

Case 5

You are the Principal of Pleasantville High School, located in an area twenty-five miles from the center of a large Midwestern city. Originally semi-rural, the area has undergone rapid growth and social change over the past two decades. Completion of a major expressway has brought high tech growth and large numbers of engineers, scientists, and other professional people with extremely diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds.

Ahmed Said, a student at Pleasantville High School, browses the shelves of the school library one day in search of sources for his history paper on the historical roots of the Arab-Israeli conflict. His eyes fall upon a volume entitled The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* which he looks over and decides to check out. The next day at school he tells other students about the contents of the book. A Jewish student, David Greenburg, overhears Ahmed's description of The Protocols and tells his parents about it.

Deeply disturbed, David's parents contact the B'nai Brith Anti Defamation League ((ADL), a group devoted to combating anti-Semitism). After verifying that Pleasantville High School's library in fact has a shelf copy of The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, the ADL lodges a furiously angry protest with the Principal of Pleasantville High School (i.e. yourself). You, in turn, investigate the situation and learn the following. It appears that in the early years of the high school, when it opened in the late 1960's, there was an assistant school librarian with anti-Semitic inclinations who worked for the high school only a short time before being let go for unsatisfactory work. This individual, however, during her short tenure, had the responsibility of ordering books, and it is believed that, without authorization, she had The Protocols of the Elders of Zion purchased by the library.

*The Protocols of the Elders of Zion is a notorious tract of anti-Semitic propaganda, widely used to stir up anti Semitic passions in Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Purporting to be the manifesto of a tightly knit Jewish conspiracy bent on dominating the world, The Protocols is a fraud, in all likelihood, the work of secret police in czarist Russia during the late nineteenth century, who wanted to provoke widespread anti-Semitic violence against Russian Jews.