

# THE NEWSPAPER

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## EDITORIALS

### A CRUCIAL YEAR

Reality--the tormented yet strangely exhilarating reality of the campuses of the 1960's--is coming to Montreat-Anderson College. We have already begun to enact on of the classic confrontations of the last decade--the conflict between administration power and student rights.

This editorial could be devoted to upholding the contention that nude pictures, liquor advertisements, and symbols probably more political or faddish than racist neither violate the spirit of Christianity nor automatically produce sex criminals, alcoholics, or racial bigots. It will not be. Such a contention, although supportable, is not the issue at hand.

The issue is whether a college administration, having rented its dormitory property, has the right to any further control over that property, exclusive of cases of physical damage and violations of civil law.

The issue is whether a college administration, no matter how Christian its intentions or how great its political power relative to students, has the moral or legal right to control the thoughts of those students, as indirectly expressed in the decor of their rooms.

The issue is whether a college administration, no matter how expert or well-meaning its members may be, any longer has the right to exercise direct social control over a part of the most mature and intelligent generation of college students ever seen in the United States.

The administration of Montreat-Anderson College feels, deeply and sincerely, that it should have the three "rights of control" stated above. This position is based, we believe, on the administration's view of its function as an agent of the Church, and on its desire to maintain a special atmosphere at Montreat--an atmosphere in which the administration has, in the last analysis, effective control over all affairs relating to the operation of the college.

This newspaper cannot, in good conscience, support the administration's position. Montreat-Anderson is, of course, a Church-related college. But Church-relatedness is not synonymous with Christ-relatedness. All too often, the environment of the "Church college" is a restricted one. The environment of the Christian college, on the other hand, must be that of the world, not the cloister. The founders of Christianity realized that the arena for their activities was the world, not some isolated, protected part of it. Is it too much to ask that the student members of the Montreat community be allowed to experience the whole world, inside as well as outside of this valley?

The attempt to isolate students from their larger environment is also educationally damaging. It is the purpose of the college to produce educated, Christian citizens.

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Yet, given present conditions, how can a Montreat-Anderson graduate be fully educated, so long as it is the practice of the administration to exclude certain "distasteful" elements from his experience? Finally, we see the administration's position as damaging to what must be the essence of any college, its sense of community. It is granted that the Student Government Association has the power to review a decision of the administration, after it has become working policy of the college. However, what real power do students have in the planning stages of policy-making? Specifically, how many students were consulted while the administration's position on room decorations was being formulated? And, if such student participation was minimal, is Montreat-Anderson a true community, or is it a collection of students and faculty under the control of the college administration?

These may seem, to some, harsh words, divisive words. They need not be. The foundation of this newspaper's belief in the rights of Montreat-Anderson students is the responsibility and maturity of those students. The foundation of its belief that something can be done to make this a better institution is the open-mindedness of its administrators and their receptivity to change. The foundation of its belief in this college is the tolerance and essential decency of its members.

We are confronted, as President Davis said in his convocation address, by a "crucial year." If, and only if, we all act as the civilized human beings we claim to be, making full use of our responsibility, open-mindedness, and decency toward one another--unless, we act we act as Christians--can this year be passed successfully.

Austin

### \* \* \* BROTHERHOOD

Longhairs and other corresponding types constitute a substantial portion of this year's Montreat-Anderson College population. This is a good sign: the student body has more variety, is composed of large groups of people with marked differences in appearance and beliefs.

However, conflict sometimes results from such variety.

In light of this, the goal of each student should be to consider the dude be-