The panel was queried why Steve Pearce, an avid conservative, eager to work within the establishment with the administration and other students, who seldom visited the Hut, comprised the student committee considering its closure. The answer: because they are Presbyterians.

The Presbyterian church, through the Hut, is probably the only religious organization affiliated with

NMA&M that has managed to cross all religious and racial lines in an effort to help the individual student. Yet some townspeople and NMA&M administrators seek to stifle this effort. Is this the so called Christian Spirit?

The major issues here are how much influence our president does and should have on affairs off campus and the fact that the Hut is closed. Many prominent townspeople are very worried about the former issue. Do you blame them?

NOTE BY THE EDITOR: No matter what our typist may say, the demonstration is not on Nov. 8. It will actually be Nov. 8.

THE BELOVED MISC. COLUMN:

The day issue #6 came out, two plainclothesmen parked in the 20-minute zone in front of the library for 45 minutes. They were driving a new green Ford pickup. . . . We noticed that the homecoming issue of the Round Up used the word "shitty." The editor really got chewed out by a group of old eunuchs. We think it was pretty shitty of them. . . . We were told that the AAUP asked Corbett to give amnesty to the NMA&M Conscience. Corbett refused, apparently preferring the prospect of driving over us with his car. . . . In the July 14, 1968 issue of the Sun-News, the following ad appeared:

ARE YOU CONCERNED

With The Increasing Student Unrest and Dissatisfaction On Many School Campuses?

INVESTIGATE

An educational institution where Traditional American Values are HONORED AND RESPECTED!

NMA&M? You'd think so. Actually, the ad was for New Mexico Military Institute. . . . Monday's teach-in was pretty successful, for NMA&M. Some students might have even learned a thing or two. . . . The Aggie Song Book will be out soon. Watch for it. . . . Thanks to Mr. Cox and Jerry Apodaca and thanks to you for reading.