



M.S.U. members ponder new tactics, at Saturday meeting.

PHOTO Dave Erlar

Ramsey M.S.U. seen faltering, in 'worse shape than last year'

by Walter Hard
Blueprint Staff Writer

Ramsey's chapter of the MSU (Minnesota Student Union) is now in "worse shape than it was at the end of last year," according to junior Dave Erlar.

Dave is a member of the Union, formed last year with the stated purpose of protecting students rights and giving the students a larger share in formulating school policies.

Juniors Jon Cook and Karen Jarvis, also members, indicated that this year's MSU is considerably weaker than last year.

At a recent MSU meeting in Minneapolis, Dave commented that many members were just "getting tired of it." Last year, he added, the weekly Saturday meetings drew up to 150 people, but last week's was attended by only about 15 union members from the Twin City area.

The Ramsey MSU has held one meeting so far this year, attended by about eight of the more active members. Dave says that Ramsey has about 50 Union members in all. Statewide, he estimates about 2000 members.

Despite the slowdown in Union activity, Dave says that, "We expect it to build up during the year. Right now we're looking for an issue to take up."

Last year, MSU's biggest issue concerned several students who were accused of smoking in the lavatories, but were refused permission to confront their accusers. MSU handed out pamphlets and sponsored an open meeting between involved students and school administrators.

Dave feels that the smoking issue was not handled as well as it could have been. "We were looking for an issue then," he explains, "and we kind of lost our heads over it."

MSU remained quiet earlier this year during the student walkouts because, according to Dave, they felt that action on their part might cause a split among the students lessening the walkout's effectiveness.

"A walkout like that could have been pretty effective," Dave says, but he feels it was badly organized and not well planned.

MSU had also considered handing out leaflets on September 30, the morning of the

Junior Achievement lyceum because JA is connected with a company that manufactures Vietnam weapons, but decided not to.

Right now, MSU is looking for issues and conflicts to become involved in. Their tactics and actions will depend on just what issue they decide to become involved in.

MSU will be involved in the Vietnam Moratorium October 15. Students and teachers have been encouraged to leave classes that day in protest of the war.

MSU, participating in an organization of war protest groups known as the New Mobilization, is attempting to support the protest in high schools. Walkouts and protests will take place in high schools throughout the state.

What action will be taken a Ramsey is uncertain, but Dave indicates that leaflets may be handed out.

Dave says that, while MSU is not connected with any college radical organizations, it is "trying to get in with the College of Education at the University. After all, explains, Dave, "if you want to change education, you have to change the teachers."

Dave also hopes that teachers at Ramsey will bring in radical speakers such as draft resistor David Pence who was at Ramsey last year.

"The administration here is probably a little more liberal than in many schools," Dave comments. "Here they don't get all hung up about the little things. I'd say Ramsey is about average for a suburban school."

STUDENTS GAIN RIGHTS

Kennedy seeks constitution

by Lynnette Olson

Blueprint Guest Writer

What would happen if students had the right to over-ride an administrative decision? What rulings would be made if students had a voice in all decisions concerning school policy?

The answers to these questions and many more depend on what happens during coming weeks at Kennedy Senior High in Bloomington where a new student constitution awaits ratification by the student body.

"I believe that students have always had the basic rights to the freedom of speech, press, and dress that has been granted them in the student constitution," said Jon Bielinski, Kennedy senior, chairman of the constitution committee and writer of the constitution. "The Student constitution merely defines the meaning of the rights in relation to the school situation," he added.

The previous Student Senate was unorganized and had no other power than to suggest changes they thought necessary in school policy. But this year, students want to change things.

"At the beginning of the year, senators from the various homerooms expressed a desire to increase the Sen-

ate's power," said Ann Casey, Senate secretary. "They felt that in order to justly represent the student body, they needed the power to make their voices heard. This was the foundation on which the constitution was constructed."

The constitution committee was made up of seven to ten interested senators and students. Reviewing the constitution of the previous year, they found it lacking in many aspects. It vaguely explained the purpose and goals of the Senate. Statements were confusing and sometimes contradictory.

The committee worked to write and define the basic principles of the constitution. It was then presented to the Senate for discussion and possible revision. "I was surprised to see so many senators involved in the discussion of the constitution. I think they feel that it's their constitution and want to take part in its creation," said Jon.

After the constitution had been revised in the Senate, it went before the administrative board.

"The administration asked many questions concerning the legality of the document. We defended our beliefs by using the structure of the Constitution of the United States in comparison," commented Jon. Several days after the administration ratified the student constitution.

An in-depth report

Student Government

What is it? Where is it?

POLL SHOWS

Students split on gov'n't

One hundred and fifty students at Ramsey were randomly polled on questions relative to student government. These are the results:

1. Are you basically in agreement with Ramsey's form of student government? YES 43% NO 57%
2. Did you (gain-lose) respect for student leaders during the teacher-board dispute? GAIN 26% LOSE 68%
3. Should the student council become involved in political and/or social affairs outside Ramsey? YES 50% NO 42%
4. Do you feel you will be represented on the student council adequately? YES 50% NO 42%
5. Do you feel the student council should have more power in school policy and rule decisions? YES 61% NO 39%
6. Do you feel that the process for selection of S.C. Representatives should be changed? YES 44% NO 55%
7. Do you understand the purpose of the Minnesota Student Union? YES 33% NO 66%
8. Is there a need for a Minnesota Student Union at Ramsey? YES 45% NO 55%

Jon explained it in this way: "We have set up a system that is like an automobile. The two main powers, the administration and Student Senate work together like gears. They are each separate in themselves, yet must work together to achieve successful results. The check and balance system serves as a brake to limit the power of each individual branch specified in the student constitution."

Students at Kennedy feel that the constitution is a start in the struggle for student rights and recognition. "It's hard to say what is the main goal of the constitution, because we haven't had the chance to use it," said Jon.

"I feel that it's a media for meaningful decision making. Students must wake up to the fact that they are individuals who have the right to express their opinions toward the system that is so much a part of their lives."

"Our main goal is to get kids involved in student government. We hope to expose kids to the situation that they will face when they become adults," said Jon.

"We want the constitution to be a strong basis on which all decisions will be made. We want students to feel the constitution is protecting their rights, and will make fair and meaningful decisions, concerning any student problem."