SOCIETY

In early November 1905, Harvard football coach Bill Reid—whose $7,000 salary exceeded by 40 percent that of any professor on the faculty—got word that the trustees had secretly decided to abolish the sport. Reid and four allies hatched a plan to save their game—by openly condemning its brutality and recommending that it be "radically changed." Harvard's president, Charles W. Eliot, was skeptical.

But Reid persisted, trying to persuade other college coaches to agree to Harvard-proposed rules changes. He predicted that without reforms, Harvard would abolish the sport and that other colleges would inevitably follow. It would mean, Reid warned, that football would be replaced: "This will mean English rugby." It was too terrible a prospect. Reid won, and football, under new rules, survived.

Bring Back the Melting Pot

"Ethnicity—North, South, West" by Nathan Glazer, in *Commentary* (May 1982), 165 East 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022.

Since the mid-1960s, new waves of immigrants—Latin Americans, Asians, and Africans—have come to America. In language, religion, or culture, they differ measurably from the European immigrants who preceded them. And they have been treated differently: through laws to help them keep their old languages and through government boosts to an increasing number of ethnic groups deemed "deprived." Such special handling is a "sure recipe for conflict." So argues Glazer, a Harvard sociologist.

European immigrants came to this country in massive numbers during the 19th and early 20th centuries. The influx halted during the 1920s, then resumed, much reduced, during the '50s and '60s. For those immigrants—Irish, Germans, Italians, Jews, Poles, Ukrainians—the open, competitive system worked: They, or their sons and daughters, eventually obtained a fair measure of economic or political success. But this system did not seem to work so well after World War II for Hispanics or Southern blacks who migrated north. For example, European immigrants had used politics to advance themselves, but despite the Voting Rights Act of 1965, blacks in Northern cities continued to vote in very low numbers. In response, Washington backed ever more extensive efforts to assure equality by conferring special benefits on blacks, Hispanics, and other "deprived" ethnic groups.

But as America's ethnic groups multiply, says Glazer, it becomes more difficult to decide who really deserves special treatment. The 1.5 million Asians who immigrated to the United States during the '70s (up from 362,000 during the '60s) included Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, Koreans, Asian Indians, Vietnamese, Cambodians, Laotians, and Pacific Islanders. Many Asian Indians were educated professionals; many Koreans, able small businessmen; many Vietnamese, adept students. Do they deserve equal, or any, government assistance? Do they deserve it in the same measure as urban blacks or Hispanics? "A com-

petition over who is more discriminated against, and who more worthy of federal or other protection," says Glazer, "may well develop." The consequences for society could be disastrous.

The answer, he suggests, is to return to the long-abandoned vision of the American "melting pot." Assimilation as an ideal worked for the old immigrants; it may yet work for the new ones.

Student Rights and the Supreme Court

"Past Court Cases and Future School Discipline" by Henry S. Lufler, Jr., in *Education and Urban Society* (Feb. 1982), Sage Publications, 275 South Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, Calif. 90212.

During the 1970s, the Supreme Court considered fewer than 10 cases involving the rights of public school students. Its rulings, which generally expanded student rights, are having an impact on the schools—often in indirect and unintended ways, according to Lufler, assistant dean at the University of Wisconsin's School of Education.

In 1969, the Justices ruled in *Tinker* v. *Des Moines Independent Community School District* that wearing an antiwar armband was insufficient grounds for suspension unless school officials could prove that the student's display would disrupt classes. The Court leashed school administrators again in 1975. *Goss* v. *Lopez* established that students were entitled to a hearing by an administrator before being suspended for even a few days. And in *Wood* v. *Strickland*, the Court added that school officials could be held personally liable if they knew or "reasonably should have known" that they were depriving students of their rights.

These cases were based on a Court interpretation of government services (such as welfare payments) as property rights, not discretionary benefits. Due process, ruled the Justices, was required before entitlements could be withdrawn. But the Justices appear reluctant to expand students' rights much beyond *Tinker*, *Goss*, and *Wood*, maintains Lufler. Due process requires only that students be told why they are being suspended and that they be given a chance to tell their side of the story. In 1977, the Court ruled in *Ingraham* v. *Wright* that hearings are not required before corporal punishment could be carried out.

Now, legal uncertainties (How much due process is required for suspensions longer than 10 days? Can grades be lowered as punishment for truancy?) plague school administrators and school boards fearful of lawsuits. A 1977 survey reveals that both teachers and students believe the courts have provided greater protection for students than is really the case. Under such misapprehensions, teachers today hesitate to discipline their students, who, not surprisingly, feel freer to misbehave.

It's up to educators to inform themselves about the Court rulings, says Lufler. Otherwise, "the gloomiest prophecies about the negative impact of courts on schools" will come true.