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~~STATEMENT TO THE CURRICULUM COMMISSION~~

The Jewish Community Relations Council of San Francisco having received over the years a small but steady stream of expressions of concern on this subject by parents of Jewish children attending public schools, urges the Curriculum Commission in reviewing song-books for use in California's public schools to keep in mind the religious sensibilities of boys and girls who will be using these books, including those who are of the Christian faith, and those who are not. It would seem appropriate in choosing materials for these books to give priority to the principle of avoiding violation of any student's individual conscience, or the presentation of materials in a way which may cause a child to feel set apart from his fellow students in an embarrassing way.

We do not suggest the exclusion of all materials with a religious content or reference from these books, For example, references to God in a patriotic song or other songs not primarily religious in character are not a matter of concern.

Apart from the song-books themselves, it would be most helpful were the teachers provided with a manual to accompany each song-book containing background materials on the various songs, and suggestions to the teacher for treatment of songs with religious content in ways which may help to avoid unpleasant experiences for children of the various faiths. In addition, the manual could suggest groupings of songs which would provide the balance in practice which we hope the books will achieve in print, or at least point out to the teacher the desirability of grouping the songs so as to achieve balance.

The Jewish Community Relations Council maintains a continuing interest in this problem and related problems involving other types of textbooks, within the general field of human relations. We would welcome the opportunity to consult with the Curriculum Commission further on this question or on such other matters as to which we may be of assistance.