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EDUCATION POLICY TASK FORCE

APRIL 27, 1987

AGENDA

9:30 -  
10:30 - Introductory Session

10:30 -  
12:15 Morning Session -- Public Education: Problems and new Possibilities

Keynote: Hon. Martin C. Borell, Chancellor, New York State Board of Regents

Responses: Implications for

- poor & immigrant groups - Colin Greer, President, New World Foundation

- school boards, civic groups and parents - Harriet Tyson-Bernstein, Author & Education Consultant

- the teaching profession - Dennis Gray, Deputy Director, Council for Basic Education

12:30 -  
1:15 Lunch & informal discussion

1:30 -  
3:20 Afternoon Session - AJC and public education

AJC Review - Frank Goldsmith, Former Chair, National Education Committee

Future Directions - A preliminary inquiry - Irving Levine

Responses -

Values & Citizenship Education - Joan Schine

Language Issues - George Szabad

Intergroup relations & multi-cultural education - Joseph Giordano

Jews & American Public Education - Marilyn Braveman

3:30 -  
4:00 Summary, next steps & closing

EDUCATION POLICY TASK FORCE  
BACKGROUND PAPER  
on  
SCHOOL REFORM REPORTS\*

I - Background:

Education in the United States has always been a state function. However, the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 1965, marked a period of federal involvement, increased control and inevitable backlash. In the 1970's, a new surge in state involvement, influenced and encouraged by the federal government and Secy. of Education Terrel Bell gathered impetus in the accountability and school finance reform movements.

"A Nation at Risk," was published in 1983, it became the symbol around which an education reform movement rallied. It and several national commission and foundation reports joined hundreds of state level task forces and blue ribbon commissions. 1983 became a watershed year for American education in that it gave the public something to identify with, media something to report and state policy makers a cause that was above ordinary political bickering.

The report writers and the educational establishment were surprised by the amount of public support for education reform and by the speed with which state policy makers assumed active leadership roles in the 1980's. Between 1982 and 1986, almost every state enacted legislation affecting almost every aspect of the school experience.

II - Some examples of state reforms:

- In 1982, Mississippi legislated state-supported kindergarten, a teacher aide program, salary increases and increases in sales and income taxes to pay for these and other changes geared to making Mississippi competitive with other states in the South.

- In 1983, California enacted more than 80 changes in its education code which lengthened the school year and day, raised salaries awarded high schools for improved student achievement etc. Florida set performance



standards for academic courses in grades 9-12, increased funding for a writing skills program, and raised requirements for teacher certification etc. Arkansas enforced a basic skills competency test and provided that a district would lose accreditation unless 85% of students in that district passed it. Teachers were required to pass a general skills test to have their licenses renewed.

- In 1984, Tennessee enacted a now-famous career ladder law which included a probationary entry year for new teachers, tougher standards for teacher training, teacher aides in the lower grades and a salary increase. Texas' omnibus reform bill set up a career ladder program with a strong teacher evaluation component and management training for superintendents and principals, required a grade of 70% for promotion, included provisions for training school board members and set minimum competency standards for graduation. Its "no-pass/no-play" provision for athletes has been emulated by many states. South Carolina raised academic standards, increased graduation requirements and the length and number of instructional days, as well as requiring basic skills testing for graduation, a lowered teacher/pupil ratio, incentive programs for outstanding principals and teachers, parenting classes and loans to students who wished to teach in critical areas.

- In 1985, Georgia supported mandatory kindergarten, a statewide core curriculum, career ladders, competency testing for teachers and students and an annual performance evaluation of all school employees. Massachusetts raised starting salaries and set up grants for poor districts etc. Missouri established a "key skills" test and strengthened teacher training. Oklahoma reduced class size, improved standardized tests and introduced mandatory evaluation of teachers. Illinois reorganized and consolidated its school districts, developed an administrator's academy, a center for excellence in teaching, a program for handicapped students from birth to age 3 and set learning objectives for each student etc.

- In 1986, New Mexico eliminated teacher tenure and raised salaries and mandated the number of hours to be spent on basic skills in the primary grades.

III - The following review of the overall reform activities reveals that scarcely any aspect of the school experience has remained untouched.



1. Administration/Leadership

- Training for schoolboard members
- Changes in certification for administrators
- Competency testing for all administrators or for initial certification
- Evaluation programs for administrators
- Establishment of principals' academies and administrative staff development programs.

2. School District

- Curricular accountability
- Long-range planning (accountability)
- Programs to lower class size and target instructional resources
- District consolidation or reorganization

3. Early Childhood

- Prekindergarten programs
- Mandatory kindergarten and/or full-day kindergarten
- Early intervention and programs for at-risk or handicapped students
- Prime-time programs and smaller classes for early elementary years

4. Finance

- Tax increases for reforms
- Funding innovations, especially incentive programs
- Teacher salary increases, career ladders, or merit pay programs

5. General

- Adult literacy
- Computers/technology
- Incentive programs for schools and districts
- Governance changes
- Changes in length of school day and year
- Parental involvement
- Programs for special populations (gifted, handicapped, etc.)
- Mandated discipline plans
- Guidance/counseling

6. Postsecondary

- Changes in admissions requirements
- Efforts to improve quality of undergraduate education
- Program consolidation

7. Students

- Programs for at-risk youth
- Changes in the curriculum
- Increased requirements for high school graduation
- Competency testing
- Academic recognition
- Changes in policies regarding replacement, promotion/retention, and remediation
- Home instruction
- Choice programs

8. Teachers

- Instructional time
- Teacher shortages
- Certification changes
- Preservice training
- Alternate certification
- Competency testing/evaluation
- Career ladder plans and merit pay plans
- Staff development
- Forgivable loans to attract new teachers.

V - Unifying Themes

There are two unifying themes in all this activity, more rigorous academic standards for students and more recognition and higher standards for teachers.

1. Changes affecting standards for students. Since 1980, 45 states and the District of Columbia have altered their reported requirements for earning a standard high school diploma. These changes have almost universally been increases in required courses. Only Hawaii, Idaho, Nebraska, and Wyoming have not chosen to change their graduation requirements, and Colorado is constitutionally prohibited from adopting textbooks or setting curriculum requirements statewide.

Thirty-four states and the District of Columbia had minimum requirements in 1980 and have added to that



number since. Alabama, California, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, and Minnesota increased their already existing state control over graduation requirements. Maryland, North Dakota, and Rhode Island changed the distribution of credits within their requirements for diplomas without actually increasing the total number of credits required. Six states - Alabama, Missouri, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Texas, and Virginia - initiated college-preparatory curriculum tracks and New Mexico will initiate one during the 1986-87 school year.

The increased requirements span a range of specific subject areas. Mathematics requirements were increased in 42 states: 25 changed from requiring one year of math for graduation to requiring two; six changed from two years to three; two changed from one year to three; eight instituted specific requirements for the first time. Thirty-four states changed their science requirements: 22 from one year to two; two from one year to three; one from two years to three; nine from no requirement to some requirements.

Eighteen states modified their language arts requirements. Ten went from three years to four; one from 3 1/2 years to four; one from one year to four; one from one year to three; four instituted requirements for the first time; and one state decreased its requirement from six units to three.

Social studies requirements were changed in 26 states; most now require two or three years of social studies for high school graduation. Two states decreased their requirements.

Physical education and health requirements changed in 14 states. Most now require between one and two years of physical education. Foreign language is listed as a requirements in the District of Columbia. In Illinois, New Hampshire, Oregon, and West Virginia, foreign language is listed in the state requirements as an option. Oklahoma, Rhode Island, and Vermont specify foreign language as a requirement for the college-preparatory track.

Computer literacy is now a requirement in six states: Louisiana, New Hampshire, Maine, New Mexico, South Dakota, and Utah. Georgia offers computer literacy as an option in its requirements; Rhode Island and Texas require computer literacy of college prep students; Oklahoma offers computer literacy as an option for college prep students. Idaho, Illinois and West Virginia indicate that one year of the math



requirements may be satisfied by computer science. A number of other states encourage computer literacy but do not require it for graduation.

Comparing the "state of the states" in the fourth year of reform with the recommendations of the National Commission in *A Nation at Risk* yields some interesting results. The National Commission recommended four years of English; three each of math, science, and social studies; two years of foreign language; and half a year of computer science. Fifteen states meet the English guideline; 10 clearly meet the goal for math and one other could qualify; four meet the science recommendation and one other is possible; 15 meet the social studies guideline; none meet the foreign language requirement; and six states require some kind of computer science.

Other changes that affect students that have come as a result of the education reform movement have been less widespread. Since 1980, the school attendance age has been changed in 15 states. Six of those states added years at the end of mandatory schooling; six start students younger; three do both.

2. Changes affecting standards and compensation for teachers. As a result of the education reform movement, most states have been actively reassessing the structure of the teaching profession, including such matters as the requirements for certifying teachers, ways of recognizing and compensating good teachers, and ways of introducing the concept of career ladders into the teaching profession .

Only 12 states - Hawaii, Iowa, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming - have yet to actively address the structure of teaching careers. Two states - Florida and Tennessee - currently have statewide career structures in place, as does the District of Columbia. Thirteen states - Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Utah, and Wisconsin - either offer incentives to encourage local districts to develop local career plans for teachers or have passed permissive legislation that allows districts to design such plans. Nearly all districts in Utah are participating in the incentive program.

Twelve states have taken a somewhat more cautious (but still statewide) approach than either Florida or

Tennessee. Ten of these states - Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, New Jersey, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin - are pilot-testing a career structure for teachers. Two states - Alabama and Missouri - are phasing in a career structure for teachers over a period of years.

Comprehensive planning of statewide structural changes in the teaching career are being considered in 13 states: Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Kansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, New Mexico, Ohio, Oregon, Texas, and Virginia. meanwhile, refinement of the career structure for teachers is currently taking place in New Hampshire and in the two states with full-scale structures in place: Tennessee and Florida. In Connecticut and Delaware, a career structure is awaiting official action, either by the legislature or by the state board of education. And in Idaho, Nebraska, and South Dakota, legislation has been enacted but has not yet been implemented or has not been funded.

Writing in the Phi Delta Kappan, Dec. 1986, Chris Pipho, Director of the Information Clearinghouse of the Education Commission of the States, and a leading education analyst, states that the reform movement can have a lasting and positive impact on American education. His optimism is based on the fact that his research shows that "higher standards for students and a higher-quality teaching force have become the basic assumptions of the day-to-day operations of American education". He notes that the period of enacted major legislative changes is coming to an end, that the attention of the public and policy makers is now shifting to implementation and that there is a national commitment to move reform recommendations to reality.

\*The material in this report was provided by the Education Commission of the States

Marilyn Braveman  
April 17, 1987

87-620



REPORT ON  
CONSULTATION ON TEACHING VALUES IN EDUCATION  
JUNE 11, 1984

I - Background:

AJC believes that more effective education about common core values may be a constructive response to calls for prayer in the public schools. Further, such programs are of intrinsic value in our pluralistic society and are necessary to develop an active, involved and educated citizenry.

However, the issue has generated a great deal of confusion and suspicion. Advocates of teaching religious values claim that any attempt to separate religion and values is "irreligious." Their fears have been compounded by the proliferation of "values clarification" programs under which it was taught that all values are relative, that almost "anything goes," and that there is no such thing as right and wrong.

This Consultation, which brought several leading experts in the area together with informed AJC leadership, was called to explore the following questions: (Conclusions are in italic)

1. Are "values" currently being taught in elementary and secondary schools? What is the "state of the art?"

*Everything a child is exposed to in school is a value. Teachers do not generally recognize this and lack the skills to be effective. Excellent curricula exists both for separate courses or for inclusion in social studies and literature classes etc.*

continued





2. Whose values should be taught? Is it possible to define universal values in a pluralistic society?

*Common core values, including but not limited to honesty, respect for others, acceptance of difference, civility, fair play, loyalty etc., can be defined and taught.*

3. If so, what is the best way to transmit them to young people?

*Students learn best when what they learn is connected to the world around them. Learning by discussion based on carefully structured examples is more effective than lecture.*

4. What is the relationship, if any, between teaching values and basic school curriculum?

*Curriculum for values education attempts to develop reasoning skills and apply them to specific value issues. Such skills, including developing inferences, standardizing sentences, working with inconsistency and contradiction, formulating questions, giving reasons, defining terms etc. are the same skills necessary to learn basic school curriculum.*

5. What are the barriers, both in the school and the general community, to strengthened values education?

*The major problem is to overcome negative feelings aroused by values clarification programs. A second is the lack of teacher training and re-training programs.*

6. What role can the American Jewish Committee play to overcome them?

*(Listed in Chairperson's summary, below)*

## II - Summary of Presentations:

- A. Dennis Gray, Deputy Director, Council for Basic Education:

All schools inculcate values at all times by the way they conduct business, by the climate they create and by the rules they enforce, as well as by use of curricula. The problem is that they are not always conscious of the powerful effect they have on students' moral development and do not always do a good job. Moreover, many teachers lack the skills to think and talk about the complex questions of values. Mr. Gray noted that there is adequate curriculum available now in subject areas such as literature, social studies, etc. that could be utilized effectively if teachers were better trained. Some parents may fear that values education can brainwash young children. The Council for Basic Education believes that these fears can be allayed. Properly conceived and implemented, values education programs can help young people learn to think effectively, critically and independently. He urged AJC to work through community wide coalitions to accomplish this goal.

B. Harriet Bernstein, Sr. Editor, Assoc. for Supervision and Curriculum Development:

The current cycle in educational policy is concentrated on utilitarianism, vocationalism and accountability. In this climate it is difficult to introduce human values. But it can be done. She made the following recommendations:

- 1) Avoid clearly suicidal approaches such as "values clarification" programs.
- 2) Students learn best when what they learn is connected with the world around them.
- 3) Values education can be included in literature, English and drama classes. There should be increased classroom time and lowered class size in these areas.
- 4) Teachers need training. What we are suggesting violates their own student experience and what they learned at teacher's college.
- 5) Some people don't want their children exposed to liberating reason. Rather than attempting to placate them we should take the risk of telling them to send their children to private school.



C. Matthew Lippman, Director, Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children, Montclair State College:

There are differing views about how best to teach about values and whether it should be done in a special course or included in regular curriculum.

Among them:

- 1) In addition to educating for learning, there is a need to educate for thinking.
- 2) Everything a young person is exposed to is a value and should be recognized as such.
- 3) Children need to be encouraged to be more reflective and to draw better inferences.
- 4) Children learn respect for each other as they learn respect for procedures, for the body of agreed-upon rules that govern classroom behavior.
- 5) Many teachers are products of values clarification and need re-training. AJC should conduct workshops for them and for principals as well.

D. Susan Glass, Director of Public Relations United Federation of Teachers:

1. Teaching about values can and must be separated from religious teaching.
2. Schools reflect society and can't completely overcome the influence of TV and world events.
3. Don't romanticize traditional values. There are some, like racism, sexism etc., that can be dispensed with.
4. Young people learn values by the way the school is run.
5. Many teachers are products of values clarification and need re-training. AJC should conduct workshops for them and for principals as well.



### III - Discussion -

Irving Levine recommended that we take a lesson from how Jewish values are transmitted. Rabbi Andrew Baker, Director of AJC's Washington Chapter, stressed that this includes the importance of thinking for yourself while observing daily customs.

A major problem is what language to use in order to overcome past and potential barriers to values education. It was recommended that AJC might concentrate on citizenship education and define "values" as "values to live by in a democratic society." The rationale of our program could then be that public schools should produce reasoning citizens with a common core of values who conduct themselves in a committed and caring manner.

There was unanimous agreement that common core values could be defined and taught in a secular context at public schools. Among the values identified by the participants were respect for others, fair play, honesty, civility, acceptance of difference, duty to family, patriotism, school and community, understanding and meeting the obligations of citizenship, self-criticism and self-control.

It was urged that values education also be presented as a program that will help improve young people's skills by helping them learn to think more logically and that it can also lead to changes in behavior.

Theodore Sizer's definition was proposed as another conceptual framework for our program. "Developing, through deliberate means, a basis for a student's reflection and decision making that results in his or her principled conduct."

Joan Schine, Chair of the Consultation summarized the consensus of the meeting:

- 1) Whatever language we use, teaching about democratic values needs to be supported and that this is an appropriate project for AJC.
- 2) AJC should develop guidelines for such programs.
- 3) AJC should consider setting up a clearing house on available programs within those guidelines.
- 4) AJC should work nationally and through chapters, in coalition with other groups, to heighten public awareness and advocate values education programs.

VALUES IN EDUCATION MEETING

JUNE 11, 1984

PARTICIPANTS

ANDREW BAKER, DIRECTOR, AJC WASHINGTON CHAPTER

HARRIET BERNSTEIN, SR. EDITOR, ASSOC. FOR SUPERVISION  
AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

MARILYN BRAVEMAN, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, AJC

JOSEPH GIORDANO, DIRECTOR, CENTER ON ETHNICITY, BEHAVIOR  
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SUSAN GLASS, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS, UNITED FEDERATION  
OF TEACHERS

FRANK GOLDSMITH, CHAIR, NATIONAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE, AJC

DENNIS GRAY, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, COUNCIL FOR BASIC EDUCATION

IRVING M. LEVINE, DIRECTOR, NATIONAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT, AJC

MATTHEW LIPPMAN, DIRECTOR, INSTITUTE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF  
PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN, MONTCLAIR STATE COLLEGE

JAMES MARSHALL, ATTY, AJC EDUCATION COMMITTEE

SAM RABINOVE, LEGAL DIRECTOR, AJC

JOAN SCHINE, PROJECT DIRECTOR, EARLY ADOLESCENT HELPER  
PROGRAM

AL SILVERMAN, ATTY, AJC EDUCATION COMMITTEE

EMILY SUNSTEIN, CHAIR, STRATEGY & POLICY COMMITTEE, AJC



## RELIGIOUS PLURALISM EDUCATION PROJECT

VALUES EDUCATION  
BY  
MARILYN BRAVEMAN  
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

### I - Introduction

One goal of AJC's "Religious Pluralism Education Project" is to develop positive strategies to counter moves for organized prayer in the public schools. We have identified teaching about common core values as one effective response.

AJC recently convened a group of top educational leaders to explore the "state of the art" of values education and to help identify effective programs that merit our recommendation and support. This report is based on the findings of this consultation, a survey of the literature, interviews with practitioners and on-site visits.

### II - Definitions

Honesty, civility, responsibility, understanding and tolerance of difference, loyalty etc. are examples of common core values to live by in a democratic society.

We define effective values education programs as "the intentional process of developing, through deliberate means, the basis for a student's reflection and decision-making that results in his or her principled conduct."\*

\*TheodoreSizer, Phillips Exeter Academy Institute on Moral Education, June 1978.



### III - Report

#### A - Background

The belief that moral values should be taught to young Americans is at least as old as the nation itself. Both Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin prescribed their study. "McGuffey's Readers," though later discredited as simplistic, were perhaps the most significant embodiment of the drive to inculcate the young with moral lessons. However, no cohesive design for values education has ever emerged and its history has been marred by controversy.

By the late 1950's an opposite belief, that schools should teach no values, had gained some vogue among educators and social theorists. But the rapid social changes of the 1960's, the phenomena of Water-gate in the 70's, and, in the 80's, fears that America has lost its sense of purpose have led to increasing public awareness of the need to reemphasize values teaching. Nevertheless, there is still confusion and suspicion around this issue.

The Constitution prohibits teaching religion in the public schools. Proponents of values education have demonstrated that it is possible to teach values without teaching religion. This has been denounced by some groups as "irreligious." Their objections have been given credibility because of the proliferation of "values clarification" programs, under which it was taught that all values are relative and that there is no such thing as right or wrong.

Others fear that the subject will inevitably lead to indoctrination of young students. They ask "whose" values will be taught. Still others point to the fact that there is only a finite amount of time during the school day to meet increasing academic demands and question whether the time spent is worthwhile.

Public attention has focused primarily on these problems of values education. But our research indicates that in fact there is strong consensus on the issue, and that theory and curricula have been well developed. For these and the following reasons, we believe that a vigorous effort to promote values education is warranted.



1. There is no such thing as value-free education. Everything a child is exposed to in school is a value, including the assumption that all children should receive a minimum education. Curriculum choices, the content of textbooks, assignments etc., are expressions of the teacher's and author's values. Insistence on honesty in carrying our assignments and decisions on which classroom rules should be enforced represent moral values, as do school policy and programs on the relationships among different ethnic groups.

Schools are not always conscious of the powerful effect they have on students' moral development and many teachers lack the skills to think and talk about the complex questions. But since they inevitably deal with values all the time, it makes sense to help them do their job better.

2. It is possible to teach values without teaching religion. In many cases, religious and civic values exist side by side. People's views about God and humanity affect their views about secular issues. There are few public issues that don't involve moral questions, and moral questions can never be separated from our religious views.

The reasons for learning honesty, civility, responsibility, tolerance, loyalty, etc. in a religious and non-religious setting may differ, but the process of learning is at least somewhat the same. Those who acquire values essential for effective citizenship have learned modes of conduct that religious groups also espouse.

3. In addition to its intrinsic importance, it is "worth the time" to fit values education into the school day because there can be a positive relationship to learning basic curriculum.

In his recent book "An Immodest Agenda" Rebuilding Before the 21st Century", sociologist Amital Etzioni argues that it is a lack of inner organization and ability to mobilize and commit psychic energy to a task that seems to account for many young people's "inability" to do elementary computation (memorize a few rules and discipline oneself to adhere to them) or to write a coherent sentence. He contends that students need to learn self-discipline and self-organization and recommends that schools concentrate on character-formation as a means to improve cognitive skills.

Values education relies on the development of reasoning skills, including but not limited to identifying underlying assumptions, formulating questions, giving reasons, working with analogies, concept-development, drawing inferences, identifying and using criteria etc. These are the same skills needed to learn basic curriculum. It therefore follows that to improve the capacity of students to think about value issues will improve their capacity to deal with all academic subject areas.

Values study can be included in existing classes in English, literature, drama and social studies etc. or be taught as a separate course of study.

## B - Theories and Programs - a critique

### Major approaches to values education

Until recently, the field has been dominated by three major approaches. Each contains excellent elements, but also serious flaws.

#### 1. Lecturing -

The key to direct teaching is deliberate intention. The experience for learning by someone (the student) is planned and carried out by someone else (the teacher). No deviation because of student reaction is permitted.

This approach is generally viewed as moral indoctrination. It is quite apparent that it does not work. Moral conduct is, ultimately, the result of autonomous decision. With all the subtle variations possible even around a commonly-held principle such as justice, the ability of a single speaker to tell very much except obvious generalities is limited. "Preaching" is useful in setting an agenda, in clarifying facts of an issue and raising a student's consciousness to some topic or other.

#### 2. Values clarification (V.C.) proponents led by Louis E. Raths of New York University and Sidney Simon of the University of Massachusetts criticize moral indoctrination as useless for making sense out of life because the modern world is uniquely difficult and complex. V.C. is based on the premise that values are a matter of personal choice. It does not posit



any supreme virtue, such as justice.

Its supporters regard it as being "neutral" and claim that none of us has a "right" set of values to pass on to other people's children. Therefore their concern is not with the content of people's values but with the process of valuing. The process includes knowing what one prizes, choosing those things which one cares for most and weaving those things into the fabric of daily living. Its teaching techniques are highly regarded. But it is a set of strategies, not a set of values.

3. Developmental Approach: Harvard University's Lawrence Kohlberg's developmental approach rests on several generations of research on moral development in humans. He identifies a series of stages of moral growth that appear to hold up in a variety of cultures and traditions and across ages. One passes from the lower to higher levels, but few attain the highest state of moral development, which is a life lived wholly on the basis of principle. He believes that students can be moved from lower to higher levels through a formal process, largely through debate about moral dilemmas which teach people, through their own experience, the value of deciding in a principled way. The key element is not the conclusion a student comes to, but how he or she reasons it out. Once a teacher understands the stage of a student's moral development, the student can be faced with examples of conduct and moral reasoning which will move him or her to a higher stage.

Kohlberg's approach has commanded great attention and respect because of its theoretical origins and the high quality of its research. But it also attracts criticism because its teaching tends toward the same kind of moral relativism as values clarification. That is, it suggests that all modes of moral thought are good. In addition, critics believe that progression through the stages may rely less on improvements in reasoning than on a student's intuitive grasp of a set of attitudes.

Some Newer and Recommended Models:

We believe that there are several existing programs that overcome the problems of past methods. We offer the following models to schools as they shape values education programs to meet the values, needs and style of their school community:

1. The Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children at Montclair State College emerged in the 1970's as the most promising of educational approaches to social inquiry. Directed by Dr. Matthew Lippman, the I.A.P.C. develops curricula and teaching manuals, evaluates its work in terms of the academic impact of its programs and specializes in teacher training. Using the discipline of philosophy, it gives children a fresh look at the logic embedded in the language they use in everyday life. It provides exercises and activities based on the concepts of friendship, fairness, reality, truth, being a person and goodness etc. An example of secondary school curriculum is a paperbound novel "Mark."

"The high school has been vandalized, and Mark is arrested at the scene of the crime. He claims he is a 'victim of society.' But what is society? What forces hold it together or work to pull it apart? These are questions to which Mark and his classmates address themselves. In the process, they move their social studies course out of the classroom into their own homes. What they seek are ways of evaluating social institutions, rules and values, so as to determine how well society is able to live up to the ideals which, at one time or another, have been set for it. They pay particular attention to the nature of law and crime, tradition, bureaucracy, and to the problems of authority, responsibility and force. But the most important considerations they take up have to do with democracy, freedom and justice."

2. The Character Education Curriculum, distributed by the Thomas Jefferson Research Center in Pasadena, California is a complete lesson plan package prepared so that teachers from kindergarden through the first two years of college can instruct students in what the Center calls the "15 consensus values."



It is designed to help students understand the values by which their culture operates, such as honesty, respect for others, integrity, courage and convictions etc. -- all the usual values that the Founders included in the Constitution, and the Declaration of Independence.

3. The American Federation of Teachers provides material to teachers for teaching traditional values. The themes are responsibility, honesty, courage and compassion. The materials have been excerpted from classical and contemporary literature, folk tales and fables, newspapers, court cases, music, art and film. The materials can be easily assimilated into the regular curriculum and, in their original versions, are accessible to both teachers and students. A panel of experts in philosophy, history, literature, education and psychology assisted in compiling the bibliography.
4. "Citizenship in New York City," a 300-page curriculum by the New York City Board of Education was designed to meet the need to revitalize the teaching of civic responsibility and the moral and ethncal principles that lead to good citizenship.

In the process of teaching the values held by good citizens, all school personnel play a part -- teachers in classrooms, supervisors on their daily rounds, dieticians in the lunchrooms, etc. as they demonstrate and model good citizenship behavior in their own relationships, adult-to-adult, as well as adult-to-young person.

The bulletin is organized in six parts, each with its own theme. The underlying concept is that the responsibilities of citizenship are exercised in the ever widening spheres: What one owes to oneself, to others, to one's neighborhood, to those who provide the larger community of New York City.

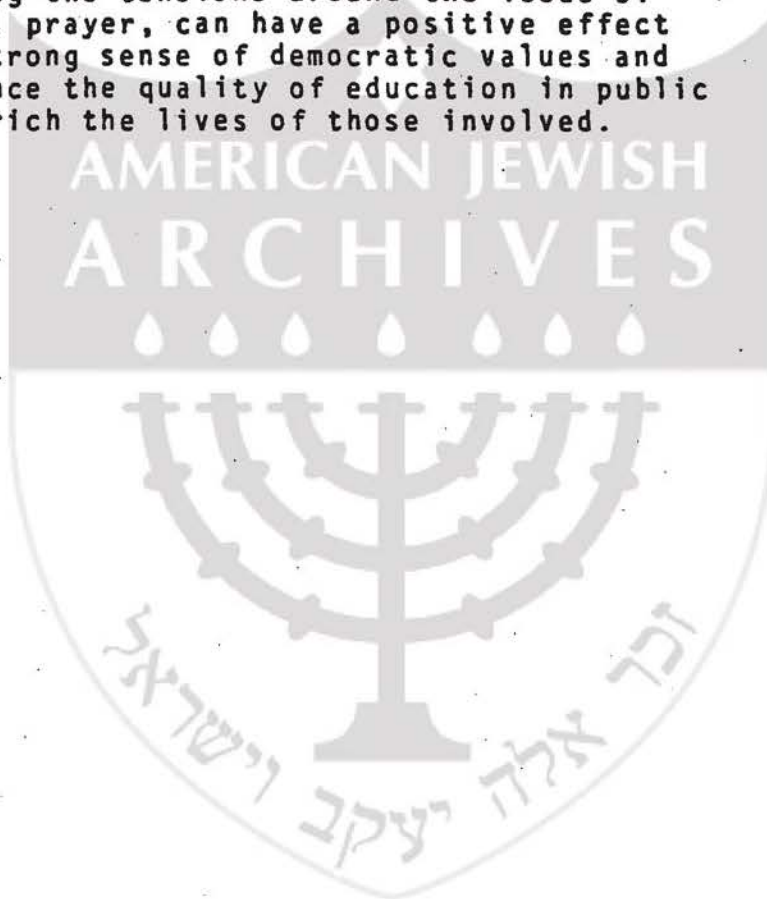
The themes are:

1. Understanding yourself and your values
2. The Good Citizen

3. The Citizen and the Law
4. The Citizen in the Neighborhood  
Community
5. The Citizen and Municipal Services
6. The Citizen and Public Health &  
Safety

We believe that values education programs, properly conceived and executed, can make a strong contribution towards lessening the tensions around the issue of organized school prayer, can have a positive effect on reviving a strong sense of democratic values and tradition, enhance the quality of education in public schools, and enrich the lives of those involved.

84-620-75  
11/8/84





The American Jewish Committee and Language Policy

The "English as the Official Language" Movement

A Briefing Paper and Recommendations

by Marilyn Braveman  
Revised 4/7/87

I - Background

AJC has been studying the issue of language policy for many years. Our guidelines on Bilingual Education, adopted in May 1980, were developed within the framework of our belief that "America has and should continue to have one common language, English, in which all people should be proficient" and that bilingual education can be a desirable tool. They emphasize that cultural pluralism is a unique and positive aspect of American life and state that "Our nation gains vitality from each of its constituent groups and sees their language as well as their cultures as valuable resources for the country as a whole." They also support foreign language competency for English speaking children.

Our pro-immigration, pro-cultural pluralism policy is developed further in the report of AJC's Task Force on the Acculturation of Immigrants to American Life, about to be issued. The chapter "Acculturation and the Language Issue" makes the following policy recommendations on "fostering linguistic competence and constructive methods to assure universal English literacy and the value and meaning of pluralism."

- English competency programs should receive strong support both for students in schools and for adults through community-based instructional programs.
- Bilingual programs that are competently run and adequately supported should be available for students who need them to maintain their educational level while they learn English.
- No school program or government agency should do anything to denigrate home languages which are often the key factors in community and family cohesion among immigrants.
- Educational programs, as a matter of national interest, should seek to foster linguistic capacities among all Americans by stressing foreign language education.
- Public agencies, especially on issues of safety such as street signs or civic participation such as ballots, should provide services in languages that large communities of residents can understand.

- Civic and communal leadership should work publicly to foster rational discourse on language policy and discourage exploitation of this issue which produces ethnic discord and communal tensions.

## II - Recommendations

It is in this light that this paper analyses the burgeoning "English-Only" movement and recommends the following additions to existing AJC policy:

- A - that AJC oppose a Constitutional Amendment, state initiatives and other "English as the official language" resolutions because they are divisive and negative;\*
- B - that AJC actively support and develop positive approaches such as the English Proficiency Act and other programs designed to help children and adults gain proficiency in English and
- C - that AJC play a leadership role, in coalition with racial and ethnic groups such as the National Council of La Raza, the Organization of Chinese Americans and others to stimulate a rational and reasoned discussion of the issues and gain broad support for constructive approaches.

## III - Analysis:

The stated goal of the "English-Only Movement", as expressed through its organizational leadership, U. S. English and English First, is to make English the official language of the United States through an amendment to the U. S. Constitution, state legislation\*\* and repeal of laws and regulations permitting or requiring public business to be conducted in any language other than English.

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\*This position is supported by AJC's Boston, Denver, Los Angeles, Miami and San Diego Chapters. San Francisco and Orange County Chapters took no position.

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\*\*English-only measures passed in Arkansas, California, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, Nebraska, Tennessee, Virginia and are proposed or pending in Alabama, Connecticut, Idaho, Kansas, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Washington State & Wisconsin and others and were defeated in Massachusetts, Nebraska & Oklahoma.



A bilingual ordinance in Dade County, Florida was recently repealed over the opposition of the Mayor and a host of community groups, including the AJC. The recent success of "Proposition 63" in California, despite the opposition of the Governor, the State Attorney General, most prominent elected officials and AJC's Los Angeles and San Diego chapters have encouraged proponents to step up their efforts for passage of similar initiatives in other states.

The movement is rapidly gaining strength and financial support, and at the same time provoking charges that it is anti-immigrant, divisive, dangerous and unnecessary.

The controversy surprises many people who agree that it is necessary and desirable to learn to speak and read English in order to function in American society and therefore question what can be wrong in having laws that say so.

A review of the background, written materials and public statements of the leadership of the movement help in looking for answers to this question.

A - The movement is anti-immigrant.

The principle group advocating English Only is U.S. English. It is a direct outgrowth of the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), which was formed to lobby for more restrictive immigration laws and lower immigration quotas. The principle founder of FAIR is chair of the Board of Directors of both organizations. They share several other Board members, lawyers and office accommodations and staff.

Currently the majority of legal and illegal immigrants are Asian and Hispanic, unlike the early 1900's when most were white and European. Both organizations appeal to legitimate fears of social change and social isolation which may result from new patterns of migration to the United States.

Another related group, "English First," uses as its symbol the Statue of Liberty Torch, stating that it is "Capturing the Spirit of Immigrants Who Learned English and Became Full Members of American Society." Its slogan and texts divide people along racial and ethnic lines by giving fuel to the conception that Hispanic Americans, in particular, do not want to learn English.

According to a number of studies, including one just completed by the Rand Corporation, this is not true. Hispanics, like other immigrant groups, recognize that they must be proficient in English in order to act as informed



participants in our society and to be competitive in schools and in the labor market. Nowhere is this more evident than in the conclusions of a 1985 study carried out in Miami. It revealed that 98% of Latino parents (as compared with 94% of Anglo parents) felt it was essential for their children to become competent in English. In addition, a 1984 survey conducted by the National Opinion Research Center showed that 81% of Hispanics believe that speaking and understanding English is a "very important" obligation of citizenship. Only 2% thought it was not an obligation.

B - English as the official language requirements can have dangerous, far-reaching and unanticipated effects.

Supporters of the movement state that the proposed Amendment and state initiatives are designed to draw attention to the issue and are largely symbolic. But, in fact, the current English language propositions contain specific provisions for enforcement and also permit individuals to sue for enforcement, raising the spectre of costly and time consuming litigation.

Opponents say this could endanger or have a chilling effect on 911 lines, multi-lingual police, fire and emergency services, interpreters in state courts for witnesses, crime victims and defendants, and bilingual education, health and mental health services etc. They say it could eliminate public service announcements in any language other than English, including pamphlets explaining how to enroll a child in public school. Some lawmakers think it could even prohibit the teaching of foreign language in public schools and advertising by private business in any language other than English. There have already been boycotts against Spanish advertisements in Florida and California, as well as campaigns against Spanish Yellow Pages and attempts to have Chinese business signs removed. One U. S. English coordinator has written to all 50 governors attacking the use of Spanish for private business.

Although proponents say they do not intend many of the above consequences, the exceptions have not been written into legislation.

C - "English as the Official Language" will not help anyone learn English.

English-only legislation would penalize new immigrants who have not yet learned the language and who, despite the suggestions of the movement, are as eager to learn it as previous immigrant groups.

A recent report in Education Week described the rising



number of non-English speaking Americans who are being turned away from oversubscribed English language instruction classes around the country. Yet proponents of the "English-only movement" did not support the English Proficiency Act which would have provided federal grants for literacy programs serving adults whose native language is not English.

These factors were instrumental in the resignation of Norman Cousins from the Advisory Board of U. S. English over what he called "its negative symbolic significance. "I am now forced to recognize that legislation is not the proper or effective means for dealing with this problem," Mr. Cousins said. "Not until we provide educational facilities for all who are now standing in line to take lessons in English should we presume to pass judgment on the non-English speaking people in our midst."

D - It is not necessary to make English the official language of the United States.

U. S. English creates the impression that English as our common language is under siege because no law mandates it the official language. But as far back as 1923, in Meyers v. Nebraska, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down laws that prohibited use or teaching of German after WWI, making it clear that we never needed to make English an official language by statute. English is the principle language used in the United States. Virtually all government agencies conduct their business in English and virtually all public documents are written in English. It is de facto the official language of the U. S. The use of additional languages to meet the needs of language minorities does not pose a threat to America's true common heritage and common bond -- the quest for freedom and opportunity.

An additional goal of U. S. English is to eliminate bilingual ballots. AJC has no specific position on this issue, although we supported the 1982 extension of the Voting Rights Act, which requires jurisdictions with a sizable number of minority language citizens to provide registration and voting materials, including ballots, in the language of the minority group as well as English. Congress' reasoning was that unequal educational opportunity resulted in high English illiteracy and low voting participation.

An amendment adopted as part of the 1982 extension greatly reduced the bilingual ballot provisions and removed 209 of the 362 jurisdictions which have been required to provide minority language assistance.

Opponents of bilingual ballots argue that Americans should know English in order to exercise the right and privileges of citizenship. They claim the ballots are unnecessary because applicants for citizenship must pass an examination demonstrating knowledge of simple English.

If AJC is to consider this issue further it is best discussed in the context of the Voting Rights Act and not in the divisive and strained context of the English-only movement.

Adopted by the National Affairs Commission 3/23/87

87-620







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## GUIDELINES ON BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

The issue of bilingual education raises fundamental questions about the nature of integration and pluralism in American society as well as pedagogical aspects of dual language instruction. Any useful approach must take account of the full range of implications involved. This topic requires us to think about how we should respond to educational deprivations, what we can do to reach out to newcomers in our country, and in what ways we can create an integrated community which values the diversity of its many constituent groups, as well as what we should teach in our schools. Our deliberations have taken place in the framework of our belief that America has and should continue to have one common language, English, in which all people should be proficient.

The past decade has seen a steady growth in bilingual programs in the United States. In 1974, the Supreme Court ruled in the landmark Lau case that children who receive instruction in a language they cannot understand are deprived of their legal right to equal opportunity in education. The American Jewish Committee submitted a brief in this case on behalf of the Chinese students from San Francisco who initiated it and who could not follow their school curriculum because they lacked proficiency in English. The Lau decision spurred the creation of numerous dual language programs in schools which had to educate non-English speaking students, though in the opinion of legal experts Lau did not specifically require bilingual education as the only way to remedy the language deficiencies of these youngsters. Federal agencies have also strongly encouraged bilingual curricula as an effective method for dealing with these students.

The growth of bilingual education has sparked vigorous debate about its merits. Opponents argue that dual language

instruction can cause unnecessary divisiveness in our society, divert general educational revenues, impede a student's ability to learn English, and threaten the position of English as the national tongue. Proponents feel that a non-English speaking child's native language provides an effective medium through which he or she can acquire basic skills, that if English is taught simultaneously these skills can be transferred, and that bilingual education can speed and enhance integration into the mainstream social and economic systems.

\* \* \* \* \*

The American Jewish Committee views the ideal of cultural pluralism within an integrated social framework as a unique and positive aspect of American life. Our nation gains vitality from each of its constituent groups and sees their languages as well as their cultures as valuable resources for the country as a whole.

Our schools should stress and help interpret the strengths inherent in a diverse though united society and incorporate an understanding of pluralism into their curricula. In this process, it is important that they respect culture and language of all groups. Children should be made to feel accepted and should not be forced to learn in a language they do not understand. To this end, bilingual education can be a desirable tool among others. However, it should not be a substitute, but rather a vestibule in which English can be acquired.

The language situation differs from community to community. Since education is primarily a local function, implementation of language teaching in the schools must reflect local concerns, including offering languages other than English to English speaking students.

Although research is not conclusive, there exists evidence that effective dual language instruction teaches English and necessary skills, such as the ability to read and compute through a student's dominant language, the major medium through which he/she operates. The American Jewish Committee believes that bilingual instructional programs should incorporate the following principles and guidelines:

1. Bilingual programs should integrate students early into the linguistic, social and economic mainstream.



*Dual language instruction is a way to achieve this goal because it teaches English simultaneously with necessary skills such as the ability to read and compute through students' native languages, the major medium in which they operate.*

2. All programs should undergo periodic evaluation to ensure compliance with their aims. Standards, set when a program is instituted, should include clearly defined time limits on participation, and assure that educational attainment levels of students in bilingual classes remain at least on a par with other students on their grade levels.

*It is important to be aware of the innovative nature of bilingual programs and to study successful models. Materials and methods that work should receive wide distribution. Placements should be reviewed periodically with a view to meeting the goal of mainstreaming of bilingual students.*

3. Bilingual programs should aim to enhance student's self-image.

*A sound educational program views the student's own culture as one important tool for progress and builds upon his or her background as a way of encouraging educational and career development.*

4. Bilingual programs must avoid the temptation to become insular and should encourage children to understand each other's cultures.

*To the degree possible, students in dual language sections should meet and spend time with other youngsters so that they will not be isolated or segregated from their peers. Classes and recreational activities that mix English and non-English speaking children must be encouraged. Moreover, special projects which seek to broaden the awareness and accessibility of all students to the full range of community life must form an integral component of the curricula of bilingual programs.*

5. Instructors should be fully trained and competent in both English and the student's home language and in subject matter.

*In no case must occupational opportunity in bilingual programs be limited to members of a particular ethnic or racial group. Competence must be the first consideration in staff selection and placement. One prerequisite must be understanding of and sensitivity to a student's culture.*

6. Parents of bilingual children should be deeply involved in all dual language programs.

*Schools should make special efforts to establish and maintain ties between the schools and parents of children in bilingual programs.*

*In addition, dual language classes should be offered to interested parents and other adults.*

We see these concerns as especially important at this time because of their economic and occupational implications. Contemporary newcomers must compete in a contracting economic situation, especially at the manual labor and small business levels that provided the career springboards for their predecessors. If they are to succeed and become integrated into American economic and social life, they will have to acquire enough skills through the schools to qualify for higher level positions. This makes their formal education a matter of critical importance. If bilingual programs can aid them in attaining the knowledge and credentials they need to achieve success in American society, such programs will be beneficial both to immigrants and the nation at large.

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Adopted by National Executive Council 10/24/80



THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

BI-LINGUAL EDUCATION - A GLOSSARY OF TERMS

I - Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students are students whose English language deficiency prevents them from participating effectively in the learning process. They scored at or below the 20th percentile on the Language Assessment Battery (LAB). There is some objection to this term by Hispanic groups, who prefer the term, frequently used by the Dept. of Education, language minority children.

II - Definitions of language programs -

Parental consent is required before a child is placed in any of these programs:

- A. Submersion. \* Language-minority children are placed into an ordinary classroom where English is spoken. There is no special program to help them overcome the language problem. Submersion is aptly described as "sink or swim." The minority home language is not used at all in the classroom.
- B. English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL). ESL students are placed in regular submersion instruction for most of the day. During part of the day, however, these students receive extra instruction in English. This extra help is based on a special curriculum designed to teach English as a second language. The non-English home language may or may not be used in conjunction with ESL instruction. The ESL teacher is not required to have proficiency in the student's language. An ESL program can be effective for students who are already strongly literate in their native language and in those situations where there are many different languages spoken in one school or only a few children in each language grouping in a grade.

\*In Lau v. Nichols the Supreme Court found the submersion approach violated the civil rights of language minority students and that schools had to make an extra effort to help overcome the language problem of these students.

- C. Immersion. Instruction is in English, as in the case of submersion and ESL, but there are important differences. The immersion teacher understands the non-English home language, and students can address the teacher in the non-English language. The immersion teacher may occasionally use the student's dominant language to clarify instruction, but generally teachers only speak in English. Furthermore, the curriculum is structured so that prior knowledge of English is not assumed as subjects are taught. Content is introduced in a way that can be understood by the students. The students in effect learn the second language and content simultaneously. Most immersion programs also teach home language arts for 30-60 minutes a day. Structured immersion differs from transitional bilingual instruction in that the home language is not used by the teacher for formal instruction and subject area instruction is given in English from the beginning of the program.
- D. Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE). Reading is taught in both the non-English home language and English. Subject matter is taught in the non-English home language until the students' second language (English) is good enough for them to participate successfully in a regular classroom. That is, a student's LAB score is over the 20th percentile. ESL techniques are often used to help minimize the time needed to master English. Use of the non-English home language instruction is phased out as regular English instruction is gradually phased in. TBE is differentiated from submersion and ESL by the use of the non-English home language for instruction in nonlanguage subject areas and by teaching literacy in the non-English language as a school subject.
- E. Two-way bi-lingual programs offer instruction in two languages for students who are proficient in both languages. These can be likened to instruction in Hebrew Day Schools and French Lycees. They have become increasingly popular in New York City public schools, particularly in classes for the gifted.



## THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

### Federal Role in Bilingual Education - a Synopsis

#### 1. Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

- This was enacted in 1968 to provide short term help to school districts with high concentrations of limited English - speaking ability students from low income homes.

#### 2. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act 1964

- This prohibits discrimination and denial of access to education on the basis of a student's limited English proficiency.

#### 3. Lau v. Nichols

- A 1974 decision in which the U. S. Supreme Court ruled that children being taught in a language they do not understand were denied equal opportunity. Lau did not specify bi-lingual education as the remedy for these children but endorsed flexibility at the local school district. School districts did not rush to comply with any plans, but enforcement efforts by H.E.W. resulted in 500 compliance agreements by 1981. Unfortunately, because of its own ideology and frustration with school districts' resistance, H. E.W. was heavyhanded and inflexible and the divisiveness over bi-lingual education grew. H.E.W. regulations were never formally published until Aug. 1980. They aroused such opposition (including AJC's) that they were withdrawn. However, opponents of bi-lingual education refer to them as though they had been promulgated and put into effect.

#### 4. The Bi-Lingual Education Act now allows only up to 4% of federal funds appropriated for LEP students to be used for other-than transitional bilingual education programs. Bi-lingual funds are not automatically distributed by the number of children deemed eligible in a Language Assessment Batters (L.A.B.). School districts must present a plan and apply to the Dept. of Education for funds.

Marilyn Braveman  
November 1985

# NEWS FROM THE Committee



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The AJC protects the rights and freedoms of Jews the world over; combats bigotry and promotes human rights for all people; defends pluralism and enhances the creative vitality of the Jewish people; and contributes to the formulation of American public policy from a combined Jewish and American perspective. Founded in 1906, it is the pioneer human-relations agency in the U.S.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW YORK, April 27 ... The following statement was issued today by Theodore Ellenoff, President of the American Jewish Committee:

"The American Jewish Committee believes that the U.S. Department of Justice acted fairly and wisely in placing Austrian President Dr. Kurt Waldheim on its so-called 'watch list', thereby preventing his entry into the United States. Dr. Waldheim brought this act of rejection on himself by his years of lying and misrepresenting his involvement in the Nazi war machine.

"But it is important for all of us, both as Americans and as Jews, to acknowledge that Waldheim is not Austria and Austria is not Waldheim. Two-thirds of the Austrian people were born either during or after World War II, and therefore are not to be implicated in Waldheim's behavior. The American Jewish Committee is presently engaged in a major program with the Austrian Society for Foreign Affairs and International Relations in examining 'Austrian-Jewish Relations -- Past, Present, and Future' and we plan to proceed with this program."

The American Jewish Committee is this country's pioneer human relations organization. Founded in 1906, it combats bigotry, protects the civil and religious rights of Jews here and abroad, and advances the cause of improved human relations for all people everywhere.

87-960-75  
AJRZ

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CSAE 1707



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APRIL 27, 1987

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THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

STATEMENT ON EQUALIZING SCHOOL FINANCE

Improving the quality of public education and equality of educational opportunity have long been priority concerns for the American Jewish Committee.

The current method of financing schools, which is dependent on the wealth of each school district, is based primarily on local property taxes and has resulted in a wide divergence in the amount of money spent on children within a state. This has been attacked on both constitutional and ethical grounds.

On March 21, 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court, in San Antonio (Texas) Independent School District v. Rodriguez, ruled that the current method of finance, though in need of reform and producing "chaotic and unjust results" was not unconstitutional.

In its decision, the Court placed responsibility for needed nationwide change in the individual states. There have been 52 court cases in 32 states and in one, New Jersey, the State Supreme Court ruled that the current method of financing education violates that state's constitution. Almost every state has been studying the issue of devising a more rational and equitable method of financing schools and many have already issued reports recommending widespread changes.

Much of this discussion has centered on specifics of full state funding taxation methods and property values. However, our interest does not lie in supporting any one specific "solution" but rather in trying to assure that the search for solutions is a constructive rather than a destructive one.

We believe that each state should move towards equalization, taking into account the particular needs of its communities.

In working towards this goal, the following factors must be considered:

1. Equalization should raise levels of financing without lowering standards in any district. Formulas for distribution of resources should be based on a "leveling up" rather than "leveling down" of expenditures. They should not freeze at any levels but should provide for necessary and reasonable annual increases for such items as cost of living and mandated costs.

(over)

2. State equalization programs should make reasonable provisions for differential costs of urban, suburban and rural areas and should take into account differing levels of ability to support education in different areas of the state.
3. State equalization programs should take into account the special educational needs of handicapped children, the impoverished students, slow learners, gifted children and the added costs of vocational education.
4. States should be prepared to provide additional funds to districts for special, innovative programs which can be replicated throughout the state.
5. Any plan under consideration should spell out local responsibility on such questions as curriculum, certification, collective bargaining. It should provide for local decision making on options above minimum state standards.
6. A state equalization plan should have a built-in mechanism for evaluation and adjustment.
7. A clear timetable for implementation should be included in any state equalization plan and there should be ample opportunity for public discussion.

Adopted by the  
Board of Governors  
June 26, 1973



THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE AND SCHOOL INTEGRATION

A SPECIAL TASK FORCE REPORT

JUNE 30, 1975

A new fashionable rhetoric is emerging about school integration. Many Americans look at the community conflict surrounding school desegregation efforts, point to confusing evidence about achievement in desegregated schools and, with pride in their pragmatism, announce that "integration has failed." In their desire for easy answers, without turmoil or inconvenience, they have begun a search for still another panacea, forgetting what the struggle is all about.

In 1954, when the American Jewish Committee entered an amicus brief in the landmark school desegregation case of *Brown v. Board of Education*, we knew there was no easy answer to the long standing problems of school segregation. We also knew that no change in basic social arrangements comes easily. We believed, and continue to believe, that a system of racially separate schools, no matter what the cause, produces unconstitutional and unconscionable racial inequality that must be corrected.

But perhaps we, along with other civil rights groups, did not realize just how long the change would take and how hard it would be. Over the past twenty years many have grown discouraged with and accustomed to dwelling upon the failures and disappointments of the school desegregation movement. We have tended to overlook the fact that despite opposition, discord and violence, the South, the focus of the first school desegregation efforts, is near the end of a remarkable process of reorganizing its basic educational structure.

For ten years, the South had been successful in evading our delaying the Supreme Court's mandate. In 1964, only 1% of Southern blacks attended predominantly white schools. However, by Fall 1972, after the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act provided an effective enforcement mechanism, that figure increased to 45%. While 99% of Southern blacks attended completely segregated schools in 1963, only 7% did nine years later.

The most encouraging thing about Southern school desegregation is that it is now largely accepted as a matter of fact. According to reports published by the University of Notre Dame's Center for Civil Rights, "Each successive study of public opinion in the South shows growing acceptance of desegregation and growing willingness of Southern whites to have their children in schools with substantial numbers of black students."

There are still many serious problems in the South and in Southern schools. Some are related to new school desegregation and others, the so-called "second generation" problems, include classroom segregation, a drop in the number of black teachers and principals and a rise in the number of suspensions and expulsions of students. Civil rights groups and the schools must



come to grips with these and other similar issues and search for uniform, fair and workable rules for their resolution. But this can be accomplished with far less difficulty in an atmosphere well described in 1972 by William F. Buckley, a commentator not noted for rash statements on these issues.

*"The fact of the matter is that the end of Jim Crow hasn't increased interracial hostilities; quite the contrary. In the past four years Mississippi has achieved a racial integration unthought of in the North ... and relations between white and black are, for the most part, altogether relaxed ... Mississippi lost the right to pass its own law respecting schooling, transportation, hotels and restaurants. And it is, without question, a better place to live in now than before."*

### Spotlight on the North

The focus of legal action has now shifted to the North, where attempts to desegregate school systems have met with resistance similar to that encountered in the South. Many adherents of school integration have become discouraged and despair, in the words of former Supreme Court Justice Arthur Goldberg, "that it is too hard to continue the pursuit of Martin Luther King's dream when the dream appears to be far from reality."

The situation is further complicated by the fact that at times the attention of the Federal government seemingly has been distracted from efforts to achieve compliance and by the relocation of the middle class to the suburbs. In addition, increasing concerns that standards are being lowered, a growing thrust for ethnic identity that sometimes appears inconsistent with the goal of integration, and fears for physical safety have been inadequately responded to.

In fact, in the North, some people have set their patterns of thinking by failure, rather than success models. They have slipped into the belief that every integrating community will, of necessity, have the same problems as Boston's over-publicized ones. But students in many newly integrated schools in Boston as well as in Milwaukee, Denver and elsewhere are quietly learning to live and work together. Plaintiffs in the Buffalo, New York school desegregation suit recognize this when they state that mental images of school integration need not be set by Boston. They point instead to the fact that while some whites and blacks clashed in Boston last Fall, many quietly went on with the business of education. In Minneapolis, schools integrated without major incidents. Likewise, in January 1975 a newspaper follow-up of the course of school integration in Prince George County's integrated schools noted a "remarkable casualness about racial matters" in a district where, two years ago, there were "dire predictions that upheaval would kindle smoldering racial fires."

Further evidence that the problems in the North can be solved is presented in an extensive study of the school desegregation throughout the nation published in 1973 by the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights. The Commission evaluated the progress made by ten counties selected from three Northern and three Southern states which had desegregated under Court order or impending



withdrawal of Federal funds. In each county, the initial reaction had been one of strong protest by the community and the school board. The most dramatic example given is that of Pontiac, Michigan, another community that has caused some people to think unhappily about desegregation against a violent backdrop. The Commission instead used Pontiac as a prime example of how a community can learn to cope with desegregation. In the months following implementation of a court desegregation order, people all over the country read newspaper stories of protest and, in prime time, watched videotaped TV accounts of mob turbulence directed against the ordinary yellow school bus, the manufacture of which, ironically, is Pontiac's chief industry. Ten of the buses were destroyed by bombs, drivers were beset by jeering mobs who lay down in front of their buses, and one bus carrying small children was forced off the roadway and barely missed plunging into the river.

The Commission points out that now, only two years later, there are few calls to the school board about school buses in Pontiac, and those few deal mostly with complaints that they are late, a familiar enough story. Despite the initial controversy, school desegregation is now an accomplished fact in Pontiac. School officials and parents can now focus their attention on the long standing academic problems of the district.

The Commission also points out that the experiences of Pontiac and other communities represent positive lessons from which community leaders can gain a deeper awareness of the basis for the anxiety of children and parents and take steps to meet them sensibly and compassionately.

### Next Steps

The American Jewish Committee believes that the goals of an integrated society and quality education in integrated public schools are consistent and in America may be tied together inexorably. But lack of public confidence in the major sectors which have traditionally promoted public education will result in diminishing resources and diminishing quality. Therefore, our support of integration in addition to its intrinsic validity, is also a re-affirmation of our conviction that public schools can fulfill their mission to educate all children at a high level of quality. The argument that integration and quality are inconsistent is specious - both are attainable together. The bitterness and conflict over accomplishing desegregation and achieving the goal of integrated education diverts attention from the issue of quality. The energies of American society must once again be devoted to the question of excellence. This will happen only when the matter of desegregation is over. Certainly it would be most desirable if school boards throughout the country were to examine their communities, make legitimate judgments about where schools cannot be integrated because of distance and/or density of school population and proceed to desegregate in all other situations. That may be asking too much. Political and educational officials throughout the North have become exceedingly reluctant to step ahead of the apparent vocal community sentiment, however ill-informed or unrepresentative of the best American tradition, to take a leadership role. The independent judiciary, therefore, unhappily remains the source of desegregation initiative.



We thus urge that:

- 1) Communities eliminate segregation caused by housing and zoning patterns promptly and voluntarily.
- 2) Where this does not transpire, AJC actively supports constructive legal alternatives (such as litigation) where proper.

After a finding of illegal segregation courts have traditionally afforded communities the opportunity to devise their own school desegregation plans in the belief that each community is best equipped to analyze its own demography, traditions and quality of educational leadership. Certain school systems take advantage of this opportunity to respond constructively to new circumstances. Nevertheless, some school boards tend to delay implementation of court orders because of their lack of information and expertise as well, perhaps, as an unwillingness to bring about change. When a loud segment of the community is opposed as well, unworkable and unwieldy plans sometimes result.

The Courts frequently lack the resources and research capacity needed to encourage and assist school boards with their responsibilities. Despite the fact that twenty years of experience and study exist, there is no comprehensive mechanism available to provide technical assistance for those who are charged with developing desegregation plans. What is needed are new initiatives in which the full support of public and private resources will be brought to bear in assisting communities to develop the best possible plans for quality integrated education.

We believe that the following are vital components of a success-oriented approach and urge:

- 1 - Establishment by the Federal Government of an independent National Implementation Resource Service. The Service would be responsible for bringing together the results of the many studies and surveys that have been conducted in the past or are currently being conducted (The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Twentieth Century Fund, Rand Corporation, H.E.W., C.R.S., National Center for Quality Integrated Education, etc.) and make them available to Courts and schools in a form in which they can be most useful. In this effort, the Service should call upon the expertise of many groups with available skills in areas such as demography, governmental structure, housing patterns, bilingualism, transportation, educational administration, conflict management and human relations training in order to help districts develop their own "packages," appropriate for their needs, interests and capabilities.
- 2 - Funding available under the Emergency School Aid Act (E.S.A.A.) and under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (E.S.E.A.) be expanded to such a level that integrating schools truly have sufficient resources to give communities a sense that their schools are being enhanced as well as desegregated.



The school desegregation attempts in the North in the last few years have too often been brought under unhappy circumstances, frightened leadership and community opinion, inadequate expertise and insufficient attention to the educational and community relations problems resulting from desegregation. Adoption of the foregoing programs would contribute to solving some of these problems.

When this is done, we will have taken a major step on the road towards rebuilding community sense that American public schools are valuable, that they serve all of the public and that they deserve stronger public support from all of our people.

MEMBERS OF THE SPECIAL INTEGRATION TASK FORCE

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## SUMMARY OF A.J.C. POSITION ON SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

### I - Busing:

- A - Neighborhood schools are generally desirable in the early grades, but their preservation must not become a rigid and unyielding principle. Problems of distance are not as crucial when older children are involved. High school populations should be integrated on a city-wide basis, as far as possible.

Schools should be made more heterogeneous by redrawing attendance zones and strategically locating new schools.

### II - Programming for excellence:

- A - Sufficient local, state, and federal funding for transportation and to offer quality education must be provided.
- B - Provisions must be made to secure physical safety in a positive human relations environment.
- C - Meaningful and challenging programs for all students - gifted, educationally disadvantaged and those in the middle should be introduced. This should include the availability of appropriate remedial and guidance services.
- D - Inter and intra group school and community relations workshops for parents, teachers and students should be utilized.

### III - Strategies for meaningful planning:

- A - There should be firm commitment on the part of local authorities where there is a court order. The opposition of school board members and other city officials can only serve to encourage public opposition to any subsequent plans that are developed and lead to further intergroup tensions.
- B - Civic, church, parent, teacher and community groups representing all ethnic groups should be involved by the proper authorities in the planning process, wherever possible, so that their experience, concerns and special



knowledge of the needs of their community are reflected in any plan.

- C - A strategy to obtain public support for the plan should be developed by school authorities prior to release of specific details. Special note should be made to gains in quality education, reduced class size, addition of specialists, change in curricula, etc., that will be included. Since any plan will generate some opposition, over-all strategy for building support, meeting opposition and making appropriate modifications after public consultation should be built in.
- D - Cooperation with all news media should be sought for coverage that will be factual, complete and designed to encourage calm, reasonable and informed discussion of the issues.

IV - What to do when schools cannot be integrated:

- A - When the density of any disadvantaged group is so great that no reasonable measures can be expected to correct imbalance, emphasis must be placed on intensive supportive programs, e.g. appropriate teacher-training and retraining, expansion of pre-school classes, intensive reading courses, tutoring and study centers, vocational guidance, social services and on-going liaison with parents.
- B - Techniques that can provide integrated experiences should be used; e.g. joint use of community educational, cultural and industrial facilities with joint planning and follow-through; paired classes in schools with enrollments of children with different racial and ethnic backgrounds; and organization of special central facilities to serve a number of schools.

Education is only one part of the problem of integration. Simultaneous efforts must be made to obtain equal opportunities in housing and employment in order to meet the needs of all our citizenry.

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M. Braveman



# Heritage

The Newsletter of the Illinois Consultation on Ethnicity in Education

ICBE

## New approaches to student behavior help reduce ethnic tension in schools

by Philip Franchine

In the 1950s, old line integrationists thought that if members of ethnic, racial and religious groups were mixed together, they would naturally work out their differences and eliminate such problems as bigotry and prejudice. And if mixing were to occur naturally, it would work even more smoothly in the suburbs, where higher income and education levels would lead to greater tolerance.

Unfortunately, it hasn't worked out that way. For example: —Last year, three youths from Chicago's affluent North Shore suburbs conducted a vicious anti-Semitic mail campaign against a Jewish businessman. One of the three characterized himself as a prankster, in a vain attempt to downplay the seriousness of the acts, which netted him a felony conviction.

—The *Chicago Reporter* has documented disturbing racial tensions at Evanston Township High School, which has long had a reputation for solid academics and peaceful race relations.

—In New York, the election of an all-Jewish student government in an ethnically diverse Long Island high school triggered the formation of a Nazi party, complete with uniforms and other authentic symbols.

—Nationally, studies conducted by the American Jewish Committee (AJC), the NAACP and the Anti Defamation League of B'nai B'rith have all found, for the first time in a generation, that teenagers today are less tolerant than those surveyed a few years ago. Although the figures show only a slight increase in bigotry, they nevertheless mark an end to twenty years of steady progress against prejudice.

"The communities which have undergone these incidents have been turned upside down by them," says Irving Levine, an ethnic expert and national director of the AJC's Institute on Pluralism and Group Identity. "Victimized groups, especially Jews, are angry and are demanding action from law enforcement officials."

Police departments and prosecutors on Long Island have taken a hard line against offenders, pressing serious charges and deploying specialists with community relations skills. New York City has an ethnic crimes squad, and under a new law, California has issued stiffer penalties for felonies in which prejudice was a motive. Illinois passed an "ethnic intimidation" law in 1982, covering assault, trespassing and graffiti.

Have we hit bottom? Are we doomed to increasing hostility between groups and acting-out behavior against ethnic groups and national or religious symbols?

No, say Irving Levine and Joe Giordano, two AJC ethnic experts who have consulted with Long Island school and community officials in reducing tensions in several towns. "Animal House slurs"

Levine and Giordano blame "the Animal House and National Lampoon type of crude ethnic slurs" conveyed by entertainment media for helping create a climate which condones anti-ethnic expressions. In addition, while law enforcement authorities have been responding well after the fact, school officials should be doing more to practice prevention.

"Administrators are powerless in facing this kind of behavior and in dealing effectively with other ethnic issues," says Levine.

"Many educators insist that problems spring exclusively from economic class or race, but not from ethnicity, religion, and so on," says Levine, who maintains that all can play a part in group conflict. "The kids interpret faculty confusion over ethnic identity or repression of ethnic identity as license to abuse symbols of ethnicity," says Levine, who was appalled at the passivity of teachers who allowed ethnic slurs and name-calling to go unchecked in the halls and classrooms.

In devising remedies to the problems, the two used community organizing approaches. One of their first priorities is to assuage the guilt feelings suffered by many teachers and administrators. They met with

small groups of teachers, selected by the administration, and with students who were selected by the teachers. The students then identified other participants, looking for natural leaders with existing or potential leadership skills. This method screened out the "noodniks" who always volunteer, loudmouths seeking a forum, and established leaders who lack diplomacy.

### Images and attitudes

"We asked the students to talk about their images as (variously) jocks, greasers, JAPs [Jewish American Prince or Princesses] and so on. We asked teachers, in separate groups, to talk about their attitudes toward ethnicity—their own and others," says Levine.

Students and teachers alike were shocked at how much they learned about long-time colleagues or classmates. Fears, misconceptions, self-images and other attitudes based on ethnicity had not withered away in moving to the suburbs.

For example, many Jewish students resented the image of being wealthy, and emphasized how poor their grandparents had been when they came to America. At one school, Black students resented the exclusive negative image which one lounge, dubbed the "Black lounge", had developed. Students confirmed that participation in many extracurricular activities was divided according to ethnic patterns.

Students identified themselves variously as Black, white ethnic, Hispanic, rich, poor, middle class, Jewish, members of single parents families, immigrants, recent migrants from the city to the suburbs, and so on. The new immigrants and the recent migrants complained of loneliness.

(Continued on page 12)

Levine and Giordano plan to detail their work and its results in a manual being published by the Institute in late 1982. Copies will be available writing IPGI, American Jewish Committee, 165 E. 56th St., New York, NY 10022.



## Ethnic tension. . .

(Continued from page 3)

The results of all this talking? "Thus far the kids have formed or encouraged existing theater groups to perform plays with positive intergroup themes, Raisin in the Sun, the Diary of Anne Frank, and so on. They've organized clubs that promote better relations, and in one school they created and sold books with intergroup themes," says Levine. In one school the Black students drafted a teacher to help plan activities in the "Black Lounge" which would showcase Black accomplishments to the rest of the school.

"Teachers have had their consciousness raised by such sessions and discovered that their own ambivalence about their ethnic identity made them weak role models for teenagers, who are trying to discover themselves. As they felt more comfortable with themselves, they also talked more naturally and became more active in stopping students from using bigoted

language," says Giordano.

During the course of the one-year program in schools with which they consulted, Levine and Giordano trained the core group of teachers to lead student discussions of inter-ethnic conflicts and to reward healthy intergroup relations. In order to avoid empty intellectualizing, they deliberately delayed discussion of curricula until after the discussion groups were well under way. Once teachers personalized the issues they had a wealth of suggestions for using social studies, English, drama, music and art classes, as well as sports and clubs, for improving intergroup relations. Giordano says that studying the Holocaust or the Black experience in America can be helpful because such studies "change the climate of the school, by raising the consciousness of the students and lowering the barriers to talking about such problems."

The program works because "we create an atmosphere where ethnic sharing puts many funny and heartwarming anecdotes on the table. This opens the group up to deeper problems which have usually been covered up. Solutions are discussed in an atmosphere of trust. The progress in group relations made in the room then give participants confidence that they can do what they have already done for themselves," says Levine. In addition, the students participating get credit for it and meet on a regular schedule. What Levine and Giordano find encouraging is that many of the students are natural bridge builders among groups—they have a healthy curiosity about those different than themselves, and find ways to cooperate with them. Until crises erupted and consultants were brought in, these students were not given systematic rewards for intergroup relations.

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"Deck the Halls," "Hanukkah," "White Christmas," "Let It Snow," "Jingle Bells," "Dreydl, Dreydl," and other seasonal songs. Folksongs, non-religious classical music, opera, even certain rock selections are appropriate. The ultimate test of a selection should be its musical value.

4. A sensitive and responsible individual should be assigned to check program notes and illustrations to make sure they are not religious or sectarian.

5. Decorations and banners should not include expressly religious themes, such as creches, or "The Three Wise Men," or slogans such as "Put Christ back in Christmas."

6. It is preferable that Christmas trees be placed in a common area, rather than in each classroom. An inordinate amount of class or assembly time should not be devoted to making or hanging decorations.

7. If a Hanukkah menorah is included, it should be viewed in its secular aspects, and explained as a symbol of victory over oppression.

8. In general, school administrators and teachers should be alert to the feelings and rights of all students, particularly in the sensitive area of religious belief. It is far wiser and more thoughtful to schedule speakers, plays and songs that all can enjoy than to sanction activities that can create lasting divisions in the classroom.

### In the Classroom

1. Teachers should avoid singling out students who do not take part in the celebrations on religious grounds. Even a benign statement to a pupil such as "You may not feel like participating" or an announcement that those who are not Christian have the right to be excused can make those students feel like outsiders. If a child asks not to take part in a Christmas program for religious reasons, he or she should receive an understanding and sensitive response.

2. Students should not be asked to explain their religious beliefs. On the other hand, if one offers to do so, his or her explanation should be treated courteously and respectfully, and should not be challenged.

3. Teachers should not include inherently religious symbols in their Christmas programs. But if a student brings such an object to "Show and Tell," he or she should not be stopped from exhibiting it.

4. Teachers should avoid assigning such essays as "What Christmas Means to Me," or other themes that encourage personal religious expression.

## THE DECEMBER DILEMMA

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THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE



should guide every aspect of school programs and activities in this area. School boards, principals and teachers can help ease the painful dilemmas by developing holiday programs that are not devotional and in which children of all faiths can join without feeling that they are betraying their own beliefs. Parents, religious leaders, community groups and professionals in the fields of music, art and drama can be valuable resources in planning such programs. Their advice may help to anticipate and avoid problems. Here are some suggested guidelines to help in this effort.

#### The Law of the Land

1. The First Amendment to the Constitution and U.S. Supreme Court rulings bar organized prayer and bible reading in American public schools. Also, school Christmas celebrations may not include organized prayer or bible readings, or the performance of hymns, or other religious music in a religious context. However, the Court has let stand school-board rules permitting the observance of holidays with both a secular and a religious basis "in a prudent and objective manner," and the use of religious symbols, art and music as teaching aids.

2. The same rules apply to taking note of the holidays of other faiths. For example, many schools include the Jewish holiday of Hanukkah as part of their programs. When this happens, the

same care and attention must be given to assuring that the secular aspects of the celebration dominate.

3. The Supreme Court has ruled that the Constitution does not prohibit teaching about religion in an objective manner. Indeed, certain aspects of history, literature, art and music cannot be taught without reference to religion. Teaching the role of religion in relation to these subjects is quite different from teaching the precepts of a religion.

#### In the School at Large

1. Holiday celebrations should not intrude unduly on academic time. In some parts of the country, schoolwide and classroom Christmas activities begin in October or early November and permeate the school atmosphere for too long a time.

2. School and class plays and performances should be selected carefully. Overtly religious dramas and church-like scenery should be avoided.

3. A special effort should be made to see that religious music does not entirely dominate the selection of music for Christmas programming. Some schools have shifted from a "Christmas Concert" to a "Winter Concert" to encourage a wider range of musical offerings. Instead of such carols as "Oh Come All Ye Faithful," "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" and other religious hymns, classroom songs can include

CELEBRATION of Christmas is so widespread and contains so many secular aspects that it is easy to lose sight of the fact that it is first and foremost a religious celebration incorporating the most basic tenets of the Christian faith.

Millions of Americans are not Christian and are free to practice and believe whatever faith they profess. Yet, each December, in public schools around the country non-Christian children find they often must take part in plays, songs and games that celebrate religious beliefs alien to their own faith, or separate themselves from their classmates and their teachers by refusing to share in the festivities.

Their parents frequently ask that programs be changed or, in some cases, that celebrations be banned. This is deeply resented by Christian children and teachers.

Common sense and sensitivity