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School-to-Work *and* Goals 2000

The Clinton Administration learned a big lesson from the defeat of its plan to take over the entire U.S. health care industry. Releasing its plan as a single 1,342-page bill in 1993 gave conservatives a large target to hit at and enabled them to identify at least a dozen fearsome features against which Americans could rally.

When health plan author Ira Magaziner and other Friends of Bill and Hillary developed a parallel plan to take over the entire U.S. educational system, they used a very different strategy. They dispersed its coercive mandates among several federal statutes, bureaucratic regulations, a strange relationship between the Departments of Education and Labor, state legislation (whose authorship traces to a common source), and grant applications submitted by states seeking federal funding.

The master plan for the health industry was developed by what became known as the Jackson Hole group, which met for several years at a private residence in Wyoming, according to an expose in the *New York Times Magazine* published *after* the Clinton plan was dead.

The master plan for the federal takeover of public schools is contained in a remarkable 18-page "Dear Hillary" letter written on November 11, 1992 by Marc Tucker, president of the National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE). It lays out a plan "**to remold the entire American [education] system**" into "**a seamless web that literally extends from cradle to grave and is the same system for everyone**," coordinated by "**a system of labor market boards at the local, state and federal levels**" where curriculum and "**job matching**" will be handled by counselors "**accessing the integrated computer-based program**."

Tucker's plan would change the mission of the public schools from teaching children knowledge and skills to training them to serve the global economy in jobs selected by workforce boards. His letter confirms that his plan is the result of meetings with leftwing gurus, including Ira Magaziner, David Hornbeck, and Lauren Resnick. NCEE has been able to milk the public treasuries of many states for millions of dollars to pay for copies of his "reform" plan and "standards" for the public schools.

Nothing in these comprehensive plans has anything to do with teaching schoolchildren how to read. Although most Americans think *that* is the number-one task of schools, and it is obvious that the schools' failure to do this is our biggest education problem, teaching children how to read is *not even one* of the eight national education goals in Goals 2000.

The implementation of Tucker's ambitious plan was contained in three laws passed in 1994: the Goals 2000 Act, the School-to-Work Act, and the reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The final piece in the Tucker plan to convert the school system into job training to serve a managed workforce, which was called "Careers" in the House version and "Workforce Development" in the Senate version, didn't pass in 1996 but will certainly be revised this year.

Specific mechanisms of control are an essential part of the Tucker-Clinton-Magaziner plan to restructure the public schools:

(1) Bypass all elected officials on school boards and in state legislatures by making federal funds flow either (a) to the Governor and his appointees on workforce development boards (as projected in the Careers/Workforce Development bill), or (b) to a new entity called a "consortium" of several district superintendents.

(2) Use a computer database, a.k.a. "a labor market information system," into which school personnel will scan all information about every schoolchild and his family, identified by the child's social security number: academic, medical, mental, psychological, behavioral, and interrogations by counselors. The computerized data will be available to the school, the government, and future employers.

(3) Use the new slogan "high standards" to cement national control of tests, assessments, school honors and rewards, financial aid, and the Certificate of Initial Mastery (CIM), which is designed to replace the high school diploma.

(4) Control the vocabulary of education, so that many words have double meanings. Thus, when parents hear the words "outcome-based" or

“performance-based,” they think the outcomes must be skills such as reading and the multiplication tables, but the educators mean “accepting diversity” or “being environmentally sensitive.”

(5) Coopt the Governors and the CEOs of large corporations to front for these “reforms” by promising the former some control over the flow of federal funds and the latter some free teenage labor. Once a Governor or CEO signs on, all decisions are actually made by the same education bureaucrats who gave us the problems in the first place.

School-to-Work Will Train, Not Educate

The School-to-Work Opportunities Act (STW), signed by President Clinton in 1994, is an attempt to use federal mandates and funding to browbeat the public schools into changing their mission. STW is being implemented nationwide by STW state laws, federal and state regulations, and the federal mandates that control the granting of federal STW funds.

School-to-Work is the implementation of Marc Tucker’s “cradle to grave” plan outlined in his “Dear Hillary” letter, and it is moving rapidly through the schools. Tucker boasts that he has written the “restructuring” plans for more than 50% of public school children. Designed on the German system, it is a plan to *train* children in specific jobs to serve the workforce and the global economy instead of *educate* them so they can make their own life choices.

The traditional function of education was to teach basic knowledge and skills: reading, writing, math, science, history, etc. School-to-Work deemphasizes or eliminates academic work and substitutes mandated vocational training to serve the workforce. Instead of the focus being on developing the child, the focus is on serving the labor force.

There’s a big difference between educating a child and training him to serve the workforce. According to the dictionary, to *educate* means to develop the faculties and powers of a person by teaching. Becoming skilled at reading, writing and calculating is essential to developing as a student and as a person and being able to fulfill the American dream. To *train* means to cause a person or animal to be efficient in the performance of tasks by responding to discipline, instruction, and repeated practice. That’s what you do to your dog. That’s what School-to-Work is: “performance-based” training of students to move into predetermined jobs.

Those predetermined jobs will not be selected by the student or his family. New bodies called workforce development boards, appointed not elected, will determine what jobs are needed in the coming years. The schools will then design the curriculum to meet these governmentally determined workforce needs, and use counselors and computers to do “job matching” of the students.

After you complete your vocational training, you will get a Certificate of Initial Mastery (CIM) or Smart Card

— not a high school diploma — and you won’t be able to get a job unless you have one. This will function much like the green card that must be presented by resident aliens in order to get a job.

STW laws and regulations require vocational training to start “at the earliest possible age, but beginning no later than middle school grades.” The federal STW statute even says that “career awareness” should “begin as early as the elementary grades.” How many elementary or even middle school children do you know who are capable of choosing their lifetime career? Obviously, these decisions will be made by the school, not by the individual or his parents.

The goal is not to graduate highly-literate individuals but to turn out team workers to produce for the global economy. In the STW scheme, individual grades are inflated or detached from academic achievement, individual honors and competition are eliminated or deemphasized, and instead we have such “team” techniques as group grading, cooperative learning, peer tutoring, horizontal enrichment, job shadowing, mentoring, and job site visits. It is obvious that Outcome-Based Education was preparation for the STW system in which children are taught to be “team workers” instead of achievers.

A computer profile will be inputted for every student, and it will contain an awesome array of personal and private family information. These data will be available to the school, the government, and prospective employers. That doesn’t sound like a free America! It sounds like George Orwell’s *1984*.

Vocational courses in high school for illiterate or semi-literate students will train young Americans to compete in the global economy with people in the third world willing to work for 25 and 50 cents an hour. That’s why a lot of big businesses have entered into partnerships with Governors and school districts to promote School-to-Work. They think the schools will do some of their job training for them.

But it’s not the job of the taxpayers to do job training; that’s the job of the corporations that hire them. It is the job of the schools to teach children to read, write and calculate.

School-to-Work is a direct threat to the individual student, his privacy, his goals, and his acquisition of an education that can help him reach them. Furthermore, a planned economy, with bureaucrats trying to predict what jobs will be needed in the next five years and training students for specific jobs, is a failure all over the world. All those who value freedom must defeat and defund School-to-Work.

Robert Reich, Ira Magaziner, and Marc Tucker are the social engineers driving the School-to-Work concept. They dream of using the schools to implement industrial policy, a.k.a. national economic planning, following the German and East European models.

Robert Reich’s and Ira Magaziner’s 1982 book entitled *Minding America’s Business* bemoans Amer-

ica's "irrational and uncoordinated industrial policy" and that we lack a single agency to monitor our domestic economy and adjust it to changes in the world markets. They think we need an economic czar.

Robert Reich, in his 1983 book *The Next American Frontier*, wrote enthusiastically about Germany and Japan, where government-managed industrial policy uses loans and subsidies to shift resources into favored industries, and "induces" disfavored firms to exit from the industry. He praised the high percentage of their national economies that is poured into numerous, generous, tax-financed social benefits and "elaborate programs of job training," which he claimed resulted in low unemployment.

Marc Tucker, in his 1992 book *Thinking for a Living*, expressed admiration for the Soviet bloc countries. He wrote that they "have done a better job than we of building human-resource development programs."

The alleged economic efficiency of the German and Eastern bloc countries, so highly praised by Reich, Magaziner and Tucker, is now on the rocks. Germany's unemployment rate is 12% and the extravagances of the welfare state are heading that nation into economic decline.

School-to-Work is the "human-resource development" segment of the Reich-Magaziner-Tucker strategy to inflict America with a national industrial policy dictated by government economic czars. These elitists have convinced themselves that they possess "extraordinary insights" to restructure our economy. But central planning is a failure everywhere in the world!

What Are the Goals of Goals 2000?

The Goals 2000: Educate America Act, signed by President Clinton in 1994, established eight national education goals. But **teaching children to read is not one of the eight national education goals**. When Clinton talks about holding schools to "high standards," elementary school literacy is **not** one of those standards.

When even President Clinton has said that 40% of 3rd graders can't read, doesn't it strike you as downright peculiar that teaching elementary school children to read is **not** one of our eight national education goals? Are the first and second years of school, at a cost of at least \$5,000 per child per year, just glorified baby-sitting?

Missouri Governor Mel Carnahan, who has been enthusiastically implementing federal education plans, capsuled this new approach when he said in his 1997 State of the State address, "Books are no longer the key to success. It's the keyboard." This means that giving children the skill to read the great books of Western literature, history, politics, and science is **not** part of school "reform."

Local control is out, too. President Clinton made a speech on January 22 to a group identified by the White House as "the students, parents and teachers of the Northbrook Area Schools Consortium." His audience was so friendly that it interrupted him with applause 29

times. One line in his speech, however, was greeted by stony silence. That's when he said, "We can no longer hide behind our love of local control of the schools."

That was a telltale admission that the real goal of the Clinton Administration's education plan is to eliminate local control of public schools. One of the vehicles of this elimination is the new entity he was addressing that day called a "consortium."

Twenty suburban Chicago school districts have been surreptitiously combined to form what Clinton praised as the First in the World Consortium. This Consortium has already received \$450,000 of federal Goals 2000 financing, and the contract gives total authority over future financing and personnel decisions to the 20 superintendents who have constituted themselves as the board of directors.

Completely excluded from the governing process are the 20 elected school boards. One school board member, Eva Sorock of Wilmette, had to file a Freedom of Information request even to see the grant application for the \$450,000 already received. She discovered that the superintendents had promised to implement "progressive methods" that parents have opposed for years, including student-centered instruction, experiential learning, group projects, integrated curricula, and assessments rather than grades or tests.

Goals 2000 is part of a coordinated national plan to impose federal mandates, bypass local control, and eliminate accountability. Once a state accepts Goals 2000 funding, it must implement Goals 2000's national goals and objectives. Section 318 pretends to prohibit federal control of curriculum, but that's just a placebo, because the statute includes dozens of specific mandates about curriculum, instructional materials, standards, content, and assessments.

Section 306 repeatedly uses the mandatory word "shall," and it's obvious that the verb means must. Section 306 mandates that the state shall establish a "state improvement plan," shall establish a strategy "for meeting the National Education Goals," shall adopt "state content standards and state student performance standards for all students," shall implement state assessments "consistent with relevant, nationally recognized professional and technical standards," shall provide "coherent information about student attainments relative to state content standards," and shall align "state and local curricula, instructional materials, and state assessments with state content standards."

Last year, Congress passed some amendments to the Goals 2000 Act, but Michael Cohen, adviser to Education Secretary Richard W. Riley, said, "There isn't anything that undermines or in any way alters the fundamental goals of the program." Even if a state spends its Goals 2000 money on computers, it still must comply with this federal law that uses the following words scores of times: "shall," "will," "require," or "must."

The Goals 2000 statute codifies the eight national

education goals. But the goals themselves are defective, particularly the first goal, "By the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn." Many schools are using this language to bring health clinics and a wide array of social services into the public schools, financed in devious ways through Medicaid. This is one cause of the tremendous increase in Medicaid costs, and it's part of the Administration's plan to bring the rejected Clinton proposal for socialized medicine in through the schoolhouse door.

The interlocking of Goals 2000 and School-to-Work reconfirms that the federal plan is to bypass elected school boards and state legislatures and put all authority in the hands of those who control the stream of federal funding. We must get the feds out of the classroom if we value our freedom. We must defund School-to-Work and Goals 2000.

The Clinton-Riley Initiatives

Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley presented President Clinton's education initiatives to the House Education and Workforce Committee on March 5. Let's analyze his statement.

"Most of today's good jobs require more skills and training than a high school diploma affords." **But that's not because jobs are more difficult;** it's because public school curriculum content has been dumbed down so much that schools actually give high school diplomas to teenagers who can't read them.

"Every child in America should be able to read well and independently by the end of 3rd grade." **No, every child should be able to read by the end of the first grade.** If the goal is only to have children reading by the end of the third grade, then the taxpayers are paying \$5,000+ per child per year for glorified baby-sitting in the first and second grades.

"Both the President and I firmly oppose any form of national control over schools and their curriculum." **That is proved false by President Clinton's January 22 speech to the Northbrook Area Schools Consortium,** in which he said: "We can no longer hide behind our love of local control of the schools."

"We will be proposing legislation that would help recruit and train one million volunteer tutors who would provide assistance after school, on weekends and during the summer to students who are behind in reading in pre-kindergarten through 4th grade." **As commentator Stephen Chapman wrote,** "This is like asking citizens to pitch in at the Post Office so mail deliveries won't take so long. It utterly misses the point."

"The bulk of the funds would go to broad-based local partnerships." **This makes it clear why the National Education Association hasn't rebuked Clinton** for the insult to the teachers when the President said that he's going to send a million volunteers to do the job that teachers have failed to do. The big teachers' union is swallowing the insult because Clinton's "America Reads" initiative will set up a new bureaucracy called

"broad-based local partnerships" that will require more tax-paid jobs.

It would be much more cost-efficient and parent-friendly if "America Reads" would simply offer a \$500 tax credit to the parents of any child who enters the first grade already knowing how to read. What a wonderful incentive to parents to become involved with the education of their children! This would save so much taxpayers' money because the schools wouldn't waste the first three years in baby-sitting and then, after stigmatizing the child as "learning disabled," pay for a remedial reading bureaucracy.

"Results of the America Reads Challenge will be measured by student performance on the National Assessment of Education Progress' (NAEP) 4th grade reading test." **This means that the illiterate children won't be discovered until the end of the 4th grade.** It is a national scandal that the wonderful window of learning opportunity that six- and seven-year-olds have will remain closed, and the schools won't face up to their failure until the end of the 4th grade.

"We are asking for \$620 million for the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities program . . . an increase of nearly 12 percent." **Riley wants more money for one of the biggest boondoggles in the federal budget.** Billions of taxpayers' dollars have been wasted on this program over the last several years. But investigative studies by the General Accounting Office and by private research organizations and academicians have repeatedly reported that there is no evidence that children who participate in these curricula are less likely to do drugs than those who don't.

"Goals 2000 is all about high standards." **False. Goals 2000 is all about federal mandates,** and any talk about "standards" deserves a belly laugh. The Department of Education's idea of "standards" is best illustrated by the taxpayer-financed *National Standards for United States History*, which were so false, biased and anti-American that they were condemned by the U.S. Senate in a vote of 99 to 1. However, the school establishment stood behind them anyway, making only a handful of cosmetic revisions. Now, these false "standards" have been adopted by most schools and textbook publishers. (For an exposé of the original standards, see "How the Liberals Are Rewriting History" in *The Phyllis Schlafly Report*, March 1995. For an up-to-date account of the worthless changes and how the falsehoods have entered school textbooks, see "The History Standards: Still an Outrage" in *The Weekly Standard*, March 10, 1997. For an exposé of the English standards, see *Education Reporter*, June 1996.)

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eagle@eagleforum.org