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The Kanawha County Textbook Controversy

Background

The Public Schools

The Kanawha County School System has a student population of approximately 46,000, giving it the largest enrollment of any school district in the state. The system employs a total instructional staff of 2500, 2200 of whom are classroom teachers. The system contains 89 elementary, 33 junior and senior high schools, and two vocational high schools, spread over a land area of 907 square miles. ...

The Divided Community

The West Virginia State law, which organizes the counties of the state as school districts, creates a special problem for Kanawha County. Coupled with the power and influence of a city, which is the state capital, are the rural areas of the county which we often identify as hollows. For many of the people who live outside the city limits, there is a sense of powerlessness born in the absence of an adequate voice to influence the decision-making process. It is more than an economic or cultural gap. It is a feeling of being voiceless and powerless. For some, the textbooks became a trumpet for voiceless people, and

the protest became an instrument in the hand of powerless people.

Statement to NEA Panel by
Bishop D. Frederick Wertz,

The United Methodist Church, Charleston

The entire county of Kanawha is designated by the U.S. Bureau of Census as a Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area, with Charleston as its urban center. But the Appalachian hills and hollows of the county—with their small country towns and general stores, subsistence hillside farms, sectarian churches, coal camps and winding bumpy roads—are as far different in terrain and cultural character from a standard metropolitan area as Appalachia itself is different from the Eastern Seaboard.

It has been the people in these rural areas of the country, led by fundamentalist ministers, who have given the anti-book movement its greatest fervor and commitment and who have been the most devoted followers of the Board of Education member who first challenged the language and philosophy of the books.

And, it has been the clash of long conflicting cultural and religious values, primarily between urban and rural Kanawha County, that has sparked the textbook controversy and given it the character of a religious war—a war, as one journalist described it, “between people who depend

on books and people who depend on the Book." The lines, of course, cannot be clearly drawn between the urban and rural citizens. There are citizens of Charleston, retaining the values of their mountain heritage, who oppose the books; and there are rural residents who support them.

The critical problem that the textbook dispute has surfaced, however, is this: The Kanawha County Public School System has the responsibility for providing a "quality" education to students who come from two culturally polarized communities--communities that may be only miles apart in distance, but which are light-years apart in values, beliefs, and in what they consider to be a "qualify" education.

The Mountain Heritage

In order to understand the many-layered complexities underlying the textbook issue in Kanawha County, it is necessary to understand something of the traditions and beliefs of the people who live in its rural mountains and valleys.

They, like the people of other Southern Mountain regions, have been the subject of exhaustive sociological research. They have been the object of derogatory and tasteless humor, and they have been the victims of exploitation.

Their powerlessness is a fact of history--a consequence, in part, of the mountain fastness of the Appalachian region itself and in part a legacy from their ancestors, the region's earliest settlers. Primarily Scotch-Irish in origin, these first Southern Highlanders came to this country during the 18th Century to escape what they considered the oppressiveness and broken promises of the British Crown--only to find in the colonies along the eastern coast a society very similar to the one they had fled. Seeking freedom from the restraints of a

government with which they had no sympathy, they became the frontiersmen, leading the way westward through the Cumberland Gap into Kentucky, down the New River over into the Kanawha, into West Virginia, and down the Ohio River into Ohio and Kentucky.

In the narrow Appalachian valleys they found an ideal refuge--a place to be free from hostile authority. The steep mountains surrounding each small valley isolated the settlements even from each other. Their isolation, and the hardships of survival in this rugged land instilled in the settlers values that adhere today--a profound dependence upon family, an independence of spirit, a sense of fatalism in facing whatever misfortunes might come, a sense of humor making it possible to endure those misfortunes, and a deep belief in religion that promised salvation to the repentant sinner and a better life in the hereafter.

One has to understand the religion of the mountaineer before he can understand mountaineers. In the beginning we were Presbyterians, Episcopalians and other formally organized denominations, but these churches required an educated clergy and centralized organization, impractical requirements in the wilderness, and so locally autonomous sects grew up. These individualistic churches stressed the fundamentals of the faith and depended on local resources and leadership.

Many social reformers ... view the local sect churches as a hindrance to social progress. What they fail to see is that it was the church which helped sustain us and made life worth living in grim situations. Religion shaped our lives, but at the same time we shaped our religion. Culture and religion are intertwined. The life on the frontier did not allow for an optimistic social gospel.

One was lucky if he endured. Hard work did not bring a sure reward. Therefore the

religion became fatalistic and stressed rewards in another life. The important thing was to get religion-get saved-which meant accepting Jesus as one's personal savior. It was and is a realistic religion which fitted a realistic people. It is based on belief in the Original Sin, that man is fallible, that he will fail, does fail. We mountaineers readily see that the human tragedy is this, that man sees so clearly what he should do and what he should not do and yet he fails so consistently ... There is strong belief in the Golden Rule. These beliefs, and variations on them, have sustained us, have given our lives meaning and have helped us to rationalize our lack of material success. Every group of people must have meaning in their lives, must believe in themselves. Religion helps to make this belief possible. There are few Appalachian atheists. ...

As the population grew and as rains eroded the hillside farms, life became more difficult, and productive soil-"new ground."-became increasingly scarce. Even scarcer was something they did not miss-education. There was, after all, no apparent need for it in the insular self-sufficiency of their lives. But, in many parts of the mountains, church groups established the first schools and staffed and supported them for years.

During the late 1800's, the rapidly industrializing nation became aware of the immense natural resource storehouse of the Appalachian region; and some of the freely enterprising speculators of the time began, with absurd ease, to gain control of these resources from the uneducated, unmonied mountaineers. They purchased the land outright; they purchased vast stands of virgin timber (trees eight feet in diameter would go for a dollar apiece); and they purchased broad form mineral deeds, giving them the right to extract all minerals from the ground, to use any timber and to construct access roads at any convenient

place-in short, to do whatever was necessary to expedite removal of the desired resources.

From the beginning, the coal and timber companies insisted on keeping all, or nearly all, the wealth they produced. They were unwilling to plow more than a tiny part of the money they earned back into schools, libraries, health facilities and other institutions essential to a balanced, pleasant, productive and civilized society. The knowledge and guile of their managers enabled them to corrupt and cozen all too many of the region's elected public officials and to thwart the legitimate aspirations of the people. The greed and cunning of the coal magnates left behind an agglomeration of misery for a people who can boast few of the facilities deemed indispensable to life in more sophisticated areas, and even these few are inadequate and of inferior quality.

Today's People of Rural Kanawha County

No longer is the economy of Kanawha County so heavily dependent as it was on the boom-and-bust coal mining industry. Today, less than 25 percent of the county's rural labor force works in the mines. As the site of the state's foremost commercial and industrial center, Kanawha County offers diversified job opportunities in its vast petrochemical plants; in glass and glass-product manufacturing; in machine tool, mining equipment, wood and clay products industries, in construction; and in service occupations.

The median family income in rural Kanawha County households is \$7,381, compared to \$6,689 for rural areas of the entire Appalachian Region, and \$6,604 for all rural West Virginia. This is not to say that poverty has been conquered in the hills and hollows of Kanawha County, but there is

less of it here than in other rural areas of Appalachia or West Virginia. The people of this area have more material comforts, a higher level of education and better communications with each other and with the outside world than they have ever had before.

Most of them have easy access to the political and economic center of the state. One would assume then, that the time had come for some integration-or at least for peaceful co-existence-of the urban and rural cultures of Kanawha County. The outbreak of the textbook controversy, however, gives lie to such an assumption.

A Holy War?

We are very skeptical of what people want to do with us or to us, especially those that are in authority, because we've been put through the wringers of deceit by the courts, by the lawyers, by the Board of Education, and we just don't feel that we can jeopardize any more of our integrity to the likes of this. So we have decided to come together and stand together until the books are removed.

Statement to the NEA Panel by
Reverend Marvin Horan, spokesman for
Concerned Citizens of Kanawha County

I am a minister of the Pentecostal Church. The standards and articles of faith of our church rest completely in our belief that the Bible is the absolute, infallible Word of God. We do not intend to compromise our beliefs, nor do we intend to agree to go to Hell, even if the majority of the people vote to do so. This is not a situation where opposing views can be reconciled. As you well know, there are some things that are somewhat like night and day, darkness and light-they are beyond the point of reconciliation. There is no dusk or dawn or in between or neutral

zone. There is a line drawn and the people stand either to the right or to the left of it.

... This is the root of the problem. There is a line-a line that broadens with every passing day A vast vacuum has developed in our community Perhaps it was there to begin with and it took this controversy to reveal it.

Statement to the NEA Panel by
Reverend Lewis Harrah, Pastor of the
Church of Jesus Christ, North Charleston

For generations, a fundamentalist religious belief has given meaning to the mountain way of life and has given the mountain people the strength to withstand its hardships. For the most part, the hardships have been considerably lightened. But the improved living standards, the vastly increased communications and transportation systems now available to these people have brought an end to the independence and seclusion of their rural communities. Their once insular world has been invaded by the pressures, the frustrations and the moral questions of the contemporary outside world. Daily they have been informed of the revolutionary movements of the black people and other minority groups; the alienation of youth; the women's liberation movement; the anti-war movements; and the threatened moral breakdown of our nation as evidenced by the drug culture, the sexual permissiveness, and the pervasiveness of crime, not only in the streets but in the seats of government.

Thus, the religion that once served as a buffer against the physical hardships and discomforts now serves, just as essentially, as a bulwark against the psychological and social stresses of integration into the larger society

It is this unbending religion that has lent moral fervor to a protest that is only in part against the books and in part an expression of religious indignation. ...

Evolution of the Conflict

The Problem ... and the Power of Communications

A question that the NEA Panel asked of Kanawha County school personnel and other citizens, and a question that many of them still seemed to be asking of themselves, was why did it happen here? What provoked the controversy in Kanawha County in 1974 when the English Language Arts materials were adopted in much the same way that instructional materials have been adopted in previous years, and when several of the adoptions were, in fact, re-adoption of materials that have been used in previous years, without objection?

One answer, on which there seemed to be general agreement, was that for a number of years the school system has failed to communicate effectively with its diverse communities-most particularly with its rural communities-and to involve them sufficiently in the development of educational objectives and programs. The selection of textbooks, traditionally, has been a routine affair, previous boards of education having accepted without challenge the recommendations of the superintendent and textbook selection committees.

In prior years, some degree of community involvement in the textbook selection process has been maintained through lay citizen participation in a Curriculum Council. This council, however, was disbanded in early 1974; its members (25% of whom represented parents) were not involved with the 1974 English Language Arts adoption. The superintendent told the NEA Panel that the Council was dissolved with the intention of replacing it immediately with two Curriculum Councils-one internal, composed of educators; and the other external, composed entirely of par-

ents. He said this was not accomplished last year, primarily because the school administrative staff wanted to first establish the internal council, but failed to get the needed number of volunteers from within the school system. Thus, the entire plan was set aside temporarily. ...

But when the recommendations of this committee were made to the Board of Education in 1974, one member-an individual who had been elected to the Board in 1970 on an anti-sex education platform-did challenge and did communicate her concerns most effectively, to all who had reason to feel resentful of, or alienated from, the public school establishment.

The English Language Arts text and supplementary book recommendations-a product of hundreds of hours of volunteer work by the five-member Textbook Selection Committee and its elementary and secondary curriculum study subcommittees-were first submitted to the Board at its regular meeting on March 12, 1974, a meeting not attended by the Board member who would later challenge the recommendation. Following the March meeting, the books were displayed in the Kanawha County Public Library for examination by the public. (At the time, few members of the community took advantage of the opportunity to review the materials.) During this period, the books were also displayed in the Board of Education offices for examination by the Board members at their convenience.

Between May 16, 1974, when the Textbook Selection Committee attempted to present to the Board of Education the rationale for its recommendations, and June 27, when the Board was to make its final decision regarding purchase of the books, the Board member who had challenged the materials launched a communications campaign that would soon involve Kanawha County parents in their public schools as they had never been involved before. She

appeared frequently at meetings of church and community groups, informing them of her objections to the books, reading and circulating printed excerpts from the materials that she deemed offensive. She taped excerpts from a "listening library cassette" for advanced secondary students, which she then played back with her own commentary to her various audiences. This presentation was taped and copies sold for \$1.50 each, the money from the sale being used to purchase additional blank tapes, according to press reports.

Copies of the books were made available for examination by concerned citizens, and petitions were circulated to parents, churches and other groups, asking that materials be prohibited in the schools which:

Demean, encourage skepticism, or foster disbelief in the institutions of the United States of America and in Western civilization. We submit that among these institutions are the following:

The family unit emerges from the marriage of man and woman;

Belief in a Supernatural Being, or a power beyond ourselves, or a power beyond our comprehension;

The political system set forth in the Constitution of the United States of America;

The economic system commonly referred to as free enterprise where the exchange of goods and services is governed by the forces of supply and demand rather than a central governmental authority;

Respect for the laws of the Nation, the State, and its subdivisions and for the judicial system which administers those laws;

The history and heritage of this nation as the record of one of the noblest civilizations that has existed;

Respect for the property of others.

Advocate, suggest, or imply that traditional rules governing the grammar and vocabulary of the English language are not a proper and worthwhile subject for academic pursuit and do not, in fact, constitute the means by which well-educated people communicate most effectively.

Deal with religion in any manner-its beliefs, rituals or literature. Inasmuch as it has been held unconstitutional for a tax-supported school to promote religious belief, we hold that it is equally unconstitutional to promote religious disbelief. Further, since the denial of supernatural forces is in itself a form of religion, the promotion of agnosticism or nihilism must also be unconstitutional.

These petitions bearing 12,000 signatures, were presented to the Board of Education at the stormy meeting of June 27 when the members voted 3-2 to purchase all of the disputed materials except for eight supplemental texts.

At this same meeting, two additional motions regarding textbook selection were unanimously adopted:

That the administration develop a recommendation for the Board to consider at the July meeting to include a number of parents on future textbook selection committees.

That the advisory committee be composed of 75% parents, 25% teachers who would advise the second adoption committee made up of 75% teachers and 25% parents, who would make the actual recommendation to the Board for adoption. The Board would develop guidelines and the committees would work within these guidelines and the recommendations of the committee would be in the Board office thirty days before the recommended books will go on display in the public library.

Before the June 27 Board meeting, there had been public condemnation of the books

by 27 ministers; and the Executive Board of Kanawha County Council of Parents and Teachers had expressed opposition to the several volumes that its members had read. There had also been public endorsement of the books by the West Virginia Human Relations Commission, the Vice-President of the Charleston Branch of the NAACP, and by ten clergy.

Following the June 27 vote, various anti-textbook groups were formed; a minister leader of the protest announced plans for establishment of a private church school; and excerpted objectionable materials from the books were widely circulated. During the months of controversy, school personnel stated, out-of-context passages from secondary level materials have been represented as passages from elementary books; other materials-for example, sex education information from a junior high school library and excerpts from a copy of Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics* taken from a teacher's desk-have been portrayed as excerpts from the textbook adoptions

Escalation of Protest

It was not until school opened on September 3 that the full intensity of the protest became evident. During the first two weeks of September, the schools were boycotted and picketed. Picket lines went up around businesses, industrial plants and coal mines in the Upper Kanawha Valley. On September 4, an estimated 3,500 miners walked off the job on a wildcat strike, ostensibly in sympathy with the protesters. Local efforts to obtain assistance from the state police were unsuccessful. On September 7, a citizens group-the Kanawha Coalition for Quality Education-formed in support of the books. On September 10, the protesters shut down the city bus system; and on September 11, the Board voted to remove

the disputed books from the school system pending their examination by a Citizens Review Committee, to be composed of 18 members-three members appointed by each of the five Board members and three appointed by the Board-member elect, who would also chair the Review Committee.

This compromise on the part of the Board was at first accepted and then rejected by the protesters. The Board's move also prompted protests from the Kanawha County Education Association, the Schoolmaster's Club, and the Kanawha County Association of Classroom Teachers, who urged that teacher members be placed on the Review Committee and questioned the Board's right to remove the legally adopted books.

During the following weeks, public education in Kanawha County was halted by the politics of violent confrontation. There were exchanges of gunfire. School buses were shot at, cars and homes firebombed, anti-book picketers arrested and released. Schools were vandalized and dynamited. Between September 12 and 16, the Kanawha County Schools were closed, and all extracurricular activities canceled. At book protest rallies, dissension became evident among the ministers leading the anti-book movement, some of them urging continuance of the school boycott and others favoring a return to school and work. Demands were made for resignation of the superintendent cut and the three board members who had voted for the adoption of the books.

Appointments, Resignations, and Recommendations

All members of the Textbook Review Committee were appointed on September 24. But, on October 9, six members and one alternate-all of anti-book persuasion-withdrew from the committee and proceed-

ed to conduct their own textbook review, the product of which was to be a 500 page document recommending removal of 184 titles of the 254 titles they had been assigned to review.

On October 9, the President of the Board of Education, whose term would have expired on December 31, announced his early resignation. His resignation statement included the following comments:

“ . . . The other board members will remember that I opposed the action on September 12 to remove these books from the classrooms. I do not mean to criticize my associates for their action at that time. We were faced with a situation verging on anarchy. The complete removal from the classroom of what I believed to be good books was more than I could accept. I further believed that to capitulate to mob rule would only encourage such action in the future. I still believe that these are good textbooks. They are not anti-Christian and anti-American as many people would have you believe. In fact, our children have learned more about un-American and unchristian behavior in the past few weeks from some of the adult population than the schools could teach in 12 years. I personally believe that the books which were adopted should be restored to the classrooms as soon as possible and this dispute settled the American way-in the courts and the political arena rather than on the streets with mob rule and terrorism.”

The Board, on November 8, 1974, voted 4-1 to return all of the books back to the schools with . . . exceptions. . . .

On a 4-1 vote, the Board further adopted two additional motions:

That no student be required to use a book that is objectionable to that student's parents on either moral or religious grounds. The parents of each student shall have the opportunity to present a written signed statement to the principal of the

school, listing the books that are objectionable for that parent's child.

That no teacher is authorized to indoctrinate a student to follow either moral values or religious beliefs which are objectionable to either the student or the student's parents.

These decisions, although accepted by the teachers, and hailed by the press and most pro-textbook groups as a reasonable and responsible compromise, did not halt the protest. Anti-book rallies and marches continued; school buses were hit by gunshot blasts; a car owned by parents who continued to send their children to school was fire-bombed, the driver escaping injury only by leaping from the car; and protesters continued the pressure of phone treats to intimidate other parents to keep their children home from school.

On November 16, while attending a meeting with protest leaders that had been called by a Methodist Bishop who has acted as mediator to the conflict, the superintendent and three Board members were served with arrest warrants. The warrants, filed by the Upper Kanawha Valley Mayors Association, charged the school officials (including the other Board member, then out of town) with contributing to the delinquency of minors by permitting use of un-American and un-Christian textbooks. The men were released on bond after brief court appearances.

Guidelines and Procedures for Future Textbook Adoptions

By their action on November 21, 1974, the members of the Kanawha County Board of Education moved from a position of conciliation to one of near capitulation to the anti-textbook forces. On that date, the Board of Education adopted a set of guidelines for future textbook adoptions that, given the interpretation obviously meant

by their proponent-the anti-book Board member-would not only bar the disputed books from Kanawha County classrooms, but would proscribe the use of any language arts books, including *McGuffey's Readers*, and would permit very little learning.

At meetings in December 1974, the Board of Education reached a tentative agreement on a set of policies under which a proliferation of committees would be established, involving parents-not as advisors, but as censors-in the processes of textbook selection and adoption for the Kanawha County Public Schools. At the time of the NEA hearings in Charleston, Board members were announcing their appointments of lay citizens who would comprise 75% majorities on screening committees to review instructional materials to be selected in four subject areas-Social Studies, Music, Business Education and Home Economics-and to set aside any materials that, in their judgment, failed to meet satisfactorily the Board of Education guidelines for textbook adoption.

On December 12, 1974, the Kanawha Coalition for Quality Education issued a public statement urging the Board of Education to rescind the new guidelines and procedures for textbook adoption. But on that same day, the Board moved to refine and approve the new policies. Even this action failed to bring immediate peace to Kanawha County. The meeting of December 12 was heavily attended by citizens against the books, some of whom carried placards announcing "We are KKK members. Following the business portion of the meeting, the superintendent, the assistant superintendent, and two Board members were physically attacked by protesters. The newest member of the Board, according to press reports, was hit repeatedly and denounced by some protesters as "nigger lover, Jew lover and Hitler lover." The superintendent, in attempting to defend the Board member, was also

assaulted and sprayed with mace by a female member of the audience.

Peace-At What Price?

As this report is being written, an uneasy peace appears to have settled over Kanawha County. The Board member whose objections to the books first sparked the conflict has counseled her followers to "concentrate on what they have accomplished rather than dwell on new English and language arts textbooks. . . ."

Educational Consequences of the Conflict

Since the advent of this controversy, the English teachers and the subjects they teach have received the brunt of much of the ridicule stemming from the adoption of the English Language Arts texts. We have been called Communists, nigger lovers, professional elitists and pseudo-intellectuals.

Many opponents have said that the subject matter of today's English texts in the classes is more for a social studies class than an English class. The English teachers, both elementary and secondary, have become frustrated as to what materials to use in their classroom.

Many feel threatened and have been threatened in the outlying areas of the country. Many feel they are going to be attacked if they say the wrong thing in the classroom.

Statement to NEA Panel by
Richard Clendenin, President
Kanawha County Association of
Teachers of English

The atmosphere of terrorism that has surrounded public education in Kanawha County has, of course, had its most profound effect on the people most directly

involved in the educational process—the students, the teachers, and the administrators.

In those areas of the country where the protest movement has been most extreme, the processes of teaching and learning were literally halted for most of the first three months of school. The President of the KCACT, a high school teacher in one of those areas, told the Panel that there had been no more than two weeks out of the first twelve weeks of school that even half of the students in his school had been present. The students and educators who persisted in school attendance during those tumultuous weeks did so in the face of great personal risk and continuous harassment from protesters.

A Climate of Fear

At the time of the NEA hearings, school attendance was near normal, but, testimony indicated, the climate of fear within the schools still remained. The President of the Kanawha County Schoolmaster's Club stated:

The current climate for the professional approach to the task of education is poor. Teachers are afraid to use materials. They will not serve on textbook committees. They distrust the Central Office staff, the Board of Education and the community. They are afraid for their safety, peace of mind and even their jobs. Effective education is at a minimum in Kanawha County. We are holding school, but it is with a waiting attitude.

... Among the targets of parental objection has been the textbooks' use of open-ended questions to encourage independent thought and analysis on the part of the students. Parents have complained

that questions concerning the students' feelings, their experiences and their home life constitute an invasion of privacy. They have contended, also, that students should not be asked what they think or how they should behave; they should be told what to think and how to behave. In reaction to these complaints, the Panel was told, the time-worn exercise of *Show and Tell* has some teachers worried that they may be accused of probing into a child's psyche. ...

Educational Losses

By mid-December 1974, many schools had not yet received the books that the Board of Education, in its compromise decision of November 8, had voted to return. The process of their return had been slowed by the requirements of the Board's instruction that no student would be required to use any materials to which his or her parents objected. At the elementary level, the D.C. Heath *Communicating series*, selected as companion texts to the basic textbook adoption, had been placed in the school libraries—to be used by students only in the libraries, and then only with parental consent. This arrangement, one elementary principal said, “unduly restricts the rights of the principal and the faculty to organize and manage, in any practicable fashion, an effective instructional program in Language Arts. ...”

During the first few months of the controversy, the extent of educational loss at the secondary level was perhaps even more severe than in Kanawha County's elementary schools. The Board's directive required that secondary language arts teachers prepare a list of *all* adopted materials to be used in their classes to be sent home with the students in order that the parents could check the materials that they approved and disapproved for their children's use. Thus, for a

period of several months, the secondary schools were without any of the adopted instructional materials. ...

Educational Repression

Spokespersons for the educational and religious fundamentalists of Kanawha County have proposed that public education shall be a neutral zone, value-free and, therefore, incapable of giving offense to any cultural, racial, ethnic or religious group. Such a form of education never was, and never can be. There is no textbook in any area of literature-including the all-white *Dick and Jane* primer or the *McGuffey's Readers*-to which some individuals and groups might not take offense. Nor would it be possible for neutral or value-free education to be realized within the guidelines that the anti-textbook leaders have proposed and the Board of Education has approved for future textbook adoptions in the school system.

These guidelines as adopted by the Board of Education on November 21, 1974, require that:

- Textbooks for use in the classrooms of Kanawha County shall recognize the sanctity of the home and emphasize its importance as the basic unit of American society.
- Textbooks must not intrude into the privacy of students' homes by asking personal questions about the inner feelings or behavior of themselves or their parents by, direct question, statement or inference.
- Textbooks must not contain profanity.

- Textbooks must not encourage or promote racial hatred.
- Textbooks must encourage loyalty to the United States and the several states and emphasize the responsibilities of citizenship and the obligation to redress grievances through legal processes. Textbooks must not encourage sedition or revolution against our government or teach or imply that an alien form of government is superior.
- Textbooks shall teach the true history and heritage of the United States and of any other countries studied in the curriculum. Textbooks must not defame our nation's founders or misrepresent the ideals and causes for which they struggled and sacrificed.
- Textbooks used in the study of the English language shall teach that traditional rules of grammar are a worthwhile subject for academic pursuit and are essential for effective communication among English-speaking people.

The first of these guidelines-requiring textbooks to recognize the sanctity of the home-conveys a value that the Board of Education has directed the schools to impart. It is an admirable value, although some very admirable writings-including some the writings of Shakespeare and Dickens, and some portions of the Holy Bible-if taken out of context, might fail to meet this criterion.

There is, in fact, not one of the adopted guidelines that is value-free. Nor can there be any literature that is value-free, for literature contains ideas; and ideas concern

values. The only way in which a school system could approach neutrality would be to offer students a random multiplicity of literature and ideas and values, and permit them to select and read randomly with no guidance from teachers; and no one is proposing this.

It must be assumed then that the anti-text leaders in Kanawha County are equating a “neutral” education with an education that is simply non-controversial, according to their own values and traditions.

If the recently adopted guidelines were interpreted in the way that the Textbook Review Committee Splinter Group appears to have interpreted them in its review of the disputed texts, the enforcement of the guidelines would impose upon the public schools the task of indoctrinating students to one system of cultural and religious values, inflexible and unexamined.

Retention of the guidelines could prohibit future history texts from telling the true story of Watergate because that story might cause some students to question the superiority of our government to all others; and it

would surely, if told truly, contain profanity. Enforcement of these criteria could prevent history books from telling the true story of the black experience in this country, or how the West was won, because those stories might offend the dominant race in this nation, might defame the nation’s founders and might induce students to question the opportunity that the nation has provided for the redress of grievances through legal processes. The guidelines would undoubtedly exclude from any future textbooks the history of the present controversy in Kanawha County. . . .

The unwieldiness of the newly adopted procedures will seriously obstruct the task of textbook selection. But the most critical problem is this: Whatever the persuasion of the Board members, the procedures that they have approved will make censors of parents, will constitute an abdication of the Board’s legal obligation to maintain responsible control of the schools and will endanger-if not destroy-the atmosphere of free inquiry and the free exchange of ideas without which education cannot survive.