

button-making /2/ who's to blame?

Before long, the slogan-driven buttons **deteriorated** into more **random ones**, with students making buttons **out of** magazine **clippings**, **stickers**, and **items** found **around** the classroom. "Nobody **meant to do** it," Chao said. "It's just **so fun** to **pull down the handle** and **have** the button **drop out** all made. Some kids were making them **just so they could** hear the sound."

Orlowski said **neither** Chao **nor** any other student **has been** willing to "**rat out**" all of the **conspirators**. **Even** students **known to have been involved** are **claiming to have been** in the bathroom during the **incident**. "From the number of **improper** buttons made--I've **personally** seen at least 50--this **was not limited to** the nine kids in **detention**," Orlowski said. "**As far as I'm concerned**, everyone **wearing** a button not **related to** the student-council elections is guilty. **From the look of things**, that's almost everyone."

Though the students **clearly acted improperly**, some Harrison **staffers** are **blaming** Orlowski, **suggesting** that the incident **resulted from** her willingness to let the students use school equipment **unsupervised**. "I wasn't sure why Karen let those kids use the button maker **in the first place**--it's not **even pep week**. But **at the** time, I didn't think **it was my place to interfere**," school secretary Millie Barthes said. "Well, I'm just **thankful** the machine came back **in one piece**."

The button-making machine **is kept** in the main-office supply closet and is **available** for classroom **checkout** from Barthes. The school **purchased** the machine 14 years ago for \$79, a **hefty** sum that, according to Barthes, clearly **indicates** that the machine is not a toy. In May 1987, days after the school purchased the maker, Barthes made a sign that has remained **taped** to its base **ever since**: "For classroom use only! Do not **waste** materials! They cost \$\$!!"

According to school **principal** Dr. Richard Wagner, such incidents have unfortunately **made it necessary** to **keep** school equipment **locked up**. Wagner said that every piece of **restricted** equipment is the result of a **specific** incident. "We have to **lock up** the balls and playground equipment **so they don't end up** on the roof," Wagner said. "Kids have to go to the **janitor** to get bathroom **supplies** or we risk another Jeremy Sachs. **He's also why** we can **no longer** use the **honor system** for **extra** milk in the lunchroom. Then **there's** the photocopier. I'll never forget what happened with the photocopier."