

Teacher Sues School Board

Fifth Estate Collective

1969

Patrick Eady, the Lamphere High School teacher who lost his job last March when a White Panther speaker used the word "fuck" at a student assembly, struck back in three broad-ranging court actions.

Eady has filed suit in Federal District Court for \$450,000 damages under the Ku Klux Act of 1871 for deprivation of his civil rights against the Superintendent of Schools, members of the Lamphere Board of Education, a police officer who brought criminal charges against Eady, and Madison Heights Municipal Judge Edward W. Lawrence.

Eady also seeks to transfer the criminal proceedings still pending before Lawrence to the federal court. A further suit for breach of contract was filed in Oakland County Circuit Court by Eady and the Lamphere teachers' organization.

Eady, the former chairman of the English and Social Studies Departments of Lamphere High School, contends the policy of inviting outside speakers to address students on controversial subjects was specifically approved by the school board and the administration, and that he was not present when members of the White Panther group used language which caused offense to some parents in the community.

Eady charges that since permission for the meeting was given in advance, he was used as a "scapegoat" by the school board and the administration to deflect public criticism from themselves. Having permitted outside speakers to address students generally, Eady asserts, the school board could not constitutionally censor or discriminate against radical political views.

William Sloan, the cop and parent of a Lamphere student and Judge Lawrence are alleged to have begun a criminal action without proper prior investigation, which charges Eady with a non-existent offense. A motion to dismiss the criminal proceedings was filed before Judge Lawrence last March but has never been decided.

The complaint charges that Judge Lawrence boasted in a public restaurant that he had caused the arrest of Eady and another teacher and would deal with them severely as common criminals despite the fact that he had heard no evidence against them and they were constitutionally presumed to be innocent.

The White Panther materials distributed to Lamphere students were similar to those involved in a recent Belleville case which resulted in ouster of a student. Federal Judge Thornton noted that the same four-letter word was found in "Catcher in the Rye," which was on a student reading list and that it was accordingly inconsistent to regard the word as basis for action against a student.

Eady charges that last December the Lamphere School Board and administration refused to ban the Salinger novel for student use, but seized upon the offending word as an excuse to oust him from employment and satisfy pressure from right-wing community groups.

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