

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairman Gene Shore at 3:30 p.m. on February 20, 1996 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Committee staff present: Ben Barrett, Legislative Research Department
Avis Swartzman, Revisor of Statutes
Dale Dennis, Department of Education
Beverly Renner, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Representative Joe Kejr
Janet Hammeke, Great Bend
Dr. Scott Waters, Emporia State University
Scott Hill, Abilene
Lloyd Hellman-Jewish Community Relations Bureau/American
Jewish Committee & Mainstream Coalition
Mark Tallman-Kansas Association of School Boards

Others attending: See attached list

Vice-Chairman Shore opened the hearing on **HB 2855**-concerning school districts, documents on American History, reading and posting authorized.

Representative Joe Kejr spoke as a proponent for **HB 2855** (Attachment 1). The "Truth in History" bill enables school district employees to display historically significant documents without fear of legal reprisal. Representative Kejr submitted a letter from the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association reinforcing the need for this legislation (Attachment 2).

Janet Hammeke, Great Bend, appeared in favor of **HB 2855** (Attachment 3). She expressed that exposure to founding documents helps students gain a sound knowledge of our past, and precludes the danger of losing our heritage. The Texas Education Agency has proposed revised course standards to reduce or eliminate coverage of important U.S. historical topics in favor of a more universal and socially acceptable approach. Many textbooks sold throughout the country are written to Texas standards. Also included in Ms. Hammeke's testimony was a brochure from The American Heritage Alliance about the bill (Attachment 4), an editorial from the October 10, 1995 Wichita Eagle supporting the bill (Attachment 5) and a letter from Specialty Research Associates, Inc. on standards for teaching American History (Attachment 6).

Dr. Scott Waters, Emporia State University, testified in approval of **HB 2855** (Attachment 7) as a social science teacher trainer. Dr. Waters expressed concern with teaching history today when less and less attention is assigned to our founding documents and less and less reference is made to our religious heritage. The result is students who are being given a distorted and incomplete view of history and students who are leaving our school with an inadequate understanding of U.S. History.

Scott Hill, Abilene, spoke on behalf of **HB 2855** (Attachment 8). Some educators have deemed the founding documents of our country as unnecessary. This bill allows the liberty to explore the wisdom of the past, rather than deprive students of the lessons of the past.

Vice-Chairman Shore closed the proponent hearing and opened the opponent hearing on **HB 2855**.

Lloyd Hellman, representing the Jewish Community Relations Bureau/American Jewish Committee, appeared in opposition to **HB 2855** (Attachment 9). There is currently no prohibition against discussing or posting any documents mentioned in the proposed bill so long as its purpose is civil and not directed at furthering sectarian religion.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, Room 519-S Statehouse, at 3:30 p.m.
on February 20, 1996.

Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards, spoke as an opponent to **HB 2855** (Attachment 10). School boards already have the authority to determine instructional programs, curriculum and teaching materials. The Legislature could accomplish the main purpose of this bill without raising additional questions by passing a resolution urging boards to promote the teaching of these important documents.

Vice-Chairman Shore closed the opponent hearing on **HB 2855**.

Because of the lateness of the hour, the hearing on **HB 2827** will be rescheduled.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:18 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 21, 1996.



TOPEKA

HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES

JOE KEJR
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COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS
 MEMBER: APPROPRIATIONS
 CHAIR: SUBCOMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURE
 AND NATURAL RESOURCES
 CHAIRMAN: JOINT COMMITTEE ON
 SPECIAL CLAIMS AGAINST THE STATE

Mr. Chairman, members of the education committee. I come before you in support of House Bill #2855 commonly known as the "Truth in History" bill.

The heritage of our country is based in a large part on our historical documents. It seems hard to believe that these documents, such as the Bill of Rights or the Declaration of Independence, do not enjoy a status that ensures that they can be displayed in classrooms across the State of Kansas. I feel that a great part of who we are as a state and a nation is reflected in these documents. I also feel that we need to insure that these foundations of our country have the opportunity to be displayed prominently in our education centers.

These thoughts have led me to introduce the "Truth in History Bill". This legislation takes steps to reintroduce our children to the rich heritage of our nation. In a nutshell it will enable school district employees to display historically significant documents without fear of legal reprisal. It is incredulous that legislation like this is even necessary, however if you have been in any classrooms lately, were there any copies of the United States Constitution on the walls? Upon investigation it becomes obvious that the necessity is there. This bill does not require, but rather gives teachers the opportunity to display the writings of our forefathers. These very documents are the foundations that men and women have believed in and fought and died for over the past two hundred plus years. It is the least that we as beneficiaries can do to treat them with the honor they so rightly deserve.

THIS BILL IS VERY SIMILAR TO THE ONE I INTRODUCED IN 1995, NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

- 1) The addition of Section C which prohibits content censorship of the historical documents.
- 2) The documents listed are:
 - 1-National Motto
 - 2-National Anthem
 - 3-Pledge of Allegiance
 - 4-Kansas Constitution
 - 5-Declaration of Independence
 - 6-United States Constitution
 - 7-Mayflower Compact
 - 8-Documents authored by Founding Fathers and Presidents
 - 9-Organic documents from the pre-Colonial, Colonial, Revolutionary, Federalist, and post-Federalist eras.
 - 10-Supreme Court decisions
 - 11-Acts of the United States Congress
- 3) This bill **does not require** but rather **encourages** posting of historical documents

House Education
 2/20/96
 Attachment 1

George Washington's
MOUNT VERNON
ESTATE & GARDENS

February 13, 1996

Chairman
House Education Committee
Legislature of the State of Kansas

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, the caretakers of the historic home of George Washington, I would like to express the Association's support of House Bill #2855, to have boards of education provide certificated employees the authority to read and post the great documents of American history.

Mount Vernon has conducted careful surveys of the textbooks used in classrooms today and has discovered that George Washington and the other Founding Fathers have been steadily disappearing from the study of our nation's history. To address this troubling deficiency, Mount Vernon educators have worked hand-in-glove with classroom teachers to develop an interactive George Washington Biography Lesson for elementary school students. To date, we have reached over 2.5 million schoolchildren, with over 90 percent of the teachers using the lesson plan. Clearly, America's teachers want to teach the story of our nation's founding, and it is impossible to do this effectively unless America's primary documents are a critical component of the lessons.

Washington himself presided over the Philadelphia Convention that framed the United States Constitution; he ordered that the Declaration of Independence be read aloud to the troops of the Continental Army as they stood ready to fight for liberty; and he gave us a Farewell Address that was a blueprint for America's success. These eloquent and groundbreaking documents carved order from chaos and, with reason and clarity, created a standard of freedom for all other nations to follow.

As the representative from the state of Kansas for the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, I urge you to reacquaint our children with the ideas of our founders. These documents articulate America's struggles and triumphs in a way that cannot be duplicated.

Respectfully,

Mrs. J. Craig McIlvain
Mrs. J. Craig McIlvain
Vice Regent for Kansas

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Proponent Testimony for H.B. 2855

By: Janet Hammeke, American Heritage Alliance
P. O. Box 1922, Great Bend, KS 67530

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee;

My name is Janet Hammeke representing the American Heritage Alliance. The American Heritage Alliance has been active in promoting this legislation, now H.B. 2855, since 1994 when it was first introduced by former Representative Bob Mead.

The purpose of the "Truth in History Bill" is to promote among students a knowledge and awareness of the writings and documents of our forefathers. We believe that exposure to these founding documents helps students gain a sound knowledge of our past, and preclude the danger of losing our heritage. The education of the next generation of our children must include a basic understanding of the historical foundations that formed this country.

This bill emphasizes the primary source documents of our historical past. According to a U.S. Dept. of Education study "many students are unaware of prominent people and seminal ideas and events that have shaped our past and created our present." To encourage students to read the actual founding documents is to keep an open mind about the past and the future. It is our conviction that history is best taught by history itself.

This bill specifically authorizes--though does not require--teachers and administrators to utilize documents or materials central to an accurate understanding of American history. Specifically authorizing the utilization of these documents actually safeguards the quality and accuracy of education itself. Going back to the primary source documents central to America's history will help to sort out any confusion as to what to teach. They are able to speak for themselves without any commentary or interpretation.

There are two growing trends all across the country today which bring concern and encouragement; The Texas Education Agency has proposed revised course standards (Essential Elements¹) for U.S. History. These revisions reduce or eliminate coverage of important U.S. historical topics in favor of a more universal and socially acceptable approach: The U.S. colonial period, U.S. political history, U.S. foreign relations, U.S. economic history of free enterprise, Anti-Federalists ratification arguments, principles that underlie the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights and all other amendments and the Declaration of Independence would be omitted requirements in place of Pre-Columbian Indian cultures, significant ethnic, racial entertainment and sports figures, traditions and customs among differed groups, protection of the environment and environmental issues. U.S. History teaching will be influenced nationwide. Why? Because textbooks written to Texas standards sell across the country.

This bill is in part a response to counteract this trend to compromise and endanger the accuracy of America's history. We are concerned most of all with the accurate portrayal of history being

¹The Texas Education Agency (TEA) for Texas State Board of Education approval of new 5th Grade U.S. History course standards 1993, Sept./Oct.

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Attachment 3

preserved. This bill encourages academic freedom and advancement of study and inquiry among students.

There is a growing trend also across the nation with state legislation to insure historical documents are kept before the students. In the last three years there have been approximately 23 to 25 states introducing similar "Truth in History" bills. Eight states have passed this legislation--Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, Arizona, West Virginia, Indiana, Florida and Utah.

I would like to summarize my testimony with a report from Robert Bryan, a trained historian and Ph.D. It is a re-examination of American history textbooks approved for use in the Montgomery County, Maryland, school system--a suburb of Washington, D.C.²

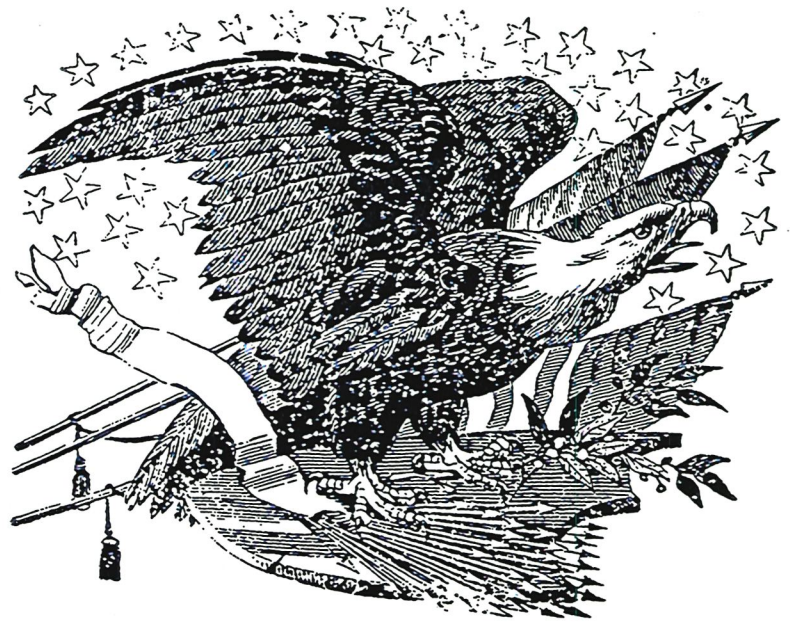
Bryan notes the importance of American history for high school students by pointing out that it is the only discipline in which students can actually have direct contact with scholarship. That is, math and science at the high school level primarily involve the learning of skills. English literature involves reading books, but usually this means the original story and not the tradition of literary interpretation and criticism. It is, as Bryan notes, in the study of history that students should encounter scholarship and reasoning. And it is here, in history, that the student should make serious contact with the primary goals of education. According to the Montgomery County school board, a primary goal of high school education is to acquaint the student with his or her "legal, moral, ethical, and cultural heritage." A work is not historical...if it fails to place the past in this context.

America's adoption of history textbooks that fail to give proper attention to primary sources is failing our students. We cannot understand the present or chart a course for the future without accurately understanding the past. This bill addresses this issue by encouraging the use of primary source documents central to America's history. We encourage you to give favorable consideration of H.B. 2855 to keep the academic avenue of historical documents open to students in Kansas schools. Thank-you

² Robert Bryan, *History, Pseudo-History, Anti-History* (Washington, D.C.: Learn, Inc. the Education Foundation, ca. 1984).

THE AMERICAN HERITAGE

ENDEAVORING
DIPLOMATICALLY
UNDER
CONSTITUTIONAL
ALLEGIANCE
TO
INSTILL
OUR
NATION'S DOCUMENTS



BILL

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: THE AMERICAN HERITAGE ALLIANCE
P.O. BOX 1922, GREAT BEND, KS. 67530 (316) 793-6704

House Education
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Attachment 4

The "American Heritage Education Bill"

Proposed Wording for the "American Heritage Education Bill":

AN ACT concerning school districts to allow boards of education to authorize certificated employees to read and post in any school building or classroom or at any school event, documents on American history: the national motto; the national anthem; the pledge of allegiance; the Kansas Constitution; the Declaration of Independence; the United States constitution; the Mayflower Compact; the writings, speeches, documents and proclamations of the Founding Fathers and the Presidents of the United States; Organic documents from the pre-Colonial, Colonial, Revolutionary, Federalist and post-Federalist eras; United States Supreme Court decisions; and Acts of the United States Congress. There shall be no exclusion thereof to American history in this state in the writings, documents and records described in subsection (a).

The state board of education is encouraged to distribute a copy of this act, immediately after the effective date thereof, to the board of education each school district in the state. The superintendent of each such school district is encouraged to distribute copies of the act to all certificated personnel of the school district. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its publication in the statute book.

Purpose of the "American Heritage Education Bill":

To promote among the students a knowledge and awareness of the writings and documents of our forefathers; to expose students to primary source documents and educate students concerning the importance of a reliance upon such documents to assemble a sound knowledge of our past; to give students a broader understanding of the foundation of America's form of government and many of her institutions and to provide a greater appreciation for why our government has been among the most successful and the most envied on earth; and to preclude the danger of losing our heritage by helping ensure that the education of the next generation of our children includes a basic understanding of the foundations of our common cultural heritage.

Why is the "American Heritage Education Bill" needed?

In 1988, the Department of Education announced: "Many students are unaware of prominent people and seminal ideas and events that have shaped our past and created our present"¹ (*American Education: Making It Work*, emphasis added). The Department of Education had cited the results of assessments of 17 year-old students, 80 percent of whom were enrolled in US. History/Civics classes at the time of their testing:

- One-fifth of the students could not identify George Washington as the commander of the Colonial forces during the Revolution;

- One-half failed to recognize Patrick Henry as the man who said "Give me liberty or give me death!":
- One-third did not know that the Declaration of Independence signaled the American Colonists' break from England;
- Forty percent could not say even approximately when the Constitution was written;
- Sixty percent did not know the purpose of the Federalist Papers;
- More than two-thirds did not know when the Civil War took place;
- More than seventy-five percent were unable to say within twenty years when Abraham Lincoln was President.

A systematic study examining ninety widely used elementary social studies texts, high school history texts, and elementary readers funded by the federal government through the National Institute of Education (NIE), a part of the Department of Education -- was directed by Dr. Paul C. Vitz of New York University. The final technical report--comprising some 680 pages of findings--was released in September 1985.² The study revealed a systematic omission from children's textbooks.

A total of 670 stories and articles from grades 3 and 6 were analyzed. The four criteria used to determine above variables accorded equitable treatment in the texts analysis as follows: 1) "Invisibility" criterion, 2) "Stereotyping" criterion, 3) the "Imbalance/Selectivity" criterion, and 4) the "Unreality" criterion.

Vitz's analysis led him to conclude the following with regard to censorship in history textbooks:

1. The major purpose of social studies is to introduce the child to American social, economic, and political life as it exists today as well as American history, the important facts and topics of our past.
2. Our educational system is a system paid for by taxpayers, claiming to be committed to impartial knowledge and accuracy.
3. The content of school textbooks is important: The facts, interpretations, and values taught today's children will largely determine the character of tomorrow's citizenry. To control the content of a nation's textbooks is to control that nation's future. --"The philosophy of the school room in one generation will be the philosophy of government in the next." President Abraham Lincoln

"CENSORSHIP" is defined in Webster's Dictionary as: To censor, value, judge, supervise; a psychoanalysis; officially removing or prohibiting anything considered unsuitable.

"OBJECTIVITY" is defined as: Impartial, unprejudiced, detached, unbiased, just, open-minded, uninfluenced, real, actual.

According to Vitz, "The essence of censorship is primarily accomplished by exclusion, by leaving out the opposing position. Such non-objectivity is much harder to observe than a positive vilification or direct criticism. It is effective and very hard to observe--mainly because it isn't **there**-- and therefore hard to counteract, also making the one-sided positions familiar and therefore plausible and the invisible content consequently irrelevant.

The study scrutinized the content of the history textbooks which appeared in the adoption lists of the states which formally adopt textbooks. In the researchers' examination of history readers for elementary students, the researchers found the 670 stories given to students to provide them historical information about the nation. After examining the content of those stories, the researchers documented a:

Lack of patriotism. There are only five (less than 1%) stories [of the 670] in all these books with any patriotic theme. Three of the five instances describe the story of the ride of Sybil Ludington in 1777. Dressed as a man, she warned local pro-Independence farmers about a British threat...There is another Revolutionary War story about Mary, a black girl who wants to join the army and who helps bring food to George Washington's troops during the harsh winter at Valley Forge.....and a story about an American boy during the Revolutionary War who captures a British soldier who was stealing vegetables from his garden....**To summarize: Seventeen of the twenty-two textbooks (more than 75%) analyzed contained no patriotic story at all. Dr. Vitz observed that "[t]hese books do not have one story featuring Nathan Hale, Patrick Henry, Daniel Boone, or Paul Rever's ride."**³

TEXTBOOK USAGE

Eighty-eight percent of the nation's students use the books in the study's sample. Reports and research show that the textbook is extremely important in determining what is taught in the classroom and that teacher dependence on the textbook has been growing in recent years. The National Science Foundations with the president of the National Council on the Social Studies concluded that a) The dominant instructional tool continues to be the conventional textbook, b) Teachers tend not only to rely on, but to believe in, the textbook as the source of knowledge. Textbooks are not seen as support materials, but as the central instrument of instruction by most social-studies teachers.⁴

These books often list what the publishers consider the most significant events and influences in American history. This approach, of course, signals to students that what is included is important and conversely, what is left out either is unimportant or did not happen at all. The exorcism often occurs by ignoring important documents or events entirely. For example, a history text quotes the Mayflower Compact this way:⁵

"We whose names are under-written...doe by these presents solemnly and mutually in the presence of God. and one of another. covenant and combine

ourselves to gather into a civil body politick, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid."

The text that Davis simply omits by use of the ellipses is as follows: "*having undertaken, for ye glorie of God, and advancemente of ye Christian faith and honour of our king & countrie, a voyage to plant ye first colonie in ye Northerne parts of Virginia."*

RELIGION IN PERSPECTIVE

Robert Bryan, Ph.D., has focused on many of the important historical and philosophic issues raised by the treatment of religion in our high school history books. The present (NIE) study has focused almost entirely on what is not in these books. Equally important but more complex is the question of how these texts do interpret religion when it is presented. Robert Bryan published a report consisting of a review of American history textbooks approved for use in the Montgomery County, Maryland, school system--a school system in suburban Washington, D.C., highly respected throughout the nation. Bryan's study overlaps with the present study of the fifteen additional texts.

Bryan notes the importance of American history for high school students by pointing out that it is the only discipline in which students can actually make contact with scholarship. That is, math and science at the high school level primarily involve the learning of skills. English literature involves reading books, but usually this means the original story and not the tradition of literary interpretation and criticism. It is, as Bryan notes, in the study of history that students should encounter scholarship and reasoning. And it is here, in history, that the student should make serious contact with the primary goals of education. According to the Montgomery County school board, a primary goal of high school education is to acquaint the student with his or her "legal, moral, ethical, and cultural heritage." It seems safe to assume that religion also is central to this moral and cultural heritage. After all, "[r]eligion, whatever it happens to be, is always fundamental, to the institutions of society...its influence is always pervasive...a work is not historical...if it fails to place the past in the context of its fundamental beliefs....There is remarkable consensus to the effect that, after 1700, Christianity has no historical presence in America...*These textbooks are written to propound the thesis that America was settled for the sake of religious freedom, and that religious freedom means the absence of religion.*"⁶

PROPOSED REVISED COURSE STANDARDS FOR US. HISTORY

The Texas Education Agency proposed revised course standards ("Essential Elements") for US. History. These revisions reduce or eliminate coverage of important US. historical topics in favor of multiculturalism and political correctness.⁷

Bearing the brunt of political correctness would apparently be US. colonial history. The proposed 5th Grade US. History standards skim over the American colonial era; because the revised 8th Grade US. History course begins its focus on the Revolutionary period; high school US. History would concentrate on the 20th century. Textbooks written to Texas standards sell across the country for US. History teaching nationwide.

REQUIRE STUDY OF

5th Grade US. History course standards...

Pre-Columbian Indian cultures

"significant...ethnic [and]
racial..entertainment[and] sports figures"

"how traditions, customs, [and]
folkways...differed among groups"
"Protection of the environment" and
"environmental issues"

8th Grade US. History course standards...

Reduced coverage...shifting from 1875 to 1900 the historical time span of 8th Grade US. History while it increases its topic load; High School History would cover US. History since 1900 (instead of 1875)
add on units...*foreign affairs/Spanish-American War, the cattle kingdom, railroading, and the closing of the frontier, Gilded Age culture, industrialization, and urbanization, trusts, labor violence, and the new immigration, agrarian revolt and currency problems, tariff and civil service reform*

High School History "revised" US. History course standards:

Required—to "identify significant Americans of various racial, ethnic, and cultural groups who contributed to change in the US. in 20th century(e.g., explorers, statesmen, reformers, inventors, military leaders, entertainers, sports figures, literary figures)" [proposed Essential Element 4-g]

Required—to "analyze the unity and diversity brought about by multicultural contributions to our civic heritage" [proposed Essential Element 2-d]

DROP THESE REQUIREMENTS

US. colonial history (e.g. events in al 13 colonies; triangular trade; French & Indian War)

US. political history (e.g., history of important political parties; survey of major legislation; significant elections and issues)

US. foreign relations (e.g., major wars and foreign policies)

Benefits of free enterprise in US. economic history (e.g., higher pay; lower prices; new net wealth)

Discussion of the "causes and effects of the United States' involvement in ...international conflicts" (sec. 1.4); the proposed new standards require only the "economic impact of various wars on the US." (sec. 3-d)

Discussion of the "historical development of political parties" (sec. 5.6) after the 1790s

Discussion of "major political campaigns [and] elections' (sec 5.7)

Discussion of "arguments..again ratification of the Constitution proposed by...Anti-Federalists" (sec. 5.2)

Omit these requirements—"Supporting the principles that underlie the US. Constitution (including the Bill of Rights and all other amendments) and the Declaration of Independence" [current Essential Element 7.2]

Omit these requirements—"Major historical documents relating to the development of the US." [current Essential Element 5.5]

Required-- to "describe the acculturation of racial, cultural, and religious groups in the U.S., citing their contributions to our society" [proposed Essential Element 7-b]

Omit these requirements--"Development of the United States banking system" [current Essential Element 3.7]

THE AMERICAN HERITAGE ALLIANCE

The American Heritage Education Bill emphasizes the primary source documents of our Historical past. The US. Dept. of Education Report, "American Education--Making it Work", April of 1988, by Secretary of Education Bill Bennett shows that today's children graduate from school, fewer than 5% able to think independently, being proficient in using primary source documents. To encourage students to read the actual documents of American History is to keep an open mind about the past and the future.

This bill specifically authorizes--though does not require--teachers and administrators to utilize documents or materials central to an accurate understanding of American history. Specifically authorizing the utilization of these documents and materials actually safeguards the quality and accuracy of education itself. Going back to the primary source documents central to America's history and heritage will help to sort out any confusion as to what to teach. They can beautifully speak for themselves without any commentary or interpretation. Missing segments of Founders' original language/documents risk a misportrayal of American history in changing the emphasis of the original message delivered. The American Heritage Education Bill encourages academic freedom and advancement of study and inquiry among students. The education of the next generation must include the basic understanding of the foundations of our common cultural heritage. This is to preclude the danger of losing our heritage.

President Woodrow Wilson, an accomplished historian stated: "A nation which does not remember what it was yesterday, does not know what it is today, nor what it is trying to do. We are trying to do a futile thing if we do not know where we came from or what we have been about."

¹*American Education: Making It Work* (1988), US. Dept. of Education

² Paul Vitz, *Censorship: Evidence of Bias in Our Children's Textbooks 1986*.

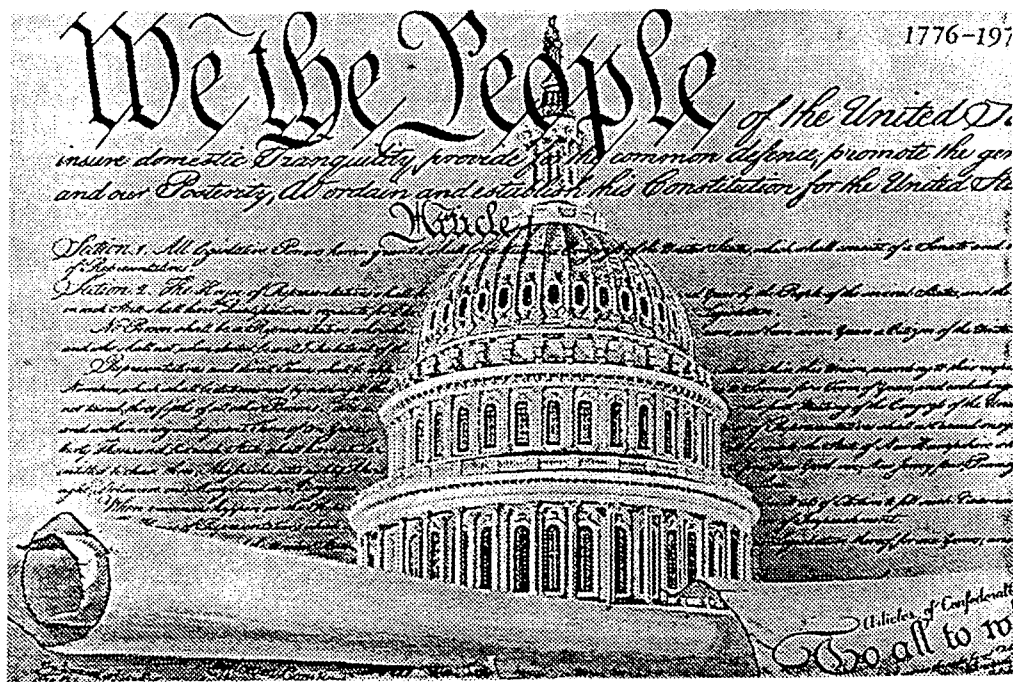
³*Censorship*, pp. 70-71.

⁴James P. Shaver, O.L. Davis, Jr. and Suzanne W. Helburn. "The Status of Social Studies Education": *Impressions from Three NSF Studies*. *Social Education*. Feb., 1979, pp. 150-153.

⁵Kenneth C. Davis, *Don't know much about History*, Crown Publishers, 1991.

⁶Robert Bryan, *History, Pseudo-History, Anti-History: How Public School Textbooks Treat Religion* (Washington, D.C.: Learn, Inc. The Education Foundation, ca. 1984). pp. 2, 3, 10.

⁷The Texas Education Agency (TEA) for Texas State Board of Education approval of new 5th Grade US. History course standards 1993, Sept./Oct.



Founders Documents help instill respect for U.S. ideals

Unlike nations that claim to trace their origins to a legendary hero or are the result of clear geographical boundaries, the United States is a nation of the printed word.

American principles are not hard to find. They are embedded in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and other documents that speak of the country's commitment to freedom and equality.

Unfortunately, many young Americans are no longer exposed to the great words that inspired and framed American liberty. In many schools, the civics lessons of the past have been replaced by something called social studies that often neglects to explore the basic ideas of the American system.

For that reason, some Kansas legislators are pushing what they call the "Founding Fathers" bill that would encourage teachers to read and post documents about the nation's creation.

Labeled the "American Heritage Bill" in earlier legislative sessions, the measure has never mustered enough votes to pass, partly because school officials tend to resist legislative activism in the curriculum.

But it's unconscionable for young people to graduate from a Kansas high school with-

out a thorough grounding in the principles that govern the nation. There is nothing better to instill national awareness than to read the words of the founders in their original form.

Moreover, displaying the formative documents would link young people with previous generations. The Constitution, after all, is not a pile of dead words, but an ever evolving blueprint of the 209-year experiment to build a more perfect nation.

In the past few years, many Americans have been concerned about a lack of patriotism and civic values among young people. The Wichita Public Schools, for instance, recently reinstated the reading of the Pledge of Allegiance in the high schools to help boost respect for the nation's traditions.

The "Founding Fathers" bill is part of a needed effort to reinvigorate democracy among the young. In fact, it would be a good exercise in democracy to have young people decide which documents should be placed in their classrooms. The point is to stimulate an appreciation among students of the noble ideals that created America, and for them to realize that democracy is a participation sport with the ground rules laid down by some of the greatest minds in human history.

House Education
2/20/96
Attachment 5

Specialty Research Associates, Inc.

P. O. Box 397 Aledo, Texas 76008 (817) 441-6044

The National Standards for United States History: Where's the Balance?

Boasting of perfect timing with the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act*, an elite group of public educators have assembled what they consider the ultimate standards for teaching American history. Here is an interesting portion of the criteria for their "broad-based national review and consensus process":

All historical study involves selection and ordering of information in light of general ideas and values. Standards for history should reflect the principles of sound historical reasoning—careful evaluation of evidence, construction of causal relationships, balanced interpretation, and comparative analysis. The ability to detect and evaluate distortion and propaganda by omission, suppression, or invention of facts is essential.

It sounds good. It sounds professional, and full of intellectual integrity. It sounds like a solid foundation for teaching students about the American system—a way for tomorrow's leaders to understand the struggles and successes that shaped the American way, the American dream. But it echoes hollow as these principles find application in modern history textbooks.

The National Standards for United States History (The Standards) has the ostensible goal of developing a "broad national consensus for what constitutes excellence in the teaching and learning of history in the nation's schools." But it is mere symbolism, void of substance. It is all sail and no anchor, tossed around by the winds of politically correct dogma.

The Standards, however, have the distinct advantage of being an unfinished product; any criticisms can supposedly be addressed in forth-coming textbooks. Apart from this convenient answer, *The Standards* still fall far short of the substance that most Americans want in their children's history textbooks. Again, the outline is merely the skeletal frame of America's past, to be fleshed out by skilled craftsmen.

What appears to be in question is whether these craftsmen seek to perpetuate what Americans understand as the best, albeit imperfect, political system in the history of mankind. Will our students see the value of a republican governing system supported by free-market economics? Time will reveal. Until then, we take *The Standards* at face value, using their own approach to history: detecting and evaluating "distortion and propaganda by omission, suppression, or invention of facts."

Moreover, we can readily observe the trend of recent textbook writers. In 1986, the National Institute of Education (now within the Department of Education) funded the definitive study by Paul C. Vitz, resulting in his book, *Censorship: Evidence of Bias in Our Children's Textbooks*. His first chapter offers this overview:

Are public school textbooks biased? Are they censored? The answer to both is yes. And the nature of the bias is clear: Religion, traditional family values, and conservative political and economic positions have been reliably excluded from children's textbooks. This exclusion is particularly disturbing because it is found in a system paid

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for by taxpayers, and one that claims, moreover, to be committed to impartial knowledge and accuracy.

This is a disturbing indictment on modern educators, but specifically on modern textbook writers. Of course, a true educator is not afraid to teach the critical and negative aspects of history. In fact, within the Biblical principle of self-examination (Ps. 139:23; ICor. 11:28; IICor. 13:5), and the fundamental idea that one learns from past mistakes, historians and educators should incorporate and encourage both constructive criticism and positive affirmation. There is a balance, and this is the weakness of *The Standards*, as well as recent history textbooks. Where's the balance?

Were there any benefits derived from our Constitution? Or was its only purpose to sidetrack the abolition of slavery? Did America's even participate in the space race, or was our landing on the moon a failure? Where is any discussion on the massive conservative movement in the 1980s? In the 1990s? Or should our children only learn of the liberal advances? Perhaps these issues, and others, will be covered in the actual texts, but not in the outline?

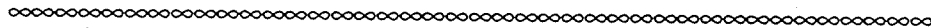
In reading through *The Standards*, however, it becomes quite obvious what these experts are outlining—their view of yesterday's America with a view towards tomorrow's world—as they want to see it. But, to their credit, a conservative textbook writer could use the guidelines to construct a vibrant, healthy history of America. Only, however, if they looked beyond the leading questions and innuendoes that form the bulk of the work. And only if they included the many positive aspects of American history that have been conveniently left out.

The conservative community should take note, and see beneath the surface. The textbooks are not really the fundamental problem at all. The problem is the world view of the people who touch the lives of America's youth on a daily basis. As Vitz's study revealed:

In spite of the biases such as those that are described here there is no evidence of any kind of conscious conspiracy operating to censor textbooks. Instead, a very widespread secular and liberal mindset appears to be responsible. This mindset pervades the leadership in the world of education (and textbook publishing) and a secular and liberal bias is its inevitable consequence.

America's government-subsidized educators, historians, social studies teachers, and administrators are shaping tomorrow's America. They are virtually priests and priestesses of America's *de facto* church establishment—public education. And *The Standards* form the outline of their revised holy books.

Perhaps the U.S. Senate best expressed the possible impact of *The Standards* as they recently condemned the two million dollar project by a 99 to 1 vote. But apart from the paradox of the government condemning itself, one thing is certain, if *The National Standards for United States History* are followed, the future will indeed look as dim and as grim as the past.



A copy of *The National Standards for United States History* can be obtained from:

National Center for History in the Schools (UCLA)
10880 Wilshire Boulevard, Ste. 761
Los Angeles, CA 90024-4108

Ph.: 310-825-4702
Fax: 310-825-4723

Proponent Testimony for Truth in History Bill
By: Scott D. Waters, Ph.D. Emporia State University
Box 4037, Emporia State, Emporia, KS 66801

Chairperson and Committee Members:

My name is Scott Waters. I am on the faculty at Emporia State, in the Teachers College. My specific responsibility is in the area of social science teaching methods. I train teacher education majors, who will eventually teach social studies; thus my interest in this particular bill. I became involved with this bill about two years ago when I learned of its purpose in promoting use of primary source materials in teaching American history. As a teacher educator, I am constantly reviewing textbooks and strategies for teaching social studies. In that vein, I have become increasingly concerned about a trend I have seen emerging in the teaching of history. That trend I speak of is teaching history with less and less attention being assigned to our founding documents, with less and less attention being paid to historical accuracy, and less and less reference to our rich religious heritage. The result of this trend is twofold: students who are being given a distorted and incomplete view of history, and students who are leaving our schools with a dreadfully inadequate understanding of U.S. history.

Why Is This Bill Needed?

Textbooks today too often do not include the foundational documents, quotes, or themes they once did. Perhaps the best example of this would be George Washington's Farewell Address. This address, written as Washington was leaving office, regularly appeared in textbooks and was sometimes even printed as a separate text. The most recent textbook I have found that includes it is this 1941 publication of the National Education Association, The American Citizens Handbook.¹ It includes the full text of Washington's remarks to the citizenry about what had brought the United States to greatness, and what would keep her on that path. Several of Washington's admonitions speak directly to spiritual and moral issues. Students studied, analyzed and memorized parts of this address as a key component of their history studies. In an analysis of social studies textbooks used by Kansas 5th, 8th, and 11th graders, I found no textbook that included more than a few paragraphs of the address, and many that included not reference to the speech at all.

Let me share another example of what teachers experience. This short book, titled The Bulletproof George Washington,² is an account of Washington's miraculous survival during an ambush in the French and Indian War. During a two hour battle, of eighty-six British and American officers, sixty-three were casualties. Washington was the only officer on horseback not shot down. Following the battle, Washington wrote a letter to his brother in which he readily and openly acknowledged: *"By the all-powerful dispensations of Providence, I have been protected beyond all human probability or expectation; for I had four bullets through my coat, and two horses shot under me, yet I escaped unhurt, although death was leveling my companions on every side of me!"* This account of God's care of Washington and of Washington's open gratitude for Divine intervention could be found in virtually all student textbooks until 1934; today, few have ever heard it. Are we not giving our children a very distorted and incomplete history. This bill encourages and authorizes teachers to use primary source documents, and to not omit or edit documents simple because they include mention of religious themes. While it is true the teachers are already free to use these documents, I would see passage of this bill as an affirmation of the crucial role they play in students' understanding of our heritage, including our religious heritage, and an encouragement to teachers to use them in their classrooms.

In addition to the fact that many texts do not include primary source documents, a second reason why I believe this bill is needed is because of the inaccuracy and distortion of historical facts that is becoming so prevalent. You are probably aware that the recently developed U.S.

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History Standards for public schools were viewed as being so distorted they were rejected by the U.S. Senate by a 99 to 1 vote. It is my understanding that the House is also moving toward a similar rejection of the standards. One of the chief criticisms was the lack of mention of founding primary source documents such as the constitution.

Perhaps the most alarming trend is the outright rewriting of history. A February 28, 1994 *U.S. News & World Report* article titled "The Junking of History,"³ and an article from the October 1995 issue of *Social Education* titled "Denial of the Holocaust,"⁴ discusses attempts to discount the Jewish Holocaust. The Nazi slaughter of 6 million Jews is exhaustively documented. Many of the killers, survivors and soldiers who liberated the camps are still alive. Yet the people who deny the Holocaust occurred have made great headway, simply by stating their claim loudly and often. All of us should be shocked and spurred to action by this development. A Truth in History Bill would go a long way toward addressing the problems these examples illustrate. Encouragement of use of primary source documents, including ones with religious content, would be a step in the right direction toward producing students who have a solid understanding of their history. Additionally, I would like to address a criticism of this bill that has surfaced. It is my understanding that some believe this bill is designed to marginalize those of the Jewish community, and is somehow anti-Semitic. My response is to simply refer you to a cordial exchange of letters that took place in 1790 between George Washington and one of the leaders of a Jewish congregation. Students of our day need to be able to read primary source documents of this type, and see for themselves the role of faith in our country's history. Far too often they never have that opportunity.

Conclusion

There seems to be confusion about what to teach about history these days. I see no better way to solve this confusion than to let primary source documents speak for themselves. Why not encourage teachers to put the actual speeches, quotes and documents in the hands of students, and let them be the interpreters of history. Thank you for your time. I would be very happy to attempt to answer any questions you might have.

1. *The American Citizens Handbook*, (1941), Arranged by Joy Elmer Morgan, National Education Association of the United States, Washington, D.C.
2. *The Bulletproof George Washington*, (1990), David Barton, Wallbuilder Press, Aledo, Texas.
3. The Junking of History, (February 28, 1994), *U.S. News & World Report*.
4. Denial of the Holocaust, (October 1995), *Social Education*.

The junking of history

Time Warner's Home Box Office, joined by PepsiCo, is having a bit of trouble celebrating Black History Month in a truthful way. An HBO-Pepsi poster and advertisement honoring black achievement features a large picture of the pyramids, and many smaller images, including one of the Sphinx.

This means that two of America's best-known corporations have officially bought into the historical howler believed by many Afrocentrists: that blacks built the pyramids and have been robbed of credit for it. Quoting the lyrics of a song, the poster says: "We are the builders of the pyramids, look what you did . . . so much to tell the world, the truth no longer hid."

Worse, this stuff is being injected into the schools. HBO and Pepsi sent the posters and other materials to 20,000 predominantly black schools and community groups. So honest teachers in these schools now have to explain the corporate seal of approval given to a historical claim that isn't true. ("Sounds like we need a history lesson," the chairman of HBO said when his Black History poster was described to him.)

This is no isolated example. The culture is now seriously plagued with deeply felt assertions that aren't true but are slowly sliding toward respectability anyway. Think back over the assertions that have won a measure of acceptance in the past year or two: the denial of the Holocaust; Oliver Stone's notion that the mafia and many government officials conspired to kill President Kennedy; the idea, depicted in a TV documentary, that a black U.S. Army regiment liberated Dachau and Buchenwald (tough-minded, honest veterans of the regiment stood up and said it wasn't true), and the supposedly strong influence of Iroquois thought on the U.S. Constitution, now taught in many schools.

Truth beyond fact. Behind the rise of rhetoric and pure assertion is a growing contempt for facts. "What we are witnessing is the transformation of facts into opinion," wrote the editors of the *New Criterion*. Not the number of times that commentators argue that the facts don't really matter. When the Tawana Brawley hoax was revealed, the *Nation* ran an article saying, "In cultural perspective, if not in fact, it doesn't matter whether the crime occurred or not." The facts were irrelevant, it seems, because Brawley's story line reflected the broader reality that whites have abused blacks over centuries. In other words, forget about facts. Just tell stories that convey emotional truth.

This is the climate HBO and Pepsi responded to, probably without much thought. Under different condi-

tions, the corporations might have been just as willing to assert that the Irish invented jazz and the Cherokees developed styrofoam.

"We're in a day and age in which I can make any claim I want," says Deborah Lipstadt, a professor at Emory University. "I can say I believe the Buffalo Bills won the Super Bowl. Then I say that it's my opinion and I have a right to it, and you're supposed to back off." Lipstadt should know. She is the author of *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory*.

The Nazi slaughter of 6 million Jews is exhaustively documented. Many of the killers, survivors and soldiers who liberated the camps are still alive. Yet the people who deny that the Holocaust occurred have made great headway, simply by stating their claim loudly and often. A

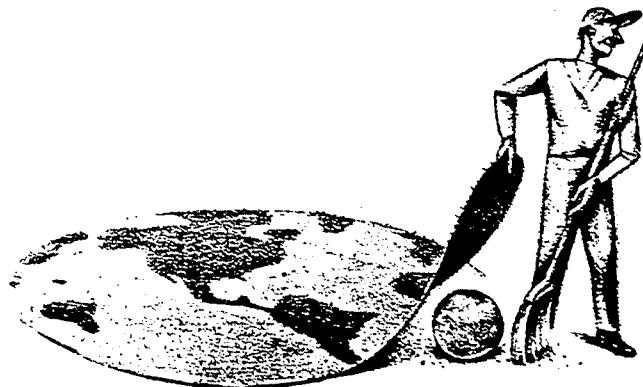
Gallup poll last month showed that 33 percent of Americans think it seems possible that the Nazi extermination of Jews never happened.

"Good students come in and ask, 'How do we know there were gas chambers?'" Lipstadt says. "Not that they become deniers, but what happens is that in a subtle way, the attackers put history on the defensive." Denial slowly becomes just one more familiar and alternate way of thinking

about Jews and Nazis. In a talk-show culture, all talkers have equal status, flat-earthers and round-earthers. Holocaust deniers and Holocaust historians, people who speak regularly to interplanetary aliens and people who don't.

Holocaust denial is only the most spectacular example of a broader assault on knowledge, facts and memory that is sweeping through the culture. A lot of it comes from some disastrous intellectual trends on campus. Deconstruction and its allied movements say that knowledge is constructed, texts are biased. Values and truth are nothing more than arbitrary products of a particular group. History is not true, merely a story imposed by the powerful on the weak. (Time Warner managed to pick up this theme in a Warner Bros. Records ad celebrating Black History Month. "History is written by the winners," the ad said, quoting Alex Haley.)

At the extreme, some of these theories say there is no external reality at all, merely consciousness, and some say that personal experience or stories are the only source of truth. This is all intellectual junk, but it's having a profound effect in the real world. Everything is up for grabs now. Like the black veterans who challenged the false TV documentary, it's important for honest people to take a stand and not let lies slide by. Otherwise, reasoned discussion in America will descend further into a fact-free opinion fest. ■



DENIAL OF THE HOLOCAUST

SCOTT MILLER

Holocaust deniers claim that the Holocaust never happened—that there was no “Final Solution” or systematic plan by the Nazis to exterminate all Jews. “Hard deniers” claim that the estimated five to six million murdered Jews were actually never killed,¹ and that the Holocaust, or at least the greater part of it, is a hoax. In other versions of denial, generally referred to as “soft denials,” it is contended that, while some atrocities took place, there was still no plan to annihilate the Jews. “Soft deniers” try to attribute the high death rate among Jews and others to the nature of the war itself, citing factors such as disease and starvation, which themselves are sometimes attributed to atrocities inflicted by the Allies on the Germans.

Holocaust denial is not a position based on the facts. It has no historical support. The typical denier is driven by political motivations, and in most cases espouses a right-wing, racist ideology with affinities to National Socialism. The memory of the Holocaust, which is widely regarded in the western world as the epitome of evil, is a major threat to the spread of such doctrines. Another important source of denial is the historical chain of anti-Semitism, with its recurrent inventions of conspiracy theories against the Jews, such as those contained in the Protocols of the Elders of Zion. Denial of the Holocaust, and the allegation that it is a Jewish-created “hoax,” are modern versions of accusations of a Jewish conspiracy.

For teachers, the problem of Holocaust denial can be quite complex, for several reasons. First, deniers call themselves “revisionists,” which is a respectable academic term in the study of

history—even though in this case, they are not revising but denying.² Unfortunately, their appropriation of a legitimate term has caused confusion. Moreover, deniers are denying facts, not opinions, and school curricula are not oriented toward dealing with the denial of facts. This often leaves teachers in a quandary as to how to deal with issues of denial, which can only be fully resolved by thorough knowledge of the facts of the Holocaust.

The Deniers

The key to understanding Holocaust denial is the world outlook of the deniers. Denial is inextricably linked with racist, anti-Semitic ideology. The deniers lack academic credentials for the study of the Holocaust.

The central institution of Holocaust denial in the United States is the Institute for Historical Review (IHR), located in southern California, and founded (with a deceptively scholarly name) by Willis Carto. Carto was previously a founder of the Liberty Lobby, an ultra right-wing and anti-Semitic organization. Other individuals associated with IHR and Holocaust denial are Lewis Brandon, the first director of IHR; Tom Marcellus, his successor as IHR Director; and Mark Weber, editor of the *Journal for Historical Review* (the IHR journal). Not one of the four has academic credentials relevant to the study of the Holocaust.³

Anti-Semitism is clearly evident in Carto's thinking. Carto once wrote: “If Satan himself had tried to create a permanent disintegration and force for the destruction of nations, he could have done no better than to create the Jews.”⁴ In another memo, Carto termed the Jews “public enemy No. 1.”⁵

Admiration for Hitler is also

widespread among IHR officials. The Liberty Lobby under Carto's influence has been described as “infiltrated by Nazis who revere the memory of Hitler.”⁶ In a deposition under oath in 1979, Carto acknowledged his agreement with the principles of Francis Parker Yockey, who consistently proclaimed that the Holocaust was a myth created by the Jews. In his book dedicated to Hitler, *Imperium—The Philosophy of History and Politics*, Yockey called for the establishment of an empire of Aryan nations, claiming that the Jews “live solely with the idea of revenge on the nations of the white European-American race.”⁷

A number of IHR officials have been active in neo-Nazi groups. Lewis Brandon (also known as William David McCalden) was once an officer of the British neo-Nazi National Front Party. Irish-born and educated in England, Brandon has edited a number of anti-Semitic and racist publications,⁸ and actively promoted the view that no Jews were gassed at Auschwitz. Mark Weber is the former editor of the *National Vanguard*, the journal of the anti-Semitic and neo-Nazi organization National Alliance.

Appeals to white racism are a common theme among these Holocaust deniers. Carto has expressed the belief that “Jews and Negroes” are at the heart of America's problems.⁹ In a letter to the racist author Earnest Sevier Cox, Carto complained about the “Niggerfication of America.”¹⁰ Fearing this “niggerfication,” Carto organized the Joint Council for Repatriation, which advocated the return of all Blacks to Africa.

In a 1989 interview, Weber told the *University of Nebraska Sower* that he feared the United States was becoming “a sort of Mexicanized, Puertoricanized country,” due to the failure of White

Americans to reproduce adequately.¹¹ Brandon's successor as IHR director, Tom Marcellus, has criticized acceptance of the Holocaust "hoax" on the ground that it does damage to the "self-image of White people."¹²

Predictably, prominent members of the Ku Klux Klan are also Holocaust deniers. In the *Crusader*, the publication of David Duke's organization, the National Association for the Advancement of White People, Duke termed the Holocaust a "historical hoax."¹³ These words of a former Grand Wizard of the KKK highlight the affinities between Holocaust denial and classical American racism (an association that may appropriately be pointed out by teachers in the classroom).

Admiration for the white supremacist doctrines advocated by Hitler is also visible among prominent foreign deniers of the Holocaust. For example, Ernst Zundel, a German citizen with immigrant status in Canada, has advanced the claim that Jews were not killed in the gas chambers. Zundel is the author of the book *The Hitler We Loved and Why*, which praises Hitler and his white supremacist ideology.¹⁴ Zundel has no academic credentials relevant to the study of the Holocaust.

Among the "soft" deniers is David Irving, a British popular historian (the only well-known denier with a knowledge of history, though without adequate academic historical credentials). Irving argues that about 500,000 to 600,000 Jews died as victims of war,¹⁵ and claims that Hitler did not know about the Final Solution. His view of Hitler is reflected, according to Lipstadt, by his having "placed a self-portrait of Hitler over his desk," and having described his visit to Hitler's mountaintop retreat as a "spiritual experience."¹⁶ In 1994, David Irving stated "I think the Jews are largely to blame for themselves by the knee-jerk responses [to anti-Semitism]... Goebbels himself said that, in fact."¹⁷

Combating the Denial of the Holocaust in the Classroom

Denial is a position contrary to the facts, and should not be treated by teachers as a matter of opinion repre-

senting one side of a debate. The most effective way to deal with the deniers is for teachers to thoroughly learn, and then teach, the storyline of the Holocaust. An extraordinary amount of Holocaust documentation exists, enabling teachers to eliminate arguments of denial by citing the facts and sharing their awareness of the documentation with students.

The Scale of Documentation

Due to the nature of German record keeping, the Holocaust is one of the more thoroughly documented historical events in the annals of humanity. For example, at the World War II Records Division of the National Archives in Alexandria, Virginia, Holocaust related material fills 28,000 linear feet of shelves. This includes mostly military documents, some SS documents, and some documents of the civil administration. And here we are only speaking of the Holocaust material in a single location.

Documentation of the Holocaust exists all over the world. There are hundreds of thousands of orders, decrees, memos, letters, blueprints, and memoirs. Eyewitness testimonies abound. There are graphic photographs and clips of documentary footage, taken by both military officials and civilians, of atrocities such as the *Einsatzgruppen* (Mobile Killing Units) shootings. Particularly dramatic is the testimony of the Nazis themselves. The major perpetrators of the Nazi crimes, on trial at Nuremberg, did not deny that the Holocaust took place, though they did try to place the blame for it on other Nazis.

Contrary to popular belief, there is an abundance of material dealing with the gas chambers. Many believe that since the Nazis themselves destroyed the gas chambers and crematoria (out of fear of retribution), there remains no evidence of the gas chambers. However, documentation exists. For example, remains of the gas chambers were found at the Auschwitz-Birkenau and Majdanek death camps (at Majdanek, in fact, not all the gas chambers were destroyed). Blueprints of the gas chambers exist in the archives at the Auschwitz Museum as well as in

Moscow, and now in the archives at the Research Institute of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. There are Allied aerial photographs of the crematoria, as well as clandestine photographs of the crematoria and of people walking to the gas chambers. Deniers claim that the gas chambers were only used for delousing. But even the commandant of Auschwitz, Rudolf Hoess, made no attempt to deny the gas chambers. In his autobiography, Hoess described the gassing process:

Then, very quickly, the door was hermetically sealed, and a can of gas was immediately thrown onto the floor, through an opening ... in the ceiling of the gas chamber, by the disinfectors, who were standing ready. This led to the immediate release of the gas ... those who were near the opening died immediately ... a third died within a moment. The others began to struggle, to scream, to choke ... after a few minutes all were on the ground. After a maximum of twenty minutes, nobody moved.¹⁸

Other testimony comes from camp guards and from survivors of Auschwitz (members of the *Sonderkommando* - Jewish prisoners assigned to work at the crematoria). In the case of the Belzec and Sobibor death camps, as well as at Auschwitz-Birkenau, a vast quantity of gassing victims' shoes, clothing and other personal belongings was discovered by Soviet soldiers at the war's end. At the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, Soviet troops also found over 15,000 pounds of human hair. Other documents record the ordering and supply of Zyklon-B gas.

Much of the written documentation on the Holocaust is now available in English, and is useful for teachers. Raul Hilberg, this country's pre-eminent historian of the Holocaust, has collected much of this material in *Documents of Destruction*. Hilberg also documents decrees and deportations in his momentous *The Destruction of the European Jews*. John Mendelsohn has published an eighteen-volume compendium of Holocaust documentation entitled *The Holocaust*. Daily accounts by German

army officers of mass shootings of Jews and others, as well as lists of areas made *judenrein*, "cleansed of Jews," have been translated into English as *The Einsatzgruppen Reports*. Danuta Czech's *Auschwitz Chronicle* (805 pages), is now available in English. It contains the Nazi daily records of Auschwitz down to the smallest details—construction of gas chambers, deportations, arrival numbers and numbers gassed. Perhaps the best overview of operations at Auschwitz is the newly released *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*, edited by Michael Berenbaum and Yisrael Gutman.¹⁹

Also available in English are the proceedings of the Nuremberg and other post-war trials.²⁰ These are an extraordinarily useful tool in verifying the historicity of the Holocaust, because here the perpetrators of the crime gave firsthand evidence. Unlike today's Holocaust deniers, the perpetrators never denied that the crime took place. Some tried to justify their actions by expressing their fear of Jews; some claimed "orders from above," while others acknowledged what happened while claiming that others did the actual killing. But never did they deny the Holocaust. As Hilberg concludes "... there was no denial obviously among any of the people who were in any way even close to these [killing] operations—no denial in the railways, no denial in the finance ministry, no denial in the SS, and so on and so forth."²¹ Should students request that the "Nazi point of view" be taught, the testimonies of the perpetrators offer the best answer to such a request.

Inquisitive students will no doubt ask whether any of the many historical documents on the Holocaust have been forged. Unlike some other major historical phenomena, the study of the Holocaust has not faced the problem of false documents. In an interview by Michael Berenbaum, director of the Holocaust Museum's Research Institute, Hilberg states that he has never in his "45 more years of research in this field found a forged document."²² Students may need to be shown that forgery of historical documents is somewhat more sophisticated than the kind of forgery students may know from personal experience. As Hilberg points out:

It sounds easy, but it is very, very difficult if one were to attempt it. For one thing, it is a matter of the right paper, the right type-writer, but even more, it is the proper language. One would have to be extraordinarily knowledgeable about the nature of the administrative operations to be able to feign the document and put it as though it were real...²³

Forgery on the enormous scale of the Holocaust documentation would be impossible. The documents are too numerous, their sources too diverse, and the time period of their discovery too limited for such massive, coordinated forgery to take place. And there was no conceivable reason for the discoverers of most documents, the victorious World War II Allies, to fabricate the vast quantity of documents about the Holocaust.

A Key Resource: The Holocaust Museum

In the United States, the most thorough pedagogical documentation of the Holocaust, which presents the historical timeline of the Holocaust from beginning to end, is the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.²⁴ Almost all the contents of the Museum's permanent exhibition are actual artifacts—objects, photos, oral histories, eyewitness evidence, including the testimony of survivors, and documentary footage. These objects tell a story, a history of the Holocaust, from its beginning through its middle to its end making, the Museum an important pedagogical tool.²⁵ Though the purpose of the Holocaust Museum is to teach a lesson and preserve memory, and not to answer the claims of those who say the event never happened, the institution ends up doing this as well.

Inscribed on the walls of the building and repeated at the beginning of the Museum's permanent exhibition are the words of General Eisenhower after witnessing the Ohrdruf concentration camp following its liberation—the first publicized testimony by an American on the atrocities of the Holocaust:

The things I saw beggar description ... the visual evidence

The Issue of Holocaust Denial. Basic Books

The most valuable sources on the issue of the denial of the Holocaust are Deborah Lipstadt's *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory* (New York: Free Press, 1993), and Kenneth Stern's *Holocaust Denial* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1993). Other leading sources on the topic are Pierre Vidal-Naquet's *Assassins of Memory: Essays on the Denial of the Holocaust* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992); Shelly Shapiro's *Truth Prevails: Demolishing Holocaust Denial: The End of "The Leuchter Report"* (New York: Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, 1990); and Marc Caplan's *Hitler's Apologists: The Anti-Semitic Propaganda of Holocaust "Revisionism"* (New York: Anti-Defamation League, 1993).

and verbal testimony of starvation, cruelty and bestiality were overpowering...I made the visit deliberately in order to be in a position to give first-hand evidence of these things if ever, in the future, there develops a tendency to charge these allegations to propaganda.²⁶

Adding to the pedagogical and documentary value of the Museum is the Wexner Learning Center, a multi-media center where visitors can access, on a single screen, various media of original documentation on the Holocaust—documentary footage, photos, survivors and eyewitness testimonies, music, maps and a daily Holocaust chronology.

Teachers at the high school level can take advantage of the various archival collections of the Holocaust Museum's scholarly division—the United States Holocaust Research Institute. The Institute's archive consists of a Documents Archive, Photo Archive, Oral History Archive, Film and Video Archive, Library, and Registry of Jewish Holocaust Survivors. The notion of "archives" should not be treated as an unfriendly concept by classroom educators. The access to primary sources that they provide offers teachers at all levels a major opportunity.

A notable resource of the Research

Institute is its especially rich archival collection of materials from Eastern Europe, Germany, and the former U.S.S.R. Much of the material captured by the Red Army in 1945, and then sequestered for forty-five years in Soviet archives, has been made available to western scholars with the dissolution of the Communist bloc. A significant part of this material is in the Research Institute's archives, making it one of the largest repositories of Holocaust documentation.

The Education Department of the Museum also offers teacher training workshops for educators wishing to incorporate the Holocaust into their curricula, and a teacher's Resource Center, equipped with teaching guides arranged according to specific topics, e.g. ghettos, camps, etc. and various media useful for Holocaust education. During the two years since the museum's opening, the Resource Center has responded to more than 70,000 requests from educators.

Conclusion

Teachers can teach the Holocaust by utilizing all the objective sources and scientific methodologies appropriate for teaching history. The singularity of the Final Solution in human history makes it an emotional subject, but emotion and historicity are not mutually exclusive. As with other historical events, the Holocaust has had its share of historiographical debates. The facts about the Holocaust are not, however, a matter of debate, and teachers need not hesitate to point out the racist ideologies and lack of academic credentials of deniers of the Holocaust. In the words of Deborah Lipstadt, truth does not have to "be on the defensive."²⁷ ■

Notes

1 Perhaps the best known case of a claim that Jews were never gassed was that of Fred Leuchter, a self-described engineer from Massachusetts (Leuchter has no engineering credentials). Leuchter spent three days at Auschwitz and one in Majdanek to determine whether systematic gassing occurred there. Upon his return, he published his finding in *The Leuchter Report: An Engineering Report on the Alleged Execution Gas Chambers at Auschwitz, Birkenau, and Majdanek, Poland*. Leuchter based his finding on "forensic samples" he gathered while inspecting the remains of the gas chambers. His findings were dismissed by engineers, historians, and officials of

the State Museum at Auschwitz.

- 2 There are revisionist schools on some of the major historical events of this century. Among the best-known are those on the origins and outcomes of World War I and the Cold War. However, the revisionist schools revise the traditional historiography of these events. They interpret, but do not deny, the fact of their existence.
- 3 Deborah Lipstadt, *Denying The Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory* (New York: Free Press, 1993).
- 4 *Ibid.*, 146.
- 5 *Ibid.* Cited in Richard Harwood's 28-page booklet *Did Six Million Really Die? The Truth At Last*.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 144.
- 7 Cited by Lipstadt from John C. Obert, "Yockey: Profile of an American Hitler," *The Investigator* (Oct. 1981): 8.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 138. As a result of his "racist politics," Brandon (McCalden) was denied membership into the English National Union of Journalists.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 146.
- 10 *Ibid.*
- 11 Cited in Michael Shermer, "Proving the Holocaust: The Refutation of Revisionism and the Restoration of History," in *Skeptic* 2, no. 4 (1994).
- 12 Lipstadt, *Denying The Holocaust*, 143.
- 13 In 1986, David Duke, who denied that Jews were killed in the gas chambers, declared that "Jews deserve to go into the ash bin of history." Jason Berry, "Duke's Disguise," *The New York Times*, Oct. 19, 1991.
- 14 Lipstadt, 158. Zundel established a publishing house, Samisdat Publications, which has reprinted and distributed anti-Semitic and racist literature.
- 15 David Irving, *Hitler's War* (New York: Viking Press, 1977).
- 16 Cited in Robert Harris, *Selling Hitler* (New York: 1986)
- 17 *Ibid.*
- 18 Rudolf Hoess, *Commandant of Auschwitz: The Autobiography of Rudolf Hoess*, (Cleveland: World Press, 1959), 166. Hoess was arrested in 1946. In the Krakow jail where he was held, Hoess wrote an autobiography in which he described the implementation of the Final Solution. At the Hoess trial, held before a Polish war crimes tribunal from March 11 to 29, 1947, the sending of Jews to the gas chambers was reconstructed by Hoess's testimony.
- 19 Raul Hilberg (ed.), *Documents of Destruction* (London: W.H. Allen, 1972); John Mendelsohn (ed.), *The Holocaust: Selected Documents in Eighteen Volumes* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1982); Y. Arad, S. Krakowski, S. Spector (eds.), *Einsatzgruppen Reports* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1989); Danuta Czech (ed.), *Auschwitz Chronicle* (New York: H. Holt, 1990); Michael Berenbaum and Yisrael Gutman (eds.), *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994).
- 20 Publications on the postwar trials, including the minutes of the Nuremberg and other trials of major war criminals, as well as secondary accounts, are widely available in public and university libraries. Documentary footage of the Nuremberg and other postwar trials, notably the Eichmann trial, is also available. One outstanding published source on the Nurem-

berg trials is International Military Tribunal, *The Trial of the Major War Criminals Before the International Military Tribunal, Blue Series* (Nuremberg: 42 volumes, 1947-1949).

- 21 "What Do We Know About the Holocaust," interview with Raul Hilberg. Conducted by Michael Berenbaum, Director, United States Holocaust Research Institute (of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum), February 1994.
- 22 *Ibid.* Berenbaum interview with Hilberg.
- 23 *Ibid.*
- 24 The Holocaust Museum opened in April 1993. It has since had approximately three million visitors. According to a survey, over 60% of the visitors are not Jewish.
- 25 Following a 1980 Congressional vote mandating the establishment of a memorial in Washington, D.C. to all the victims of the Holocaust, it was initially decided to build a "memorial" in the Washington sense of the word—a monument. This posed a pedagogical problem. One does not learn a complete story, or any story, from a monument. Monuments memorialize stories that are already known. The story of the Holocaust was not known to the majority of Americans. Therefore, it was decided, for pedagogical reasons, to build a chronological exhibit to document the story of the Holocaust.
- 26 Eisenhower visited the site of Ohrdruf concentration camp on April 4, 1945. See Judah Nadich, *Eisenhower and the Jews* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1953). Eisenhower's statement is an illustration of the fact that much documentation of the Holocaust is from American and other Allied sources. Much of the documentation is currently in American archives, such as the National Archives in Washington, D.C.
- 27 "What Do We Know About Holocaust Denial?" Interview conducted by the author with Deborah Lipstadt, February 1994. This interview was conducted as part of an effort by the Research Institute of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum to educate university students with the facts on Holocaust denial. This effort was in response to a string of advertisements by Holocaust deniers which were printed in university newspapers throughout the country in 1994. In addition to an interview with Lipstadt, students receive an interview with Raul Hilberg and a letter from Walter Rockler, a leading attorney and prosecutor at Nuremberg Trials, who demonstrates that the printing of denial ads is not a civil liberties issue. Newspapers are under no obligation to take money to publish the opinions of racists.

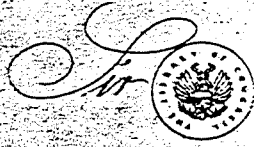
Scott Miller is University Programs Coordinator at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., where he directs educational programs for university students visiting the Holocaust Museum and assists in developing curricula for college level Holocaust courses. He also served as a research historian for the Museum's Learning Center, a multimedia information center on the Holocaust, authoring its daily Holocaust chronology, 1933-1945.

Document 1

A letter from Moses Seixas, Warden of Congregation Jeshuat Israel, Newport, Rhode Island, to President George Washington, August 17, 1790

Source: Papers of George Washington, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

To the President of the United States of America.



Permit the children of the Stock of Abraham to approach you with the most cordial affection and esteem for your person & family - And to join with our fellow Citizens in welcoming you to Newport.

With pleasure we reflect on those days - those days of "difficulties" & "dangers" when the God of Israel, who delivered David, from the peril of the sword - rescued his head in the day of battle: - since we rejoice to think, that the same Spirit, who rested in the bosom of the greatly beloved Daniel enabling him to breathe over the Fountains of the Babylonish Empire, will and ever will rest upon you, enabling you to discharge the arduous duties of Chief Magistrate in these States.

Depressed as we had before been of the invaluable rights of free Citizens, we now find a deep sense of gratitude to the Almighty dispenser of all events, residing in a Government, erected by the Majesty of the People - a Government, which to us, gives no sanction, to persecution nor assistance - but generously & "bravely" will liberty of conscience, and immunities of Citizenship: - becoming every one, of whatever Nation, colour, or Language, equal parts of the great governmental Machine: - This ample and extensive Federal Union whose basis is Philanthropy, Mutual confidence and public Virtue, we cannot but acknowledge to be the work of the Great God who dwells in the Heavens & Heaven and among the Intarsistants of the Crown. Going what ever remains him good.

Document 1 (continued)

For all the blessings of civil and religious liberty which we enjoy under an equal and benign administration, we desire to join our thanks to the Author of Days, the great Preserver of Men - beseeching him, that the Angel who conducted our forefathers through the wilderness into the promised Land, may graciously conduct you through all the difficulties and dangers of this mortal life: - And when like Joshua full of years and full of honour, you are gathered to your Fathers, may you be admitted into the Heavenly Paradise to partake of the water of life, and the tree of immortality.

Done and Signed by Order of the Hebrew Congregation in
New York Island August 17th 1790.

Moses Seixas, Secretary

Transcription of Document 1

A letter from Moses Seixas, Warden of Congregation Jeshuat Israel, Newport, Rhode Island, to President George Washington, August 17, 1790

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Sir.

Permit the children of the stock of Abraham to approach you with the most cordial affection and esteem for your person and merits, and to join with our fellow citizens in welcoming you to Newport.

With pleasure we reflect on those days, of difficulty and danger, when the God of Israel, who delivered David from the peril of the sword,—shielded your head in the day of battle:—and we rejoice to think that the same Spirit who rested in the bosom of the greatly beloved Daniel, enabling him to preside over the Provinces of the Babylonish Empire, rests and ever will rest upon you, enabling you to discharge the arduous duties of Chief Magistrate in these States.

Deprived as we heretofore have been of the invaluable rights of free citizens, we now (with a deep sense of gratitude to the Almighty dispenser of all events) behold a Government, erected by the Majesty of the People.—a Government, which to bigotry gives no sanction, to persecution no assistance—but generously affording to All liberty of conscience, and immunities of Citizenship:—deeming every one, of whatever Nation, tongue, or language equal parts of the great governmental machine:—This so ample and extensive Federal Union whose basis is Philanthropy, mutual-confidence and Publick Virtue, we cannot but acknowledge to be the work of the Great God, who ruleth in the Armies of Heaven and among the Inhabitants of the Earth, doing whatsoever seemeth him good.

For all the Blessings of civil and religious liberty which we enjoy under an equal and benign administration, we desire to send up our thanks to the ancient of days, the great preserver of men—beseeching him, that the Angel who conducted our forefathers through the wilderness into the promised land, may graciously conduct you through all the difficulties and dangers of this mortal life:—And, when like Joshua full of days and full of honour, you are gathered to your Fathers, may you be admitted into the Heavenly Paradise to partake of the water of life, and the tree of immortality.

Done and signed by order of the Hebrew Congregation in NewPort Rhode Island, August 17th, 1790.

Moses Seixas. Warden.

Document 2

A letter from President George Washington to the Hebrew Congregation in Newport, Rhode Island, August 21, 1790

Source: This document is on long-term loan to the B'nai B'rith Klutznick Museum, Washington, D.C. Used by permission of the Morganstern Foundation.

To the Hebrew Congregation in Newport
"Rhode Island.

Gentlemen.

While I receive, with much satisfaction, your Address replete with expressions of affection and esteem; I rejoice in the opportunity of assuring you, that I shall always retain a grateful remembrance of the cordial welcome I experienced in my visit to Newport, from all classes of Citizens.

The reflection on the days of difficulty and danger which are past is rendered the more sweet, from a consciousness that they are succeeded by days of uncommon prosperity and security. If we have wisdom to make the best use of the advantages with which we are now favored, we cannot fail, under the just administration of a good Government, to become a great and a happy people.

The Citizens of the United States of America have a right to applaud themselves for having given to mankind examples of an enlarged and liberal

Document 2 (continued)

policy: a policy worthy of imitation. All profess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship. It is now no more that toleration is spoken of, as if it was by the indulgence of one class of people, that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights. For happily

the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection, should demean themselves as good citizens, in giving it on all occasions their effectual support.

It would be inconsistent with the frankness of my character not to avow that I am pleased with your favorable opinion of my Administration, and fervent wishes for my felicity. May the children of the Stock of Abraham, who dwell in this land, continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other Inhabitants; while every one shall sit in safety under his own vine and figtree, and there shall be none to make him afraid. May the father of all mercies scatter light and not darkness in our paths, and make us all in our several vocations ^{useful} here, and in his own due time and way everlastingly happy.

G. Washington

Transcription of Document 2

A letter from President George Washington to the Hebrew Congregation in Newport, Rhode Island, August 21, 1790

Gentlemen.

While I receive, with much satisfaction, your address replete with expressions of affection and esteem, I rejoice in the opportunity of assuring you, that I shall always retain a grateful remembrance of the cordial welcome I experienced in my visit to Newport, from all classes of Citizens.

The reflection on the days of difficulty and danger which are past is rendered the more sweet, from a consciousness that they are succeeded by days of uncommon prosperity and security. If we have wisdom to make the best use of the advantages with which we are now favored, we cannot fail, under the just administration of a good government, to become a great and a happy people.

The Citizens of the United States of America have a right to applaud themselves for having given to mankind examples of an enlarged and liberal policy: a policy worthy of imitation. All possess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship. It is now no more that toleration is spoken of, as if it was by the indulgence of one class of people, that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights. For happily the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens, in giving it on all occasions their effectual support.

It would be inconsistent with the frankness of my character not to avow that I am pleased with your favorable opinion of my administration, and fervent wishes for my felicity. May the Children of the Stock of Abraham, who dwell in this land, continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other Inhabitants; while every one shall sit in safety under his own vine and figtree, and there shall be none to make him afraid. May the father of all mercies scatter light and not darkness in our paths, and make us all in our several vocations useful here, and in his own due time and way everlastingly happy.

G. Washington

In his reply, Washington endorsed the Congregation's definition of a government that "gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance." But he went much further, telling the Jews that liberty of conscience is not a gift of the government, but their "inherent natural right."

This full liberty of conscience, so movingly espoused by the "Father of our country," remains the first principle of the American way of life. For the first time in history, a nation committed itself to move beyond persecution, and even beyond toleration, to "free exercise" of religion. Though America's history has been marred by outbreaks of persecution and religious bigotry, the United States has achieved a degree of religious liberty unprecedented in the world's history. Religious liberty, freedom of conscience, remains America's greatest gift to world civilization.

References

Rhode Island Committee for the Humanities. (1986). *The Legacy of Roger Williams*.

Suggestions for Using the Documents

Discussion Questions

1. What is the difference between "toleration" and "free exercise of religion?" Why was this distinction particularly significant for the first American Jews?
2. How does Roger Williams' conception of "soul liberty" differ from other ideas of liberty?
3. What is the meaning of the phrase "inherent natural rights"? What are our natural rights?
4. Why did most societies of the 17th century view freedom of conscience for people of all faiths or none as a dangerous idea?
5. Religious liberty or freedom of conscience has been called America's "first liberty." Why?
6. Although religious liberty is guaranteed by the First Amendment, has America always lived up to this ideal? Discuss positive and negative chapters in America's experiment with religious liberty.

Extension Activities

1. Assign four students to prepare brief oral reports about the biblical characters mentioned in the Hebrew Congregation's letter (Abraham, David, Daniel, and Joshua). After the reports are given, have the class discuss how each of these characters is used in the letter. What is the point being made in each case?
2. President Washington ends his letter with a quote from the Hebrew scriptures (Micah 4:4). Ask the class if anyone recognizes the reference. If not, send the class on a detective hunt to find the source and identify the exact text.
3. Ask students to discuss with their parents the Hebrew Congregation's letter and Washington's reply. How has religious liberty, or freedom of conscience, been important in their lives or the lives of their ancestors?

Research Topics

1. What were the religious convictions of George Washington?
2. Why were the Jews persecuted in Europe for centuries?
3. Baptists consider Roger Williams one of their founding fathers. How did Williams shape the Baptist view of religious liberty?
4. Investigate the history of the Jewish community in Newport, Rhode Island. What is the status of the congregation there today?
5. When and how did the Jews of New Amsterdam finally enjoy full religious liberty?

Additional Resources

- Cousins, Norman, ed. (1958). *In God We Trust: The Religious Beliefs and Ideas of the American Founding Fathers*. New York: Harper and Brothers. A useful collection of writings concerning religion by Washington and other Founding Fathers.
- In Search of Tolerance*. (1978). Del Mar, Calif.: McGraw-Hill. A film that discusses the European background of religious groups whose search for freedom brought them to America. Includes Anabaptists, Huguenots, Puritans, and Quakers.
- Jews in America. (1973). New York: Anti-Defamation League. A two-part filmstrip and discussion guide covering 300 years of Jewish life in the U.S.
- Morgan, Edmund. (1987). *Roger Williams: The Church and State*. New York: W. W. Norton. The best discussion of Roger Williams' views on religious liberty.

ANALYSIS OF 5TH, 8th, and 11th GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES TEXTS FOR INCLUSION OF KEY HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

At a recent National Council for the Social Studies conference, held November 18-22, 1993 in Nashville, Tennessee, 5th, 8th and 11th grade history texts from every major publisher of textbooks were analyzed to document the inclusion of historical documents. Such documents include the Declaration of Independence, Constitution, Mayflower Compact, George Washington's Farewell Address, etc.

5th grade summary:

- * Declaration of Independence and United States Constitution - Included in:
Our Country, 1993, Silver Burdett Ginn, pgs. 650-681.
Exploring America's Heritage, 1991, Heath, pgs. 560-591.
The United States: Its History and Neighbors, 1993, Harcourt Brace Javanovich, pgs. R 4-37.
- * Mayflower Compact - Mentioned (no text of complete document) in:
Our Country, p. 162.
Exploring America's Heritage, p. 165.
The United States: Its History and Neighbors, p. 177.
- * Washington's Farewell Address - Not mentioned in any of the above texts.
- ** Silver Burdett Ginn texts are most widely used in Kansas 5th grade classrooms.

8th grade summary:

- * Declaration of Independence and United States Constitution - Included in:
One Flag, One Land, 1990, Silver Burdett Ginn, pgs. 152-156 and 194-219.
The Story of America, 1991, Holt Rinehart Winston, pgs. 158-161 and 200-218.
A More Perfect Union, 1991, Houghton Mifflin, pgs. 636-659.
- * Mayflower Compact - Included in:
One Flag, One Nation, p. 77.
The Story of America, pgs. 53-54.
A More Perfect Union, p. 663.

* Washington's Farewell Address - Mentioned in:
The Story of America, pgs. 251-253.
Not included in Silver Burdett Ginn or Houghton Mifflin texts.

* Alexis DeTocqueville's Democracy in America - Some references from this book found in Holt, Rinehart, and Winston. No reference to family life or the moral climate of the country, a prominent observation of DeTocqueville in writing the book.

** Silver Burdett Ginn is most widely used in Kansas 8th grade classrooms. Holt Rinehart Winston, and Houghton Mifflin are also widely used.

11th grade summary:

* Declaration of Independence and United States Constitution - Included in:
History of the United States, 1991, Houghton Mifflin, pgs. 92-95 and 138-164.
America's Story, 1990, Houghton Mifflin, pgs. 180-183 and 206-235.
The Americans: A History, 1991, McDougal Littell, pgs. 121-123 and 156-172.

* Mayflower Compact - Full text included in:
History of the United States, p. R 16.

Mentioned in:

America's Story, p. 80.
The Americans: A History, p. 25

* Washington's Farewell Address - Mentioned in:
History of the United States, p. R 18.
The Americans: A History, p. 221.

** Houghton Mifflin texts are one of the most widely used in Kansas 11th grade classrooms.

Social Studies Textbook Use in Kansas:

Approximately 1/4 of Kansas School Districts were surveyed to determine what textbooks are used to teach Social Studies.

Analysis of texts done by:

Scott Waters, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, The Teachers college
Emporia State University

Mr. Chairman and Education Committee, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to come before you and testify on behalf of House Bill #2855. I am a parent of 2 children attending public school and a concerned citizen of the state of Kansas.

America is unquestionably the most powerful nation to ever be founded in the History of mankind. It is a country that has had more political, economic and military force than any that has preceded it. Only the most naive would say that this great country is only the result of luck. To say that would be like saying that Bill Gates and MicroSoft just happened, without any direction or purpose.

The United States of America, my beloved country, didn't just happen, Brilliant minds with a common purpose devised this great nation. Their motivation was the all consuming quest for freedom. Freedom for pauper and freedom for prince as well. They labored with a common purpose and with a discussion process that was to say the least, heated. The resulting documents that established this magnificent Union have caused a lump to rise in throats for over two hundred years. They have caused men to march off to war and willingly sacrifice their lives for it. They have caused hearts to swell with pride, put tears in eyes, and enabled men to rise above themselves to accomplish great things.

Switch now to the end of the 20th Century. Our current "enlightened" generation doesn't feel that old ideas or values are significant anymore. In our blindness we see only the present thought processes as valid and considering two hundred year old ideas is somehow "just out of touch". In

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our own great state of Kansas, educators have deemed the founding documents of our country as unnecessary.

I have come to you to state my feelings on House Bill# 2855. This is a bill that is the spirit and tradition of our Constitution. It does not restrict freedom. What it does rather is allow the liberty to explore the wisdom of the past. Our children, who will lead this country into the next generation are being deprived of the lessons of the past. As recent as last summer a policy making educator determined that historical documents are "unnecessary" for the education of our children.

I say let the children decide whether they are unnecessary or not. Allow them access to the Constitution, to the Bill of Rights, to the Declaration of Independence, to the Gettysburg Address. If they, the brightest and sharpest of our offspring, reject these documents then at least it was their choice. If on the other hand, they embrace the concepts that have guided this country for over two hundred years, then maybe by the Grace of God, the greatest years of our country are yet to come. Please join me in supporting House Bill #2855 and pass it out favorably.

Scott Hill
Abilene, Ks.



5801 West 115th Street
Koralchik Wing, Suite 203
Overland Park, KS 66211-1824
(913) 469-1340 FAX (913) 491-5591

OPPOSITION TO HB 2855

My name is Lloyd Hellman and I represent the Jewish Community Relations Bureau/American Jewish Committee. The JCRB/AJC is the social action arm of the Jewish Federation and represents the vast majority of the 20,000 Jews in Kansas. I am also representing the more than 1,400 members of the MAINstream Coalition in Johnson County, Kansas. I am testifying in opposition to HB 2855, the Heritage-Truth in History Bill.

There is currently no prohibition against discussing or posting any documents mentioned in the proposed bill so long as its purpose is civil and not directed at furthering sectarian religion.

Representative Kejr stated that "it is incredulous that legislation like this is even necessary." I agree with him – it is not necessary. The bill is a transparent attempt to empower those few educators who are driven by their sectarianism to post religious tracts for religious purposes. This, the legislature should not encourage; for it violates Section 7 of the Kansas Bill of Rights prohibiting preference to any religious establishment and the First Amendment of the U.S. Bill of Rights prohibiting establishment of religion by governments. Jefferson's separation of church and state is still the good doctrine upon which this great country has proceeded for 200 years.

While some founding fathers were religious zealots, their position was not sustained because the founding fathers had experienced the invasive effect of organized religion in matters of government and would have none of it. The greater majority were fearful of religion's intervention in government. It would be a

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distortion of history and of no benefit to our students to have religious views of some of the losers emphasized over the separation doctrine. We suggest the true reason for this bill is to "cover" promotion of sectarian religion in schools.

We stand opposed to this wasteful exercise and stand opposed to the passage of this unnecessary legislation.

Lloyd S. Hellman
9600 Chadwick
Overland Park, KS 66206



TO: House Committee on Education
FROM: Mark Tallman, Director of Governmental Relations
DATE: February 20, 1996

RE: Testimony on H.B. 2855

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

KASB appears today as opponents of H.B. 2855 for two reasons. First, we believe that school boards already have the authority to allow the reading and posting of the documents listed in Section 1 (a) of the bill. Second, we are unclear about the real meaning of subsections (b) and (c) of Section 1.

School boards already have the authority to determine instructional programs, curriculum and teaching materials. If anyone believes that boards do not have this authority, then we certainly have another case for school board "home rule!" We believe school boards take seriously their obligation to support instruction in American history. If they do not, the local election process is certainly capable of addressing the problem.

We do not understand the meaning of subsection (b). What does "no exclusion" mean? It is obviously impractical to include all writing, speeches, documents and proclamations of all the Founding Fathers and Presidents; and all "organic documents," Supreme Court decision and acts of Congress in any single course of studies or even requirement for graduation. How should schools comply with this language?

Subsection (c) says there shall be "no censorship" based on religious references. What does the bill mean by censorship? Who is censoring what, which requires such a bill to be passed? The role of religion in the public schools is generally limited by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which this act could not supersede. We are deeply concerned about placing schools in the crossfire between legislative mandates and judicial rulings.

It seems to us that the Legislature could accomplish the main purpose of this bill without raising these additional questions by passing a resolution urging boards to promote the teaching of these important documents.

Thank you for your consideration.

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