FROM: Phyllis Schlafly

68 FAIRMOUNT, ALTON, ILLINOIS 62002 / (618) 462-5415

RELEASE: May 8, 1984

WILL THE EDUCATION DEPT HEARINGS BE PUBLISHED?

Will the Department of Education publish -- or censor -- the record of the seven days of hearings it recently completed across the country on regulations for the Protection of Pupil Rights Act? To publish or not to publish, that is the question.

Secretary Terrel H. Bell and his Department are now sitting on more than a thousand pages of recorded testimony taken down by court reporters at full-day hearings in seven U.S. cities. These pages speak with the thunderous voice of hundreds of parents who are angry at how their children have been emotionally and mentally abused by experimental psychological and behavioral programs during classroom hours when the parents thought their children were being taught basic education.

Parents complained that such programs are alienating school children from their parents, from religious beliefs, and from our nation's patriotic heritage. Parents claim that educator "change agents" have spent federal tax dollars to use local schools as laboratories for social engineering and experimentation rather than for traditional academic instruction.

All that sort of thing is supposed to be in violation of a law passed by Congress in 1978 prohibiting psychological programs without the parents' consent. Although the law is five years old, the Department of Education is just getting around to asking for public comment on proposed regulations.

One Pennsylvania parent, testifying at the Washington, D.C., hearing, stated that she removed her four children from public schools after discovering that sexually explicit films were used in a "human development curriculum" required for all students. Specifically, she complained about a 20-minute film shown to eighth graders which depicted teenagers engaging in "nude masturbation in detail; it showed how men do it, women do it, why they do it, and where it feels best."

A spokesman for the Maryland Coalition of Concerned Parents testified that the schools have shifted from "cognitive academic learning to psychological development and

social adjustment." He complained that "pop psychology" is used to manipulate the children's feelings, attitudes and opinions.

Some psychological programs are funded in whole or in part by federal tax dollars, and others are simply given the federal stamp of approval. Many witnesses pointed a finger at the National Institute of Education, the National Diffusion Network, and the National Center for Educational Statistics as the fountainhead of such programs.

Parents told how arrogant educators act as though they think it is their prerogative to change and mold the values of children. Parents told how schools teach that it is "in" to be nonjudgmental about moral standards, to think that all opinions are of equal value, and that "nobody these days knows what's normal and not normal."

Witnesses told how children are taught in a thousand ways that parents are old-fashioned and often (or even usually) wrong. They are taught that situation ethics is the norm in today's pluralistic society, and that a child who maintains religious values is somehow out of step with today's secular society.

Parents told how psychological treatment is dished out in courses called family living, sexuality education, drug and alcohol education, nuclear war, and human development. Often the objectionable lessons are integrated in many different subjects.

After the Education Department hearing in Washington, D.C., one Department bureaucrat was overheard to say, "We're in big trouble." Another was heard to say, "I guess I didn't know as much about what is going on in the schools as I thought I did."

Back in 1974, Terrel H. Bell had this to say about the role of parents: "Parents have the right to expect that the schools, in their teaching approaches and selection of instructional materials, will support the values and standards that their children are taught at home. And if the schools cannot support those values, they must at least avoid deliberate destruction of them."

Continuing, he said, "Parents have the ultimate responsibility for the upbringing of their children. The school's authority ends where it infringes on this right. We must pay more attention to parents' values and seek their advice more frequently."

Parents certainly gave their advice at these Education Department hearings. Whether or not Secretary Bell publishes the record of the seven hearings will indicate whether or not he is listening to the parents' advice.