

CHRISTMAS FOES WALK A MINEFIELD

It was a tricky season for those who delight in warring with Christmas. Consider what happened in Waterbury, Connecticut.

Erik Brown is the principal of Walsh Elementary in the Waterbury School District. His staff was under strict orders not to employ secular, as well as religious, Christian symbols when they enjoyed their “winter celebration” on December 21. Yet Christmas carols were sung at the event, as were Hanukkah songs. And students were given gifts.

Is there a law against the display of secular holiday symbols in Connecticut schools? No. So why were they banned? Brown said, “It is state law that a public school can’t knowingly exclude children.” He is, of course, wrong: there is no such law. If there were, then his school would be open on April 2. But there is no school on that day, and that is because the Waterbury School District Calendar marks that day as “Good Friday.”

Why were Christmas carols and Hanukkah songs allowed to be sung on “winter celebration” day? Don’t those songs exclude Buddhists? And if those songs were okay, why were teachers forbidden from displaying Frosty the Snowman, never mind Baby Jesus? Moreover, why was it okay to sing “Santa Claus is Coming to Town,” but it wasn’t okay to display a poster of Kris Kringle?

Come to think of it, why did they have a “winter celebration” at all? To be exact, there is no “summer celebration” scheduled for June 21. So why the discrimination? There had to be students who would like to sing “Those Lazy, Hazy, Crazy Days of Summer” and receive another round of gifts. How could they be legally excluded under Connecticut law?

It seemed to us that Mr. Brown sat through one too many multicultural workshops. We urged our members to call him and to wish him a Merry Christmas.