

Voucher-taking French schools were forced to admit Algerian immigrants as part of the non-discrimination policy, and whatever we think of multiculturalism generally, it hardly creates the best possible learning environment. The French schools that wanted to retain distinctive linguistic, cultural, and religious traits refused tax dollars. But they have had to compete with subsidized schools, and therefore suffer artificial financial strains.

Voucher advocates point out that the U.S. is one of the few Western countries not to spend public money on private elementary and secondary schools. Right. But the U.S. doesn't have fully socialized medicine either, which also makes it unique. America has the largest independent-school sector in the world. That's something to be proud of, not to jettison through vouchers.

Look at Milwaukee, the only voucher program operating in the country. The 12 schools chosen to receive funds have become public in every sense but formal ownership. If they allow prayer or teach anything nominally religious, for example, they're blackballed. Students already in private schools are ineligible for funds.

Here is a snapshot of Milwaukee's voucher-taking population, as provided by Daniel McGroarty in the Fall 1994 *Public Interest*: 60% of the

parents are currently receiving welfare; 77% are from single-parent households; 93-96% are black; they are "very near the bottom in terms of academic achievement"; and they are likely to have "a history of behavior-related problems."

Such kids are far from hopeless, but mixing them up with good students from stable homes is hardly the answer, as busing has shown. Yet such mixing is mandated in Milwaukee. Schools getting vouchers must have 51% paying customers. (But as these people leave the changed schools, the non-welfare minimum has been lowered to 35%). Republican governors should ask themselves: how exactly does the middle class benefit from such a program? Liberal social engineering, which seeks to orient all of society towards the underclass, had a lot to do with the defeat of Democrats in November 1994. It's politically stupid to bring such an idea back under a conservative guise. ■

P.C. Watch

by L.H.R., Jr.

Goodbye, Kitty

Barney's, the expensive New York City clothing store, removed a mock manger scene from its front window after protests from the Catholic

League threatened to disrupt Christmas sales.

The display, created by sculptor Tom Sachs, was entitled the "Hello Kitty Nativity." It featured a kitten wearing a beanie as the Christ Child, Bart Simpson dolls as the Three Kings, and the singer-slut Madonna, bra loosened to reveal her breasts and legs spread apart, as the Blessed Mother. Over the scene, instead of the Star of Bethlehem, were the "Golden Arches" of McDonalds.

A couple of years ago, Barney's featured a Christmas tree decorated with colored condoms. (WINS News Radio, New York City, 12/10/94, and *New York Times*, 12/13/94)

Gullah-ble

The American Bible Association has been funding a massive project for 15 years to translate the Scriptures into "Gullah," described as a black language spoken by 20,000 descendants of slaves on the sea islands of South Carolina and Georgia. Lead by a Baptist minister, the Rev. Irvin Green, 13 other Gullah speakers and linguists hope to finish the New Testament in three years. The ABA has just published their Gospel of St. Luke.

"It's our language," says Mr. Green. "It's just wonderful to come to this." We have "tried to undo 350 to 400 years of indoctrination that the way we speak is bad and wrong. It was drilled into us if you want to get

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ahead, you must get rid of the Gullah."

Some people wanted to make up a new alphabet, since Gullah is an "oral language," and to avoid using the white man's letters. But cooler heads prevailed, since the Gullah speakers are largely illiterate, and the translation uses an "alphabet based on English." Despite talk of Gullah being based on West African dialects, the true nature of this "language" is shown by the title of the published Gospel: "De Good Nyews Bout Jedus Christ Wit Luke Write." (*Washington Times*, 11/12/94)

Alienation and Angst

"As bells jingle on Christmas eve, many American Jews [not living in New York] feel a familiar kind of claustrophobia," writes David Margolick in the *New York Times* (12/24/94). They can't shop because everything is closed. They can't go out because it's so cold. They can't even "watch television because it's filled with Christmas specials." For them, "alienation and angst are as much a part of Christmas as Santa Claus and his reindeer."

In response, "800 Jews in the Bay Area" will eat Chinese food and laugh at "a cross-section of California's Jewish comedians: men and women, straight and gay, short and tall." There were even fortune cookies "stuffed with bits of Yiddish wisdom," such as "With one rear end you can't dance at two weddings." Then the audience sang "the an-

them of late-20th century American yuppie Jewry, not 'Hatikvah' or the Internationale, but 'Sunrise, Sunset.'"

Gud Greef

In a letter to family court, Harlem junior high school principal Harvey Young defended one of his students. He also spelled like one of them: "William was present during the time of this robbery [sic], however he was not the main culprittnore [sic] shuld [sic] he be charged. William was traveling with a friend when the robbery [sic] took place and I feel this is being blown out of proportion [sic]." (*New York Post*, 12/16/94)

Did Freud Kill Mahler?

Sigmund Freud and Gustav Mahler took a famous four-hour walk in the Dutch town of Leiden in 1910. The composer was distraught over an affair his wife, Alma, was having with the architect Walter Gropius, and after much see-sawing, decided to seek the help of Freud. Now the researches of a Philadelphia psychiatrist, Emmanuel E. Garcia, have thrown some new light on the incident.

Alma was 20 years younger, and Freud told Mahler he was a replacement for her father. Mahler himself, claimed Freud, has been looking for a replacement for his mother. The proof? Alma's middle name, Maria, was the same as Mahler's mother's first name. Freud later told the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society—Garcia discovered—

that "Mahler was at a turning point in his life," and Freud reveled in his power of turning him towards his music or his wife. Freud chose the slutish Alma. He had long been interested in the "largely unknown territory of genius," said Freud, and he decided to experiment on Mahler, even though he knew it might "damage the intuitive creative process." Mahler took Freud's advice, although his wife was promiscuous for the rest of her life. Mahler was unable to finish his 10th Symphony, and wrote nothing else between his talk with Freud and his unexpected death 10 months later. "Turning to his wife" came "at the expense of his creative wellsprings," says Garcia, "and could well have hastened his death." (*Washington Post*, 12/29/94).

Outland

When "Outland" and "Bloom County" cartoonist Berkeley Breathed was asked by *Omni* magazine what extraterrestrial visitors should be told, he said: "Naturally, official victim status would need to be established, a grievance group founded, and letterheads designed. A suitable term for their minority status would need to be determined even before their feet, or tentacles, or ambulatory hair follicles reached the ground from the craft. For instance, 'alien of color' or 'non-color' if pigment-challenged." (*Washington Post*, 1/4/95) ■