P.S. to the NEWS
by PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Box 618, Alton, Illinois 62002
Phone: 618-462-5415

RELEASE: November 26

YOUrH CRIME & SCHOOLS

New York City has recently developed a new problem a big rise in the number of vicious criminals who are only 12 to 16 years old. These adolescent criminals prey particularly on senior citizens -- those least able to defend themselves against murderers, muggers, and robbers. The youthful hoodlums show no fear of arrest or remorse when they are caught.

The NEW YORK TIMES reported that "no one seems to know with certainty what is behind the rise" in youth crime, but speculated that the causes could be the easy availability of handguns and knives, violence in the movies and on television, the laxity of the courts in convicting and sentencing them, or economic privation in the slums.

It is just possible that the protesting parents in Kenawha County, West Virginia have the answer to New York's new problem -- namely, the matter of _what children are taught and not taught in the schools.

Children are not born with a sense of right and wrong. These concepts, both in general and in specifics, must be taught to each child. But they are no longer taught in the public schools as a result of years of so-called "progressive education" and its assumption that right and wrong are relative rather than certain. The U.S. Supreme Court administered the coup de grace to moral education by removing God and prayer from the public schools.

Down in West Virginia, where people are less sophisticated than they are in New York, the parents engaged in an unusual intellectual exercise. They actually read the books used by their children in

(more)

the schools. They came to the conclusion that some of them are anti-God, anti-moral, and anti-patriotic.

The protesting parents reject the argument that, in order to "understand the world around us," we are required to give our chil dren books that promote a tolerance of violence, theft, adultery, ob scenity, profanity and blasphemy.

Maybe West Virginia parents are intuitively protecting their com munities against the kind of trouble New York City already has. In searching for the reasons for the increase in youth crime, maybe someone ought to read the books in the New York City schools and find out what the children there are being taught and not taught about obedience to the laws of our land.

Quite apart from whether the West Virginia textbooks are good or bad is another issue that is just as important -- who is going t0 control the textbooks? The West Virginia dispute reveals that t e most powerful forces are activated and orchestrated in order to pre vent mere P?rents and taxpayers from having any say so over what is taught in the schools that their taxes have paid for and which their children attend.

"Bookburner" is an irrational epithet hurled at anyone who ob jects to vulgar, obscene, or immoral books. There are hundreds of thousands of available books from which a tiny selection must be made by someone for use in elementary and secondary schools. The real ll"bookburners" are those who choose contemporary trasp or trivia over books that inspire the young generation with the achievements of great men and women and the wisdom of past generations.

(end