

These are suggested because they are being used with success in many school systems and because they offer opportunities for young people to participate in setting up the problems to be studied.

We live in critical times. We have a heavy responsibility in preparing our young people to maintain and improve our way of life. Sound information on

problems which confront us, skill in reflective thinking, and a genuine concern that these problems can be solved are fundamentals of citizenship education. These fundamentals cannot be acquired in isolation from life. They must be developed through the study of the current problems of our communities, our nation and the world.

Evaluation of Instructional Materials

FLOYD L. HAIGHT

Criteria for evaluation of instructional materials, as developed and adopted by the American Legion, are reported by Floyd L. Haight, Social Science Department, Dearborn High School, Dearborn, Michigan.

MOST thoughtful American citizens have come to realize the danger in the existence in our country of an alien ideology which seeks to destroy by force, if possible, our democratic way of life. They agree that all available legal means should be used to uproot such a subversive force. Some discerning citizens have detected also other subtle influences at work. Such influences are harder to recognize, yet some are potentially extremely dangerous to our democratic way of life. Laws and statutes for control of such influences are difficult to enact and to enforce. In addition to such legislation, the everyday judgment of the everyday citizen must be enlisted to combat such infiltrating influences. But by what criteria shall our judgments be guided?

Realizing both the obvious and the hidden dangers in the existence of such an ideology, some organizations and in-

dividuals, in their enthusiasm have been somewhat indiscriminate and overzealous in their condemnation of persons, as well as of textbooks and instructional materials. These attacks have always been based upon claims of lack of patriotism, misrepresentation of facts or unfairness of content. Some of these attacks may have proved justified; yet obviously many have been unfair. Thoughtful persons have recognized that many unjust attacks have developed because some prominent individual has expressed a feeling of bias or of prejudice. Such a prejudiced or biased individual, while blandly assuming himself to be inviolate and above reproach, sometimes freely, carelessly, incorrectly and unjustly calls persons who disagree with him, "Reds" or "Communists."

Such a policy has sometimes permitted the reputations of men and women to be smeared even though

their views may have been as far from communistic as night is from day. Accusations have been known in specific instances to cause lasting injury. Unfortunately, the accuser in such a case has often gone unharmed, with the inflated ego of a gladiator who has just slain his victim. Rarely has an apology been offered in those instances, even though evidence has proved the accusation false.

How can a solution to this problem be found that will protect the innocent from slander and that at the same time will keep our liberties from being used by those who have dedicated themselves to destroying the very thing which we are fighting for today?

Legion Acts to Protect Innocent

Members of the American Legion have given much serious thought to these two problems. The Legion has passed resolutions condemning communism and dictatorial policies, and it has offered its aid in combating these influences. It has also passed a mandate to discourage and condemn the careless, incorrect and unjust use of such words as "Red" and "Communist" and the attacking of teachers and other persons who merely have views different from those of their accusers. Matters of public education also have been of concern to members of the American Legion. In state and national conventions resolutions favoring better standards in public education have been adopted. Legion members, once they are thoroughly informed, have usually been found willing to carry out these educational mandates.

By 1947 the state educational committee of the Department of Michigan,

American Legion, had developed one of the broadest educational programs of any organization in Michigan, and this program was adopted at the 1947 American Legion state convention.

On the same day of the adoption of this program, newspaper headlines stated that the Hughes textbooks were being attacked by the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The satisfaction of our recent success disappeared. We discovered this new development and agreed that it would be most helpful if a set of criteria for evaluation of textbooks and of utterances considered unpatriotic could be set up and adopted by the American Legion, ready for use in cases of controversies such as these. After some discussion we arrived at three conclusions:

- Such criteria should not be used for the launching of textbook investigations. They should merely be ready and available for non-partisan use in dignified, unprejudiced and constructive evaluation of any textbook which might be subjected to attack.
- A qualified committee whose loyalty could not be questioned should be appointed to draw up such criteria.
- Members appointed to the committee should be legionnaires of some prominence.¹

The resulting committee held meetings over a six months' period discussing and ironing out the delicate questions with which they must deal. Criteria which they drew up were so thor-

¹ The following were appointed: Charles Brake, *chairman*; G. Robert Koopman; Kaye Buttars; Wilmer Menge; Harry Johnson; Hugh Neale; and Floyd L. Haight, *ex-officio chairman*.

ough that they were labeled by one commentator as the "Magna Carta of academic freedom." The Department of Michigan passed a resolution asking the National American Legion to adopt these criteria for the evaluation of instructional materials. This was done at the national convention of the American Legion in Philadelphia in September, 1949.

CRITERIA ADOPTED

The report of the educational committee of the American Legion, Department of Michigan, to the national convention included a statement of purposes, historical background, procedures for use, cautions and safeguards, as well as the criteria.²

Criteria for evaluation of the loyalty factor as expressed in instructional materials were:

- In the study of democracy both its accomplishments and failures are examined.
- In the treatment of the individual's relationship to government his obligations are stressed as well as his rights.
- In the presentation of the bitter truths of the history of democracy, an attempt is made to present constructive recommendations for preventing recurrence of the undesirable results described.
- The materials help students to develop their own methods of propaganda analysis to be applied to all situations.

² The entire report as adopted by the national convention may be had by writing the Department of Michigan, American Legion, 1702 Barlum Tower, Detroit, Mich.; National Headquarters, American Legion, Indianapolis, Ind.; or Henry Holt and Co., Inc., Chicago, Ill.

- In dealing with controversial issues both sides of the issue are fairly presented.

Procedures for using the evaluative criteria:

- Arrange for joint committees of professional educators and lay persons to work cooperatively on the analysis and evaluation of instructional materials.
- Prepare questionnaires³ and check lists based on the criteria, to be used as a guide by social science teachers, administrators and lay people in analyzing and evaluating textbooks and other types of instructional materials. The items in a questionnaire or check list should deal with:
 - (a) The several types of educational purposes that may be served by books and other printed materials used in classrooms.
 - (b) The extent to which statements of fact are documented.
 - (c) The extent to which the five criteria are met.
- Analyze the purposes of the author by securing information about his experience and competence in the field in which he writes—his standing among recognized authorities in his field—other contributions he has made to the interpretation of knowledge in his field.
- Recommend that the school system develop a statement of policy on the teaching of controversial issues. (The policy developed in the Cincinnati Public School System might be of use as an example.)

³ A questionnaire for procedure may be had by writing the Department of Michigan or the National Headquarters, American Legion.

- Discriminate between source materials such as *Mein Kampf* and textbooks. Any document is admissible to

a learning situation. The question of its relationship to the course or unit should be determined.

Preparing Teachers for Controversial Issues

J. MARTIN KLOTSCHÉ

Schools should develop persons eager for truth and teachers should be capable of encouraging and guiding students in their approach to it, according to J. Martin Klotsche, President, State Teachers College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

ONE fact seems to have emerged clearly out of the present world confusion. It is that we are engaged in a decisive struggle between those who want to remain free and those who are determined regardless of cost to enslave the human spirit.

This is not the first time in history that man has been confronted with this problem. Yet the effort now being conducted by the Communists, in ruthlessness and singleness of purpose, is without equal in the annals of history. For in the communist world the state has intruded into every phase of human life and in so doing has destroyed creativeness, eliminated criticism, penalized idiosyncrasy, with a resulting enfeeblement of the intellect that should be of real concern to all of us. It is the issue of freedom versus dogma, then, which should have top priority in the war in which we are presently engaged.

Now in dealing with the ideological threat offered by the communist world, we can proceed in one of several different ways. Sensing the danger of this threat to our own way of life, we can emulate the Soviets by resorting to the

same tactics that they use. Needless to say, there are persons in America today who in their mistaken zeal would fasten upon all of us the very evils that they abhor in our adversaries. Yet these same persons would attempt to defend their behavior behind the label of Americanism. There is perhaps no more insidious way than this for making respectable ideas which otherwise we would abhor.

Certainly in becoming aware of the tactics of the opposition we should not become so hypnotized by their actions that unconsciously we imitate them. Let us admit that the fundamental problem of our age is the preservation of democracy and of our free institutions. But let us also candidly state that we shall not solve this problem by resorting to the same tactics that are employed by the Communists, who assume that they are omnipotent, omniscient and guiltless and thus can turn falsehood into truth and ignorance into virtue.

Freedom to Inquire

But there is another way of dealing with the problem at hand. One of the

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