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by PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY
Box 618, Alton, 11linois 62002
Phone: 618-462-5415

SECULAR IfUM.ANISM

Most Congressional bills or amendments that pass one House but are not voted on in the other House die quietly without further controversy. An exception to this rule is an amendment to the education bill proposed by Congressman John Conlan which would have prevented the expenditure of Federal funds in the public schools for the purpose of promoting the religion of Secular Humanism. This amendment passed by 222 to 174 in the House, and then died in the Senate.

The Humanist Magazine has suddenly become very exercised about the Conlan bill, as well as about other efforts by religious parents to stop what they believe is the teaching of Secular Humanism in the public schools.

Humanism is best defined by the humanists themselves. The Second Humanist Manifesto, published in 1973 and signed by many leading educators, states: "As in 1933, humanists still believe that traditional theism, especially faith in the prayer-hearing God, assumed to love and care for persons, to hear and understand their prayers, and to be able to do something about them, is an unproved and outmoded faith. ••• We find insufficient evidence for belief in the existence of a supernatural; it is either meaningless or irrelevant to the question of the survival and fulfillment of the human race•••• We can discover no divine purpose or providence for the human species."

It is a historical fact that our Founding Fathers did not intend the First Amendment to prohibit all religious teachings except Secular Humanism from the schools. When the Constitution was written, religious

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nstruction in school was considered an essential part of education.

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existence, the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously declared in the Church
of the Holy Trinity v. United States that our history provides a "mass
of organic utterances that this is a Christian nation." It was not
until the second half of the twentieth century that the Supreme Court
forbade religious education, Bible reading, and prayers from the
public schools.

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religious teaching was prohibited, the gap was filled in many schools
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Parents are now fighting back. Many are organizing private schools.
In Ohio alone, nearly a hundred new Christian schools have been started.

Even in the public schools, the parents can probably prevail. Since
the Supreme Court has declared Secular Humanism to be a "religion," the
same First Amendment that bars pro-God religious teaching must necessar-
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