

## **Tomorrow's Students: Actions for Success**

Across the nation widespread disillusionment is evidenced by protesting parents and taxpayers over reported failures and mushrooming expenditures for education. They want more value from the billions of dollars that will be spent annually on elementary and secondary public school students. The “baby boom” is over, and there is a growing danger of a split between the American public and the school establishment. Their disgust is shown by the increasing votes against the spiraling funding for educational programs. The disgust is not unjustified; many of today's youth problems can be traced to faulty educational training: the massive decline in the basics, the increased juvenile violence and crime, and the rampant adolescent moral deterioration.

There are, however, practical solutions.

### **Educational Solutions**

Eliminate automatic advancement by providing a program of achievement promotion that will guarantee minimum competency for each grade.

Institute educational standards and a system of accountability for students and teachers that will ensure mastery of basics.

Adopt reasonable educational standards for high school graduation.

Use ability grouping for effective teaching.

Develop interesting and practical educational programs that will properly prepare students for their future.

### **Disciplinary Solutions**

Insist on proper student behavior so schools can maintain an effective learning atmosphere.

Utilize preventive teaching techniques to avoid discipline problems.

Give teachers the legal right to act *in loco parentis*, which includes the judicious use of corporal punishment.

Remove the few unruly youth who refuse to submit to proper authority.

Create a fair, firm, and loving atmosphere.

## **Racial Solutions**

Eliminate forced busing, which removes children from neighborhood schools.

Provide immediate remedial work to help students achieve rather than lower educational standards for non achievers.

Insist on quality education in a disciplined environment.

Provide the proven method of fundamental education that expects all children to learn and is beneficial for all races.

## **Moral Solutions**

Provide states the option to permit teachers to pray and to read the Bible in order to teach children that our national moral values are derived from faith in God.

Eliminate sensitivity training and programs that invade the privacy of children for the purpose of desensitizing them for humanistic resocialization.

Promote America's traditional and legal ethical standards in courses and textbooks instead of the immoral concepts of atheistic humanism.

The implementation of these solutions will revolutionize the educational system and the nation. Success can be achieved. However, the difficulty is that public schools are controlled by an entrenched group of progressive leaders who adhere to atheistic humanism as their educational philosophy. The largest group of signers of the 1973 Humanist Manifesto were university-level American educators who continue to perpetuate the progressive concepts of John Dewey. Many leading universities are dominated by these humanists who train the teachers; the teachers in turn propagate these progressive principles to students; and many students incorporate the principles in their life-styles. Instead of transmitting our historical traditional values, which the majority of Americans adhere to, educators subtly substitute their subversive programs to build a new social order.

## **Restrictive Regulations**

Many principals and teachers could have successful schools and classes, but regulations imposed by governmental and educational leaders forbid them to incorporate successful solutions. Dr. Richard Vetterli, commenting on the negative effects of government intrusion in

fundamental schools in Pasadena, says, "Because most federal education programs tend to promote progressive education and at the same time inhibit the freedom of the individual school districts through rules, orders, restrictions and regulations, fundamental educators look upon federal aid as counter-productive. The fundamental schools in the Pasadena Unified District reject federal funds outright."<sup>1</sup>

A 12-member panel of well-known scholars sponsored by an independent research foundation spent a year and a half researching American education. The diverse participants issued, "The report of the Task Force on Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Policy." They said:

Before putting forward our proposals for a new federal policy on elementary and secondary schooling, we think it useful to identify what has gone wrong. Why, despite spending more per student than every other advanced nation, is there a growing gap between the goals and achievements of our schools? . . .

All too often, though, the nature of federal intervention has been counterproductive, entailing heavy costs and undesirable consequences. Direct federal outlays accounted, at their peak, for less than 10 percent of total annual spending on the schools, but by resorting to compulsory regulation and mandated programs the federal government has swelled school bureaucracies, imposed dubious and expensive procedures, and forced state and local governments to reallocate substantial portions of their scarce revenues. What is more, its emphasis on promoting equality of opportunity in the public schools has meant a slighting of its commitment to educational quality. Thus, the federal government has not only had a pervasive influence on the spending of local school districts but has undoubtedly played a part in many of the other troubles of the schools.<sup>2</sup>

The disaster in many of New York City's schools is caused primarily by board of education rules. Students are automatically promoted without mastering the basics, teachers cannot properly discipline students, guidelines permit vulgar textbooks, and sex educators must be nonjudgmental on sexual vices. It is difficult to imagine leaders tolerating undisciplined atmospheres in their schools, but I have witnessed such schools. It is schools like these that produce masses of illiterate and

undisciplined youth. Also, humanistic textbooks and sex education classes have trained multitudes of youth to become immoral.

### **Private Schools**

Out of desperation, scores of parents have abandoned public schools. In the last decade public school enrollment fell 11 percent in the West, while private enrollment rose 19 percent; in the South, enrollment declined 6 percent, while private advanced 31 percent. Now one out of every eight students goes to private school. A top federal official estimates that a new private school opens every seven hours. In New Orleans, Buffalo, Providence, and Boston half of the school-age children have defected to private schools. When parents were asked in a *Newsweek* survey whether they ever considered sending their children to a private school, more than half said they did.<sup>3</sup> Many parents are so dismayed over the crime, drugs, vandalism, nondiscipline, lax academic standards, and immorality that they are willing to forsake free public education for private. One minister pointed out, "Schools have gone from religion-sponsored to non-religious, then to anti-religious."

The private school movement has been charged with racism. Yet black and Hispanic families account for 17 percent of the total Roman Catholic parochial enrollment, 13 percent of Lutheran school enrollment, and 9 percent of old-line independent school enrollment. From 80 to 90 percent of all private schools belong to the Council for American Private Education, which requires all member schools to be racially nondiscriminatory.<sup>4</sup>

Sociologist James S. Coleman created quite a stir in a government-sponsored report. His study of 58,728 sophomores and seniors in 1,016 high schools revealed that private schools do a better job of education than public schools. The results were still the same even when affluent family backgrounds were discounted. The achievements were due to tougher courses, lots of homework, and better discipline. The "greatest difference found in any aspect of school functioning between public and private schools was in the degree of discipline and order in the schools." Even though private schools have a lower percentage of blacks, Coleman maintained that in some respect private schools are less segregated than public ones.<sup>5</sup>

What aroused the ire of public school officials is that Coleman supported tuition tax credits for parents of students in private schools.

This arrangement, he claimed, would aid desegregation by allowing minorities to enter private schools. John C. Esty Jr., president of the National Association of Independent Schools, says, "In the past, many of us in private education have not advocated tuition tax credits, but now because more low- and middle-income families are turning to private schools, with resulting strains on family and schools' financial-aid resources, we are increasingly interested in new forms of support to equalize the right of families to choose what they deem the best education for their children." Esty notes that "twenty-seven percent of families with children in private schools have an income under \$15,000; the average cost per student per year is \$820—less than one-half the public school figure."<sup>6</sup>

Opponents of tax credits such as Albert Shanker, who heads the American Federation of Teachers, have warned that such aid would lead to the ruin of American Public education.<sup>7</sup> When Secretary of Education T. H. Bell was asked whether such aid would be a big blow to public schools, he replied, "I don't think so. I don't believe that the credits will be so massive that they're going to make an enormous difference in the family budget and cause a big exodus from the public schools. To have alternatives and to have some contrast and even friendly competition is a good thing."<sup>8</sup> Columnist James J. Kilpatrick puts the challenge squarely:

We lose sight of fundamentals. Why are we spending all this money anyhow? Our public purpose is not public education; our public purpose is education, period. The object of these vast expenditures is to raise our children to be responsible, literate, knowledgeable citizens, capable of making their way in an adult world. The mechanism by which this aim is achieved is immaterial.

In a free society, the people ought to have a right to buy any kind of schooling that will meet these goals. If the public schools serve the public purpose, fine. But to paraphrase the Founding Fathers, if the public school system is destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to abolish the existing system and to institute a new system that seems to them more likely to effect their desires. Diversity is generally to be preferred to regimentation, and voluntarism is superior to compulsion. As long as we impose "compulsory education," wise public policies should encourage a variety of choices.<sup>9</sup>

Opponents of private school education have other methods to close private schools—use legislation to overburden these schools in meeting state requirements for educators and buildings. However, private schools are resisting; they recognize that to license is to control, and control means being dominated by humanistic standards. One could understand these attacks if children were in dangerous buildings and receiving a defective education, but private schools with their “inferior” educational buildings and teachers are doing a better job teaching children than public institutions. Many of these schools are in churches, which cannot meet the enormous expenses that state-supported institutions receive from tax revenues. Furthermore, one wonders why these schools are safe for children on Sunday but unsafe on Monday.

To produce quality education Americans should permit a greater percentage of parents the option to put their children into private schools by providing vouchers or tax credits. At the same time, they should encourage educational leaders to restore our traditional value system for public schools. Our economic system allows competing forces to stimulate productivity, and the spirit of competition has brought Americans their high standard of living. Encouraging a public and private school system will apply that same beneficial pressure to stimulate both kinds of schools to be productive. Provided with vouchers or tax credits many poor and middleclass parents will also have the liberty to choose the schools they believe are most beneficial for their children. To avoid the unwarranted attack on separation of church and state, parents, not schools, should receive the tax credits or vouchers. Just as, during World War II and the Korean War, GI’s were given the option to attend secular or religious colleges, so should children today receive the same privilege? This aid did not bring ruin to public education.

It has been claimed that a dual school system will encourage children to be exploited in inferior private schools because of ignorant parents. But the fact that a few parents choose unwisely should be no reason to deny millions of other parents the freedom to choose their child’s school. Besides, how many children are now being ruined by public schools? In addition, a dual educational system will provide an incentive for public school leaders to implement necessary changes to provide quality and proper moral education for all pupils. When these educators begin to see frustrated parents removing their children to private schools because

of inadequate training, they will be forced to change or see a greater exodus.

## **A Time for Action**

A tempting solution has been proposed: a purely secular school and a parochial school system—but this is not the answer. Even if private school enrollment reaches 25 percent of the student population, we cannot allow the remaining 75 percent to be destroyed by progressive educators. America was founded upon a theistic value system, not a secular one. Public schools should promote a nonsectarian faith in God while leaving private schools free to teach sectarian beliefs. To this end there needs to be an infusion of new leaders to guide the schools properly and install successful programs. To incorporate such changes is extremely difficult; it will not be accomplished because problems have been exposed and solutions presented. Neither will change occur at the top, where educational leaders are ingrained with progressive concepts. Change must come from concerned parents, individuals, and organizations that will apply firm pressure on leaders to change or bring in new leaders with better programs.

Americans are concerned over the rapid deterioration of our society; but many are unaware that schools are a major source of this breakdown of the traditional national values. The shocking school conditions have been exposed and documented, and explicit solutions have been offered. The next step is action by concerned individuals. Militants, activists, and persons aiming to destroy our society have spoken. Now it is time for the silent majority to become an active force for those issues that have made our nation great. Looking back just a few years one can observe the deplorable decline of schools and nation, and the roots of havoc are spreading rapidly. We can no longer stand by and permit ourselves to become so weak that we are unable to resist the systematic destruction of the virtues and principles that formed our nation. The ruinous policies of the gargantuan humanistic educational system must be eliminated.

The moral disintegration of public education can be seen from a statement made 45 years ago by Elwood P. Cubberley, cited as the principal historian of American public education: It was the “settled conviction of our American people” that nothing “contributes so much to the moral uplift” and “to a higher civic virtue” as the public school system.<sup>10</sup> Who would dare say that today?

What is now transpiring is a minority of educational leaders are permitted to discriminate against the values of the majority of Americans. Constitutional lawyer William B. Ball, member of the New York, Pennsylvania, and United States Court bars, has appeared in numerous litigations producing landmark educational decisions. He says:

Look again at *Engel*. The prayer was the merest expression of theistic sentiment, which, even if persisted in, was not going to radically alter any child's life. Yet the twenty-two-word prayer is now unconstitutional. Compare that with such programs as MACOS or HEW's latest job, "The New Model Me. "These later programs go to the very vitals of a child's existence, probe into his family relationships, directly attack Christian values pertaining to many areas of morality, and are capable of severely disorienting a child psychologically. These programs have innumerable ramifications respecting a child's own privacy and familial privacy. Can we venture to say that a handful of people who didn't like Bible reading and praying have rights superior to other people who do not want their children's moral structure destroyed?"<sup>11</sup>

People who believe in our historical theistic culture must act. But if we are unwilling to fight for the right, we have no right to complain about the wrong; we deserve what we receive. Once ignorance could be blamed, but no longer. Swiss author Henri Frederic Amid said, "Truth is violated by falsehood, but it is outraged by silence." John A. Howard, president of Rockford College, has shown what happens when good men do nothing.

To a very great extent, the degeneration of public standards of conduct and the increasingly corruptive character of literary, artistic and dramatic works are simply the result of what the citizens tolerate without voicing their strong objections.

Like the small child who keeps going a little farther to see how much he can get away with, the pace setters of the news and entertainment industries seem impelled to reach deeper and deeper into the cesspools of sensationalism, animalism and degradation. Their success is only possible because of the tolerance of those who know better.<sup>12</sup>



## **Parental Rights**

Parents need to learn about their rights and then insist upon them to promote educational excellence. In many states parents have the right to visit their child's classrooms any time upon notification to the school office, to have their child excused from studying subjects or reading assigned books on religious, moral, or other reasonable grounds, to speak to local public school board meetings, and to appeal certain local school board decisions to higher state authorities. In all states parents have the right to examine all official school policies and to investigate research programs of the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation.<sup>13</sup>

Senator Orrin Hatch had an amendment (Public Law 95-561, Nov. 1, 1978) added to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act that applies to every public school receiving federal funds—that is, basically all schools: “No student shall be required, as part of any applicable program, to submit to psychiatric examination, testing, or treatment, or psychological examination, testing, or treatment . . . without the prior written consent of the parent.” This ban applies to “(1) political affiliations; (2) mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student or his family; (3) sex behavior and attitudes; (4) illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior; (5) critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships. . . .”<sup>14</sup> Parents now have the needed material to stop the few humanistic Peeping Toms in their psychodrama, role playing, sensitivity programs, touch therapy, and other psychological games. Schools failing to adhere to these restrictions would lose federal funds.

## **Persistent Action**

Individual parents will find it extremely difficult to change the system. Alone they often laugh at their puny efforts. But as concerned individuals unite, they can once again make America a nation of achievement, discipline, and morality. Disagreement will certainly exist among those favoring a fundamental approach to education. Yet if major concepts are accepted, we can bury our differences and band together to bring back excellence to our schools. It has been wisely said, “In essentials unity, in nonessentials charity.” The secret of success is unified parental pressure that demands action. There has been a small measure of success, but it needs to be multiplied in every community. It will take much more than an outcry of displeasure to effect a change; it will take time and sacrifice.

One must guard against permissive leaders who by their soft words and fair speeches claim all is well by seizing upon some molehill of gain and ignoring the mountains of failure. Some improvement is not enough. Our educational system needs a dramatic policy reversal. Many educators today are verbally against the term *permissiveness* because it has unpopular connotations. Nevertheless, their actions betray them; they still embrace permissive policies. Parents must insist on specific actions to alter the current educational deficiencies. Sadly, even if radical change does restructure the educational system, society must still pay for generations the damage done to inadequately trained children.

Though solutions are simple, it is extremely difficult to alter teachers, principals and administrators. Persons who endeavor to change schools must be willing to be called everything from far-right ultraconservatives to ignorant bigots suffering from sexual hangups. Parents should not be surprised when educators charge that their methods will set education back 100 years. Ignore the name-calling and ridicule. Let the shocking statistics tell their own story; facts cannot be refuted. We cannot let them embarrass us to silence.

*Magical Secrets for Creating Understanding* is a communications guide to show educators how to eliminate parental objections. The book is written in storybook fashion: A wise king and his tutors are having problems because some of the subjects have fallen under a spell. These are objecting parents; to deal with them four basic truths are presented:

- I. All persons are basically good and seek to learn and also grow in knowledge.
- II. Although persons are basically good, it is true that there are evil forces in the kingdom which influence them. Those forces seek to thwart education and to block communication.
- III. If an evil spell has befallen a person, the cardinal rule for breaking that spell is to recognize that the person is separate from the spell. . . .
- IV. To combat an evil spell and to allow the good within persons to emerge, a tutor must understand and exercise the principles of communication outlined in this volume.

The book lists various types of complaining individuals whom educators will encounter, then presents instructions in how to deal with their spell. Following are some excerpts:

“Sheriffs” are “overcome with righteous indignation” and speak with a “very authoritative tone.”

### **Antidote**

FOG. Fogging is a skill needed in many antidotes to spells. It is the ability to confuse a person acting antagonistically by refusing to argue a point. It is best done by agreeing either (a) in part; (b) in principle; (c) in predictions to the statements the person makes. *Sheriff*. “If things don’t improve, this whole school will fall apart!”

*Responder*: “I know there are things we could improve.”

If anger increases or shifts to another area of contention, you can be certain that this is a long-term spell. At this point:

Avoid this person, but make your exit politely OR develop instant telephone trouble. “Hello! Hello! I’m sorry. Can you hear that? Can you hear me! Something must have gone wrong with this line (louder each time). If you can still hear me, please call back in ten minutes.”

If anger persists, ask what they intend to accomplish with this visit/call. Then ask them to submit it in writing so that their message will not be misunderstood nor forgotten. This will clarify their thinking.

“Messengers” think “they are blessed with superior knowledge”; they desire to “enlighten tutors.”

### **Antidote**

Messengers quickly lose their way in a fog. Use the fogging technique to satisfy and short circuit the spell. If possible, especially if the spell seems to be one of long duration, put this person to work. The inconvenience of time and effort will frequently wipe out this or some variant of the “do-goody” class of spells. One wise tutor kept an on-going ad hoc committee just for persons falling under this spell. The committee would meet and try to enlighten one another until the spell faded.

“Dumb Spell Bugs” are confused and anxious individuals.

### **Antidote**

If confusion persists, tell the person that you, too, are sometimes confused on the particular matter. Then, promise to mail information that will clarify the situation. (This will get them out of the room or off the phone.)

“Loquacious Lecturers” are “able to pour forth incredible volumes of words.”

### **Antidote**

Put them on hold. When you come back on, shift the conversation by beginning with a statement of your own. In extreme cases, the only way to stop the flow of words is to create an instant emergency. “Oh, no! “The lights just went off! I’ll call you back!” Breathlessly take the number quickly and hang up.<sup>15</sup>

So, my dear parent, you are basically good; unfortunately, you have fallen under an evil spell because you do not like our sex education program or our humanistic literature program supporting violence, racism, lying, profanity, euthanasia, infanticide, pornography, prostitution, and homosexuality. We the educator by the art of skillful communication will endeavor to help you to separate your wicked spell from your basic goodness. It is all right for you to express your emotions—we understand how you feel; however, if you still persist in demanding a solution, we will have you write down your problem, get you off the phone by offering to mail information to clarify the situation, put you on a committee to divert your excess energy, confuse you by our fogging technique, or downright lie to get rid of you.

Because of tactics like these there is a danger that concerned parents will become discouraged and settle into defeatism because of encountering stubborn resistance; but parents must exert the same persistence as those forces destroying our schools and nation. We cannot surrender millions of public school children to atheistic humanism. We must resist becoming psychologically conditioned to accept undisciplined and immoral behavior. Schools were once disciplined and moral; there is no reason they cannot return to this condition.

The program of quality education is not one of instant success. It takes

time and diligent work to overcome failures of permissive education and to graduate literate and disciplined youth. First there needs to be a crash program to reform the early grades; here success can be quickly realized. As properly educated children move through the school system, the entire educational system will be transformed if standards are maintained. For children ruined by the permissive training, a disciplined program should be immediately implemented to break the syndrome of failure and to salvage as many as possible. Traditionally, public schools were firmly controlled by parents and local school boards; however, state and federal agencies, courts and professional organizations are increasingly controlling them. Fortunately, there is now a new emphasis on getting power back to local rule. Concerned individuals need to encourage such moves and to insist on quality education.

What action can be taken to restore quality education? As Eric Hoffer has said, "It is easy to be full of rage. It is not so easy to go to work and build something." In carrying your hammer, do not just knock—build. Many practical solutions have been offered; use the documented facts to build programs of success. Do not just be negative—be also positive. In being against permissiveness, progressive schools, rights without responsibility, situational ethics, infanticide, euthanasia, abortion, profane textbooks, immoral sex education, anti-Americanism, and atheistic humanism, be certain to stress the positive virtues of discipline, fundamental schools, human rights, honesty, parental respect, decent textbooks, moral purity, patriotism, and America's traditional theistic heritage.

There are public schools where children are receiving a good education. Support these schools. But be alert that there are individuals who want to bring in policies which destroy educational achievement. To promote quality education, elect officials who support sound policies. Write letters to your city and state leaders and members of Congress about issues detrimental to the wellbeing of children. Inform the public if your school or district is promoting programs that are alien to proper teaching or are promoting immorality. Send items to the press and concerned parent groups. Become aggressive and vocal about important issues and insist on an open educational atmosphere; educational leaders have built high walls of secrecy making it extremely difficult for concerned individuals to investigate their programs. Examine textbooks and insist that they be open to public review before purchase. Stress the illegality of the religion of humanism and programs that promote views violating state and local laws. Guard against invasion of student privacy, sensitivity training, and

programs for resocialization of children. Be involved in parent-teacher organizations and especially try to be elected to one of the 16,000 school boards. Endeavor to gain positions where you can influence positive actions. Refuse to become a rubber stamp of the humanistic status quo.\*

Do not let educators silence you by saying it is too expensive to incorporate these changes. The changes—implementing achievement promotion, ability grouping, interesting and practical educational programs, disciplined learning environment, neighborhood schools, programs that expect all children to learn, textbooks promoting decency and patriotism, and voluntary prayer and Bible reading—are not costly to put in place.

America needs a parental revolution to incorporate these changes. Not a revolution of violence, but a revolution to restore quality education. We need to beware of labeling every humanist a communist, even though humanism is a perfect tool for the destruction of our nation. Many teachers are unaware of the ramifications of their teaching methods; they have been trained in humanistic procedures and they continue to follow what they have been taught. Provide them with books and literature that exposes humanism; some teachers will change after being shown the full implications of their teaching methods.

### **Action by Educators**

There are teachers, principals, and administrators who believe in our theistic heritage and value system and are alarmed at the deterioration of our schools. Individually they often feel helpless to change the entrenched humanistic bureaucracy. Nevertheless, they need to speak out boldly for wholesome education and to oppose in every way possible the influence of humanism.

In a meeting with Christian educators I heard one teacher tell how she and another teacher decided they wanted to pray together before school hours. When they asked the principal's permission, he gave his approval. Then the principal told the two teachers to wait because of the pending Lubbock court case in which the ACLU challenged the right of high school students to organize a voluntary Bible discussion group. The teachers acquiesced and did not meet to pray. Unless Christian educators insist upon their rights to express their faith in God, every vestige of America's moral heritage will be removed from public education.

Many of today's educational problems occur because professors at the university level promote humanism. America needs professors to

raise intelligent voices in behalf of the ethical core values that promote national moral soundness. All educators, from elementary to university level, need to organize and become an effective instrument for positive education. United effort can have a powerful impact on the future of our nation; statements made by such educators can have a significant effect in combating the entrenched humanistic programs. Their actions will arouse strong opposition, but educators need to be courageous.

There is a national teacher organization that promotes positive values. Christian Educators Association, now called Christian Educators Association International, ([www.ceai.org](http://www.ceai.org)). It has members in each of the 50 states, and in many states local chapters in which educators meet to learn and to inspire others to uphold the moral principles that have shaped our nation. CEA has national and regional conventions, city-wide banquets, and a magazine, *Vision*, which has interesting articles for educators and parents.

This is CEA's stated philosophy:

It is the philosophy of Christian Educators Association of America that the Judeo-Christian ethic is the foundation and the heritage of our great country. Although we would like to see America turn to God and become a truly Christian nation, we do not advocate that Christianity should become a state religion.

America is a pluralistic society, with tolerance toward all religions and political views. *Tolerance* is the key word, not control. When any religion tries to control the government or schools, it is out of step with the laws and purposes of our country. This is precisely why the atheistic religion of humanism is illegal in our schools and government.

However, on the question of "whose religious moral values do we use to teach morality?" it is our philosophy and the heritage of our country, that those basic values are to be based upon Judeo-Christian principles. This philosophy says: there is but one God; there is right and wrong; every man is born with certain inalienable rights; children must be nurtured and taught moral truth before they can live a life of responsible actions; human life is sacred; sexual permissiveness is damaging and wrong; honesty is proper in all situations; stealing is always wrong; we must respect and honor God and our fellowman. This is the *Christian*



philosophy.

The philosophy of *secular humanism*, in direct contrast to Christianity, as written out in *The Humanist Manifesto I and II*, says that there is no God; there is no standard of right and wrong; all is situation ethics; man's rights are as each generation and each person sees them; there are no absolutes, so children do not need moral training, for morality is immoral; human life can be taken by suicide or euthanasia (medical elimination of the old or infirm). Humanism is not in the American tradition. It is a religion, not out of our tradition, held by only a handful and damaging to our children. We thus feel this philosophy must be opposed, and we are dedicated to eliminating its propagation within our public school systems.

Education is the glue that holds a democratic society together. When education is wrongfully used, as in the religion of humanism, it becomes self-destructive. CEA believes that public education is absolutely critical to maintaining America intact. Christian schools and all non-Christian private schools combined comprise only 10% of the student population. The church should not abandon the public schools because of the obvious evils of humanism—the church should join in the battle to change the schools by ridding them of humanism.

Christian teachers and Christian students should remain in the public schools and practice Christ's teaching to be the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the world." Christian parents should accept their personal responsibility to teach their own children the Bible and the Christian faith. The schools should teach our national heritage of Judeo-Christian morality and values. Gallup polls and United Press polls in 1982 claim that 97% of Americans believe in God. That means the humanists cannot claim them! Another Gallup poll in 1980 indicated that 170,000,000 Americans accept the morality of the Bible as man's only standard.

We hold that the beliefs of the vast majority of Americans and the heritage of the founding fathers should dictate the basic moral system of our nation's philosophy.<sup>16</sup>

Though there is at present a discernible disgust with the educational system, this new movement of stressing morality, standards, basics, discipline, and patriotism must be more than a backlash return to the "good



old days.” A mere nostalgia for the past will fail. Historic reinforcement is good, but there must be also pragmatic programs that project into the future. The unparalleled technological advancements of our modern society demand that education keep pace; programs must be innovative and experimental to prepare students for the future. Unfortunately, most experimental programs have implemented permissive humanistic concepts.

### **Intelligent Action**

Voting a tight pocketbook will not solve the educational crisis; while it proves frustration, education still needs funding to educate children properly. Jamming students into oversized classes hinders effective learning. Certainly, there are ways to save money, but blind budget slashing is not the answer.

One of the fastest ways to destroy educational reform is for furious individuals to make foolish demands. There must be intelligent action to restore proper educational procedures. It must be stressed—*be intelligent* in your demands. The crisis is very real. Be logical and factual; avoid nitpicking over every minor issue, or the entire emphasis on educational reform will be thwarted by causing legitimate complaints to go unheeded. Parents should present a positive image by endeavoring to help students, teachers, and administrators. Also, when educators *are* doing good work, let them know!

### **Successful Actions**

Mel and Norma Gabler, founders of Educational Research Analysts, fought many battles to secure proper textbooks and learned many valuable lessons. Following are excerpts from an article they wrote, “A Parent’s Guide to Textbook Review and Reform”:

The secret ingredient: Work. Parents need not be highly qualified, skilled or educated, but do need to know their subject. Closely related to work is persistence.

The essential time to protest objectionable books and to propose positive alternatives is before the texts are adopted and purchased. While books are under consideration for adoption, they should be available for citizen review.

It is at the adoption state that victories for positive education are more likely to be obtained.

Learn the textbook adoption procedures in your state and district. Become familiar with procedures concerning citizen participation.

Your thorough knowledge of the textbook is your best offensive weapon. Do not attempt to stop adoption of any book with which you are not personally familiar. Do not rely on hearsay. Obtain the book for yourself and verify what it contains.

One of the best ways to stay on the offensive when school officials try to place you on the defensive as an “emotionally overwrought” parent is to ask them if they have read the books thoroughly and to question them on content. If they have not read the book, or have done so only cursorily, they have clearly placed themselves in the absurd position of defending a text with which they are not personally familiar. The question then becomes obvious, “Is it your position with the school system that obligates you to defend this book rather than its actual merits?”

Never start with the worst of your objections, but save some of the most telling material for your rebuttal; thus your argument will not be anti-climactic.

Do not expect victory overnight. Be prepared to lose some battles. Remember that each time you will learn to be better the next time. Sometimes you make gains you know nothing about. It is evident that where parents have been persistent in exposing questionable content, publishers do not submit their more “mature” versions.

Seek out other concerned persons in your area for help. Numbers are important. Objecting parents are frequently told, “you are the only parent who has objected to this material.”

In dealing with school board members in particular, a low key approach is the most effective. Do not be hasty or rude with a school board member. If possible, have different parents contact each of the board members. Tell them you give them credit for having the interest of the children at heart.

One of the most essential steps toward textbook reform is to gain support from leaders in your community. Take the texts in question to as many community leaders as possible.

One effective means to focus attention is to purchase an ad in the local paper featuring quotes from the books. Also consider

going on audience participation programs, news or talk shows on TV or radio. An essential tool for dealing with the media is a press release.

Remember again that thorough knowledge of the text is your best offensive weapon.<sup>17</sup>

Here is how Marcia Sielaff of Peoria, Arizona, became involved in the struggle to change schools. "I discovered that our youngest son was not learning as he should. I knew there was a problem, but I wasn't really sure what it was. I wondered if my situation was unique. I spoke to other parents. I read all the articles on education in the media. I visited public schools; I visited private schools. I was looking for a school that would give our son the kind of education we wanted him to have. But, what kind of education was that? Suddenly, I had more questions than answers.

"At first, all I could figure out was that I was looking for a school that had a good phonic reading program and a classroom atmosphere conducive to learning. I found that the public school educators to whom I spoke couldn't be pinned down to answer specific questions. *Their words seemed to have meanings not in my dictionary.* . . .

"I spent a whole summer reading everything I could get my hands on about education. I made trips to the University. I talked to teachers. I wrote letters to the editor, and I answered letters to the editor. I found people who knew more than I who were willing to help me get information. I even took an in-service training course with the teachers from my district. I figured that if I could understand what teachers were being taught about teaching, I could understand what they were trying to accomplish in the classroom.

"I have a patient and long-suffering husband whose inclination, I'm sure, was to put his hand over my mouth because, wherever we went, in town or out, I would talk to people about their schools." Sielaff was a menace at weddings, social functions, and funerals. Finally, after all her searching she concluded that our educational system has switched tracks.

It was the progressive education movement, Sielaff discovered, that "took control of the Professional Associations and today, virtually runs the education show."<sup>18</sup> She started an organization called LITE (Let's Improve Today's Education) to provide information to parents that was not readily available through official sources. Parents obtained a phonics course of study in Arizona; authored a similar version of the Buckley

Privacy Amendment as a part of their Parents' Bill of Rights six months prior to the federal law; and opened the textbook selection process so that now educators must make textbooks available for parental review, have an open hearing, and include parents on textbook committees.

In Carlsbad, California, high school students taught fifth- and sixth-graders sex education under the guidance of a school district nurse. In order to learn about the teaching methods, about 150 parents gathered to watch a student peer teacher demonstration. There was a discussion over values:

“But we're not teaching values,” protested a teenager. “Nothing's right and nothing's wrong.”

“Don't you realize that, that in itself is a value?” asked a parent.

The course never mentioned the words *husband*, *wife*, or *marriage*; the terms *partner* and *the one you love* were used. Many parents opposed the teaching methodology of this sex education course because 16-year-old boys were teaching mixed classes of fifth- and sixth-grade children the facts about menstruation.

Initially, the peer teaching class was to be a health education class exposing the dangers of VD, but it was expanded. The nurse director was influenced greatly by Dr. Sidney Simon, professor of humanistic education at the University of Massachusetts. Dr. Simon frequently visited the area and actively supervised student peer teachers. In values clarification workshops he taught them that all values were of equal worth.

Christine A. Jones, a minister's wife, decided to find out more about this peer teaching class. She says, “Many of the students claimed to have undergone a personality or character change since joining the class. Observers at their demonstrations described the testimonies of these students as euphoric and religious like. Often a demonstration would begin with the district nurse asking one of the peer teachers his name. Then followed the question, ‘And how long have you been alive?’ The student would reply, ‘Two years,’ or whatever length of time he had been in the class.”

Six couples gathered to form a concerned parents group. They decided to use all legitimate channels in a gracious manner. Four major sex education objections and alternatives were formulated, and the material was presented to the Health and Safety Citizens Committee. They wanted educators to know that, though they had a right to their opinion, they did not have the authority to violate parental rights by undermining the values children were being taught at home. To be well prepared these

parents thoroughly researched values education, read hundreds of other articles and books, and contacted other parent groups engaged in fighting humanistic values. It was time-consuming, but in the end they knew their subject. Now when they spoke the opponents would have to respect the fact that they were knowledgeable.

Because of the interest generated, the Health and Safety Citizens Committee was expanded from 15 to 90 members. It included doctors and teachers who refused to acknowledge that abortion, homosexuality, and premarital sex were even undesirable. One mother said, "You have so little faith in the children's ability to make right and good choices!"

"We had to agree," Christine Jones said, "and it soon became evident that this was a basic issue that divided the committee. As Christians believing in man's sinful nature, we felt that children need guidelines. Many who did not profess to be Christians supported us, if only because they felt we had a more realistic viewpoint."

A few weeks later Christine Jones and her husband were called to meet the chairman of the school board, the district superintendent, and the high school principal. They were informed that the school district nurse was being transferred to elementary schools and would no longer supervise the peer teaching class. In addition, the Health and Safety Committee met and rewrote the health curriculum. Many conflicts were still unresolved, and on some of the issues compromises had to be made; nevertheless, a number of positive results were achieved. Though unsettled issues remain, parents are watching and teachers are more concerned over parental values. Mrs. Jones says, "The furor has diminished, but we will not lapse into indifference. Our children are too important for that."<sup>19</sup>

A Maryland family, aroused over what was transpiring in the schools, became an effective voice for better education. The father, Malcolm Lawrence, attended George Washington University and received his M.A. in government and economic policy; for 20 years he served as a diplomat for the United States foreign service. At present, Malcolm Lawrence is deputy special assistant to the secretary of state for narcotics matters and is listed in *Who's Who in Government*. His wife Jacqueline has spoken throughout the United States on the needs of education.

As a foreign-service family with nine children the Lawrences left the United States in 1958 for a ten-year duty in Europe. During this time their children attended schools in England, France, Germany, and Switzerland. The family retained the lofty principles of what it was to be an American and remembered the high ideals of American education. While serving

in the United States embassy in London, Jacqueline often spoke on “Education in America.”

In Switzerland, Malcolm was a commercial attaché, and he served as chairman of the board of the English-Speaking School of Bern, a school for business and diplomatic families. Both Malcolm and Jacqueline endeavored to promote the best of British and American educational systems by carefully selecting teachers and curriculum. Malcolm says, “The beauty of the school was that it worked. The children learned to read, write and compute; and nobody’s ethnic, nationalistic or religious toes were stepped on. Discipline was good, and the parents and students were content. The school did what it was supposed to do—impart a quality education, with plenty of homework in the process.”

When their term came to an end in 1968, the family returned to Montgomery County, Maryland, near Washington, D.C., one of the most affluent areas in the United States. “This was a rude awakening!” Malcolm relates. “The education of a decade earlier no longer existed. The schools had taken a drastic turn for the worse.” Malcolm reveals what they discovered in a thorough investigation of the schools:

We found discipline was ragged—student revolt was becoming a fashionable tool for destroying the schools. The school board was catering to weakness and succumbing to every whim of a permissive superintendent and demanding student body, and drug abuse was rampant in the schools. The curriculum and teaching methods had drastically changed. Unevaluated experimental innovations had begun to permeate the schools, crowding out the basics. To keep students “happy,” emphasis was shifting from what a child should know (cognitive) to how a child feels about things (affective). There was a loss of scholarly objectivity and academic freedom. Chronological factual history was being replaced by conceptualized social studies. Achievement scores were on the decline; the system was graduating functional illiterates.

We noted the introduction of open-ended, non-judgmental discussions based not on what was right or wrong, but on how students viewed such concepts as lying, cheating, stealing, and expression of human sexuality. Situation ethics and other tenets of the religion of Secular Humanism were invading the schools, with the children being told to consider all options of moral and ethical issues and “make up their own minds.” We felt that

community ethics and standards were being eroded and that the schools were actually contributing to the delinquency of minors. State bylaws and county regulations were being violated. The classroom materials invaded the privacy of the student and family. Teachers were rolling over and playing dead to the tunes of the new educationist. They complied with instructions to use such psychotherapeutic techniques as role playing, psychodrama and socio-drama. Without parental permission, teachers were assuming the role of clinicians and therapists—and our children were the patients.

Finding PTAs ineffectual, the Lawrences located other concerned parents and formed a group called Parents Who Care. They took the school system to court and filed a bill of complaint charging the school system with violating state bylaws and the U.S. Constitution. They called “for the removal of Family Life and Human Development curriculum, sensitivity training, selected humanistic social studies and other specified materials and practices that invade the privacy of the students and the home.” The judge decided that they must first appeal to the county and state school system. Finally, more than three years from the beginning of their state board hearings, they were able to present their final arguments.<sup>20</sup>

The Maryland state board of education evaluated the charges and recommendations of Parents Who Care. Malcolm Lawrence reports:

While we did not win all of our points, it is gratifying that the State Board of Education went along for the most part with five of our twelve recommendations. This is a good start toward guiding the education establishment down a more wholesome road.

In addition to the State Board rulings, during our five-year battle, the Montgomery County educators have been quietly withdrawing books, issuing internal instructions to staff and teachers, and rewriting curriculum and teachers' guides to avoid the problem areas raised by PARENTS WHO CARE. At long last the teachers are being made aware of the State and local regulations.<sup>21</sup>

Parents Who Care engaged in a long, difficult battle. Though they won some issues and lost others, what is encouraging is that they determined



to keep on pressing their demands. What will happen if communities around the nation follow suit? We will see education start to become what it should be.

While we as parents endeavor to promote positive values, we must train our own children and encourage them to stand for their convictions. Many times we parents do not want to create trouble for fear of the negative consequences our children will encounter. But confrontation of immoral issues is necessary even if it causes disturbances. Although your children may have to suffer for moral rightness, years later they will be proud that they took a stand with their parents for morality.

The silent majority needs a creative minority to stimulate the American people to action. Our nation needs leaders who will publicly declare their faith in God and the moral convictions that such faith produces. We need also a vast educational campaign to instruct Americans about the true nature of our government and its theistic heritage. For too long, theists have refrained from expressing their moral convictions in our national life. We must now arise in unison and press for the restoration of the value system proposed by our founding fathers. We cannot surrender our public schools to atheistic humanism.

Bill Freeman attended Southern Methodist University and Columbia University Teachers College, where his many liberal professors caused him to abandon his parents' faith and conservative upbringing. Freeman says, "There I was indoctrinated into the permissive philosophy of education and of life." At college he enjoyed the high grades he received, for teachers graded according to the progressive concept that the group had priority over the individual; the nebulous concepts of "group progress, social interaction and future potentialities" determined his grades.

As a teacher and principal in one of the better school systems in Austin, Texas, Freeman pioneered the way to change the curriculum. "I advocated the 'progressive' idea that writing, reading, and arithmetic should be integrated into the social studies program to let these basic skills more or less 'emerge.'"

He received his doctorate from the University of Texas. Then, while teaching at Austin College he told prospective teachers, "Teaching reading was secondary. Of first importance was the child's social development." Freeman tells how "another 'progressive' theory was that all teaching and learning should be fun, exciting, and made easy. If a lesson or skill was difficult, it should be carefully scrutinized because pupils should not be



daunted by hard problems.”

However, something happened—his two older children awakened him to the “world of evangelism.” He took a sabbatical and did a postdoctoral work at L’Abri in Switzerland. He studied and listened to tapes of Francis Schaeffer on the influence of humanism in our culture. “I could understand the truth of what they proclaimed,” notes Freeman, “because I had experienced directly or vicariously everything they said.” Freeman says, “At L’Abri I found intellectual reasons for believing in the biblical absolutes I had once been taught but had later taken lightly or dismissed entirely.” Freeman came to this conclusion:

Among all the religious and nonreligious philosophies of the world, none compares with the Christian philosophy centered in the teaching of Christ concerning the worth, potential, and responsibilities of each person. Without such a philosophy, parents, educators, and leaders in society often deteriorate in personhood.

I became specially aware of the results of permissiveness in the public schools. I came to see such problems as grade inflation, promotion for merely social reasons, laxity in discipline, lower academic standards, and general disrespect for people and property as reflections of our culture and its system of education.<sup>22</sup>

### **Men and Women of Action**

Restoring prayer and Bible reading will do much to return our nation to its moral strength, but this is just a part of the solution. America needs a total revitalization of its faith in all its institutions whereby parents, educators, businessmen, lawyers, political leaders, and ministers will translate God’s truths into the moral fabric of our schools and nation. As theists we need to fight the logics of futility and take leadership roles in giving moral direction to our nation. When the original 13 states were on the verge of disintegration, Benjamin Franklin called for prayer; as America travels the humanistic road to destruction, let us too call for national prayer to save our schools and nation. Then with prayer and faith in God let each one go forth as if the destiny of America hinged on our action.

America need not join the graveyard of nations after her 200 years. We have not reached the point of no return. But the implications of the future of America with humanism as its ideology are horrendous. Every American ought to feel a moral disgust at this atheistic social engineering

attempt to brainwash our children to become adherents to this new religion.

It has been said, “What you put into the school will appear in the life of the people of the next generation.” Let us provide our children with an education that is in keeping with the standards that have made our nation prosperous. Concerned Americans must act while they are strong. As we proceed, let us go with love and compassion for the youth of America. We should never forget the future distress these children will encounter because of the destructive effects of their inadequate educational and moral learning experience. We need to keep the children on our hearts as we patiently champion the cause for academic excellence, disciplined learning environment, racial progress, and moral wholeness.

Who will arise to call America back to her foundational strengths? The issues are clearly marked; the lines are drawn. Our action or inaction will determine America’s future. Let each one take the mantle of responsibility to transform American education into: Schools of Accomplishment: Training for Success.