

to the City authorities, and any criminal action would be, of course, dependent upon the action of the State's Attorney. But that isn't exactly what I'm referring to. I am referring to the disciplinary problem that may not indicate the necessity for taking punitive action, but simply a more active and well-thought-out role on the part of the school and police authorities to deal effectively with the experimentations of children who always, from the time they are born, like to test the limits of authority of adults.

Q. Governor, can you give us an idea of where this lack of discipline is specifically occurring, and also what kind of remedial action you're thinking about taking?

A. Well, I think without any question the beginnings of it are occurring in the home. Much of the trouble comes because the first contact that the child has with a disciplined life comes when he attends school. It does occur within the systems too, and of course there are some people in the school system, some professionals, who are now taking the attitude that it is no longer the teacher's role to be a disciplinarian — that he is there to teach and what goes on in the halls and rooms, what goes on outside his specific teaching responsibility, is not his concern. I don't think this is the role of a teacher. I believe very strongly that the professional teacher recognizes that his or her purpose is to formulate a young character — not just to provide sources of information.

Q. Governor, there was a case recently of a male teacher who said he failed to break up a conflict between two young ladies because he was afraid that he would be accused of manhandling them. Doesn't this deter teachers from stepping in and stopping this sort of violence?

A. Yes, of course it does, and this is an area in which school authorities should make it clear by specific instruction about when there would be a reasonable cause for a teacher to place his hands on a student. Now, obviously, the usual crime of assault and battery occurs when I place my hands on you. If I see you attempting to assault and stab a person and I rush over and deter you, of course, in my attempt to save the person who's being assaulted, I'm not going to be charged with assault and battery. In other words, we can't rationalize or generalize in every case what is an improper placing of hands on a student. But certainly anyone with common sense should know that if two children are fighting and one looks as though he's about to be injured as a result of the altercation, a teacher would in my opinion be unquestionably justified in grabbing both of them by the scruff of the neck and separating them.