

Letters To The Editor (Continued From Preceding Page)

deal with feelings, thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, values, habits, behavior and family life?

The federal Hatch Amendment or Pupil Privacy Act, which Quest states in their workshop guidebook that they do not violate, says that psychological, psychiatric or personality testing or treatment—defined by this law to be any activity not directly related to academics which attempts to determine or treat any of the above without prior informed written consent of a parent or guardian of a minor is forbidden.

Also, all materials used are to be made available to parents. Since this is the case, why are the probing, personal diary-like journals, "my reflections" they're called, which all children taking A/A (Quest) are required to write their feelings, thoughts, attitudes, family life, etc. in—why are they required to write these personal things in them?

Why does the guidebook say Quest does not do journaling? And why are the children instructed by the advisor/teacher that these journals may not be brought home and must not leave teachers' possession?

Guidebook also instructs teachers not to correct or grade grammar or spelling in these journals. Isn't that a strange instruction for a teacher? Why does the guidebook, in giving teacher instructions for dealing with a student trying to sabotage the class, call the student a saboteur?

If Quest (SFA) is in total compliance with state requirements and federal law, why did the N.C. State Board of Education remove it from the state's approved list of recommended drug curriculums at their April 1991 meeting? We have a copy of these minutes and also a letter from Steve Hicks, chief consultant of the Department of Public Instruction, stating Quest was removed because it did not meet state standards.

Jeff Cumbie told our local board of education at the September 1991 meeting that Quest would be reinstated on the state-approved list at the state school board's October 1991 meeting. This statement was based on information received from Steve Hicks.

I and a friend attended that state board of education meeting Oct. 2 and 3, all committee meetings and full board meeting. At no time was Quest (SFA) mentioned nor does it appear on the agenda. At great time, expense and trouble, we attended to hear for ourselves the presentation of Quest. However, after these most enlightening two days, before leaving Raleigh we attempted to see Steve Hicks.

In view of the fact that there are several letters from the Department of Public Instruction, Mr. Hicks, plus the minutes from the April state board of education meeting, all of which have only confused the whole Quest issue further, I felt a brief visit could perhaps be helpful in answering some of our questions. Mr. Hicks refused to see us, even for two or three minutes. Wouldn't you think he'd want to speak to these concerns and put people's minds at ease?

The workshop guidebook instructs that children who are removed from Quest are to be given a profitable or positive alternative. Are the growing number of children at Shallotte Middle being provided with a posi-

tive alternative as is the child at South Brunswick Middle who was removed? Or are they being treated as though they're being punished—kept in the office, a conference room and a counselor's office—forbidden to talk or look around? And have they been told no class is going to be created for them? I and many others salute and applaud them for bringing their Bibles and reading them during this time even though they are forbidden to speak to one another.

Isn't it interesting that 35 miles below us in Horry County in South Carolina the county school board has ruled that it would probably violate the Constitution if the Gideons were allowed to give all fifth graders a Bible even if permission slips were sent home like sex education permission slips?

And isn't it amazing that 35 miles above us in New Hanover County the rather lopsided committees appointed to review and recommend to the school board the sex education proposals and direction they should go would hardly even listen to and refused to recommend anything that the three (two on one and one on one, two committees, 30 people total) the three people who were pro-abstinence-based education endorsed.

And isn't it really ironic that we're hearing more and more from folks who've just come from Russia that even the officials there are asking, begging, "Please bring Bibles and Christian literature, please go in our schools and tell our children about God and about Jesus. We have no hope, no faith, no values. They have no hope. Please bring them hope."

Is it true that the time for A/A was taken from band, chorus, art and physical education? Is it more important to spend this ever-shrinking instructional time exploring and documenting our children's private feelings and family life? Have the teachers at Shallotte Middle been instructed that children for no reason are ever to be allowed to miss A/A class?

I have spoken directly to Quest International twice and was told by them that there is a 1985 edition and a 1988 revised edition only. There is a draft of what will be published in February or March as an insert into unit six. This consists of four pages, two sheets front and back, which do state clearly the wrong and harmful no usage message. I have a copy of this draft and all other documents, letters and books referred to herein.

If the Quest material our children have been instructed from since '89-'90, 6th-8th grades, has been in total compliance, the question then is why is this insert necessary?

And will it be sufficient to offset six other units which seek to indoctrinate each child into believing that they have the right to decide for themselves about drugs, alcohol, smoking, sex, etc.; in other words to choose for themselves what their own values will be? Having been repeatedly been led to examine and ponder their beliefs, feelings, values, family, etc., and then further instructed to take risks and using decision-making processes to make their own choices, is it any wonder that all available research, even Quest's own, shows a marked increase, as much as 40%, in involvement in

drugs, alcohol, smoking and sexual promiscuity, and, a greatly reduced perception of risk?

What else could be the result when 10-14-year-olds are taught that as long as they go through the five-step decision-making process, that whatever their decision, it will be right for them?

A quote from the 1988 revised edition says, "Some teachers may not be comfortable teaching this kind of course, and we strongly recommend that no one be required to do so." Shouldn't this cause red flags to be raised by teachers and parents? What about our trusting, innocent children? Must they be required because of parental ignorance or misinformation to submit to this? Do the teachers of Brunswick County know that there is a federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) ruling (1984) which clearly prohibits employers from requiring employees to be subjected to new-age type training which would violate their own beliefs; and that as defined by this ruling, Quest employs many of these new-age techniques?

Do the citizens of Brunswick County understand that "All it takes for evil to prevail is for good people to do nothing?" (Edmund Burke).

Chairman Donna Baxter, speaking for our board of education, said that since the board members had not received a single phone call in opposition to Quest and since they had only heard positive comments, it would be continued this year in our schools. Perhaps some phone calls are in order, and some visits to schools, and some questions of your own, and some more letters to editors, school board, central office, Department of Public Instruction, Steve Hick, and even Lt. Gov. Jim Gardner who, when I asked if he was aware of Quest, assured me he was and would like any information regarding it.

Quest (SFA) is now fully implemented at Shallotte Middle and South Brunswick Middle with plans to shortly include Leland Middle and Waccamaw, grades 6-8.

I was not the only one, or one of two, who raised questions and concerns, with much information and evidence, and asked for answers of our Brunswick County Board of Education at the September 1991 meeting. There were at least 14 others there also to voice the same concerns. The "Hurry," Ms. Usher, is that there are too many questions which too many people don't want asked and for which they don't have answers. Take a lesson from the workshop guidebook, the page teaching effective listening (I'm not kidding—it's really there): "When listening to the speaker (Quest trainer) accept what you hear even if you don't agree." Shades of George Orwell, 1984 and Animal Farm! I accept as highest acclaim the accusations of paranoia and McCarthyism, especially considering who they came from, and why, voicing concerns and questions about our most precious heritage, our children.

Quest (Skills for Adolescence) 6-8 is still a removed-for-not-meeting state-requirements-curriculum at this time and since the April 1991 state board of education meeting.

Mrs. Janet Pope
Shallotte

shout if they could return.

Mr. Editor I've had my last say concerning this matter. Call your next case.

William H. Stanley
Shallotte

**W. A. And W. H.—
Not Same Stanley**

To the editor:

The W. A. "Bill" Stanley who lives on the Bricklanding Road is not the W. H. Stanley who has written those letters to the editor in the newspaper.

W. A. Bill Stanley
Rt. 9, Shallotte



PHOTO BY BILL FAVER

SANDWICH TERNS are often seen among Royal Terns on our beaches.

Look For Surprises On The Beach

BY BILL FAVER

One of the exciting things about spending some time on the beach is the possibility of discovering something new. It can be a shell you haven't found before, or a piece of driftwood polished by the sea, or a species of bird you didn't expect to see. I was surprised last week when I discovered among the Royal Terns several birds with long black, yellow-tipped bills. They were a little smaller than the Royal Terns and somewhat larger than the Common Terns and we identified them as Sandwich Terns, formerly called Cabot's Terns.

The guidebooks tells us these birds often are found with Royal Terns and even nest among them. Both are regular summer residents of the Carolina coast. Sandwich Terns are long, narrow-winged, pale-looking birds with a gray back and a black cap. The feathers at the back of the head are elongated and appear to be a crest. In winter the forehead becomes

white.

These interesting terns are found along the Atlantic coast and on the European coast. They appear farther north in Europe because of the influence of the Gulf Stream. Their name comes from association with Sandwich, England and they carry the scientific name of *Sterna Sandvicensis*.

Sandwich Terns often feed offshore and look for small fish, shrimp, marine worms, and squid. They are a fast and powerful bird when flying and are hard to distinguish from the Common Terns unless you can see the bills. The Royals have an orange-red bill with a black tip in summer and this becomes mostly dark in winter plumage. The best distinguishing mark of the Sandwich Tern is the black bill with its yellow tip.

The call of this interesting bird is a grating, rather loud "kirrik," "kirrik."

Now is the time to be on the lookout for these and other special birds along our coasts. Migration is under way and almost any day we can expect to find some surprises as we walk out on the beach. Keep your eyes open and look among the familiar gulls and terns to see if you can spot something new. It's fun!

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Exchange Ideas Without Name-Calling

To the editor:

Thank you for publishing my letter Oct. 3, and thank you for publishing Dr. Lee Langston's response Oct. 10. This is great. This is America at work; ideas being freely exchanged without name-calling or using smear words like McCarthyism.

My letter was not in response to Dr. Langston's speech. It was in response to the article published in the *Beacon* Sept. 12 and he was quoted as using both smear words, McCarthyism and schizophrenia.

Words like that upset me because I've heard them before. Once in Charlotte I was accused of being a

member of the KKK because I said I was not in favor of forced school busing. This kind of thing does not belong in American society.

I agree with Dr. Langston, our students and teachers are responsible, but we must give them a better curriculum to work with, otherwise there will be no improvement.

The good old days were when the average person could afford to go to the doctor and the hospital, buy a home instead of a trailer, and one person working with a average job could support their family.

Yes, the good old days did seem much better. I'm sure there are a lot of people in America who would

VOTE WALLY AUSLEY

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