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2nd Nosy Survey Lawsuit Filed

RIDGEWOOD, NJ – The Ridgewood School District on Jan. 23 was served with a second lawsuit over the administration of an intrusive questionnaire to students without parental knowledge or consent. Parent C.N. filed the lawsuit on behalf of her son (M.N.), who was 13 at the time the survey was given in March 2001.

Entitled “How Am I? Checking Up on Yourself,” the survey appeared in the January 2001 issue of a magazine called *Current Health: The Continuing Guide to Health Education*. Seventh and 8th-grade students at the George Washington Middle School answered 55 personal questions about the use of alcohol and illegal drugs, sexual behavior, and illegal, anti-social, and demeaning behavior.

This questionnaire was given even though litigation was pending against the Ridgewood School District over a Search Institute Survey administered to 9th graders without parental consent in 1999. (See *Education Reporter*, January and February 2002.) The Search Institute survey also probed children about “risky” sexual behavior, illegal drug use, suicide, incriminating behavior, and other personal family matters. In December 2001, a federal appeals court ruled that the parent-plaintiffs in that lawsuit could go forward, and the case is still pending.

The new lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court in Newark, charges that the Ridgewood School District, in administering “How Am I” without parental consent, violated the students’ Fourth, Fifth, and Fourteenth Amendment rights. Students were required to take the survey, write their names on it, and turn it in for credit.

The complaint alleges that “the defendants failed to administer the survey in an anonymous fashion with the result that

information provided by the students, including M.N., was potentially subject to identification and publication.” It charges that the school district “invaded the privacy of the student plaintiff and interfered with the rights of the adult plaintiffs to raise their children as they see fit.”

Law Prohibits Surveys

In January 2002, the Governor of New Jersey signed into law the New Jersey Student Survey Bill, which requires that public schools obtain prior written parental consent before administering surveys that ask students for personal information. Opponents of the law are trying to pass a new bill to allow simple “passive consent,” which means that if parents fail to return consent forms, “that failure to respond indicates approval of participation in the survey.” This bill was tabled in the Assembly and killed in the Senate.

Citing the recent spate of news stories linking several New Jersey educators with a variety of pornography and sex charges, parent Carole Nunn believes that to again permit the surveys would place students in potential danger from pedophiles and child pornographers.

“When Ridgewood administered their supposedly ‘anonymous’ Search Institute Survey to students in three of our schools,” stated Mrs. Nunn, “that anonymity was breached. One school labeled the surveys with students’ names. At another school, students were questioned about their alarming answers on the survey. At a third school, a student was made to retake the survey because he had jokingly changed his race. Imagine how great is the temptation for educators who are pedophiles or child pornographers to review our children’s completed surveys.”



Carole Nunn

No Child Left at Home? Feds give states pre-K ‘guidelines’

WASHINGTON, DC – At the annual conference of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) in November, federal officials announced that states will be required to establish learning guidelines for preschool children.

An article in *Education Week* (12-4-02) quoted associate commissioner Shannon Christian of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Child Care Bureau as stating that, while local daycare centers “will not be under a mandate to adopt the guidelines, states will be required to have them in place.”

This announcement is part and parcel of the Bush Administration’s early childhood initiative, Good Start Grow Smart, which is based on the flawed premise that early childhood education programs can make a significant long-term difference in how children perform in school. Good Start Grow Smart promises to improve Head Start and promote other early childhood education efforts.

Good Start’s executive summary laments: (1) “Most states have a limited alignment between what children are doing before they enter school and what is expected of them once they are in school”; (2) “Early childhood programs are seldom evaluated based on how they prepare children to succeed in school”; and (3) “There is not enough information for early childhood teachers, parents, grandparents, and child care providers on ways to prepare children to be successful in school.”

‘Bright’ Beginnings?

When preschool programs are evaluated, however, results consistently show that there is *no* difference in achievement by the 3rd grade among children who participate compared to those who do not.

(See *Education Reporter*, November 2002 and April 2002.) Last summer, the results of a study of children who took part in a preschool program called Bright Beginnings in the Charlotte Mecklenburg School District in North Carolina, showed that participating students scored no higher on tests by the end of the 3rd grade than children who did not participate. These students were enrolled in Bright Beginnings in 1997, and were the first to be evaluated by



3rd-grade end-of-year tests.

After the study findings were made public, North Carolina newspaper publisher Warren Smith pointed out that, in some cases, the scores of the Bright Beginnings students were actually lower than those of “the 200 or so kids who were eligible for the program but did not participate.” Smith estimates the cost of Bright Beginnings to be approximately \$10,000 per child per year, noting that “we should be seeing exponential gains in performance for this kind of expenditure.”

Although Bright Beginnings is limited to “at risk” children, such programs are becoming more common and efforts to make preschool “universal” continue to

(See *No Child*, page 2)

Raisa Lowered Boom on Preschool

Soviet dictator’s wife admitted flaw in socialist theory

When former First Lady Nancy Reagan published her book, *My Turn*, in 1989, federally financed babysitting was a hot topic in American politics. Her book contains an eye-opening tidbit on this subject on page 311.

Mrs. Reagan had been discussing what she called her “difficult relationship” with Raisa Gorbachev, wife of former Soviet dictator Mikhail Gorbachev, but added that there was “a happy postscript.”

“In December 1988,” Mrs. Reagan wrote, “Gorbachev flew to New York to address the United Nations. While he and Ronnie met for lunch, Raisa and I were among the guests at a women’s luncheon at the home of Marcela Pérez de Cuéllar, the wife of the secretary gen-

eral of the U.N.”

“At the table, Raisa talked with Matilda Cuomo, the Governor’s wife, and acknowledged that Soviet society had not done a good job in the area of child care. ‘We could have handled this better,’ she said. ‘We always provided day care in the mother’s workplace, but now I think it might have made more sense to keep the child at home for the first few years.’” Mrs. Reagan admitted she was “touched” by what Raisa Gorbachev had said.

Mrs. Gorbachev’s candid words should be published far and wide for the enlightenment of American preschool activists, educators, and lawmakers.



Raisa Gorbachev

No Improvement from Preschool

FORT SMITH, AR – Retired educator and former Fulbright scholar Margaret Brogley, who spent nearly 40 years in the classroom, says public education is failing because of the methods and materials used, not because there aren’t enough toddlers enrolled in preschool. In a letter to state early childhood education officials, legislators, and the Governor of Arkansas, Mrs. Brogley confessed to political incorrectness by taking a stand “totally against early childhood education.”

Brogley recalled that in 1931, James W. Reynolds, then a recent graduate of Columbia University Teachers College, told her American History class about a movement afoot to make children wards of the state. “I thought, no parent would allow that!” Brogley wrote. “However, I have lived to see it happening. No doubt, Mr. Reynolds heard it from John Dewey, the

father of ‘progressive education,’ for Dewey was teaching at Columbia when Mr. Reynolds was a student.”

“Three years ago,” her letter continued, “I attended an Early Childhood Conference in Atlanta, where then-Secretary of Education Richard Riley and three people from other countries were guest speakers. The thrust of the entire meeting was to enroll the child in school from infancy on. I was reminded of Reynolds’ statement made 70 years ago!”

Mrs. Brogley noted that over the past 40 years, education has been dumbed down, from fuzzy math to the dearth of phonics reading instruction to the inability of many students to use cursive handwriting. “For 50 years, we have heard of the necessity to improve education,” she wrote. “How long will it take? Every

(See *No Improvement*, page 2)

EDUCATION BRIEFS

An elementary school performance that included mock human sacrifice was canceled, after parents watching a rehearsal complained about the violent content. The show was a project of 3rd through 5th graders in Pennsylvania's Titusville School District. Titled "Bizarre Bazaar," the show was to culminate a social studies program about ancient Chinese, Egyptian and Aztec civilizations, and included re-enactment of Aztec human sacrifices. One father expressed disappointment that "those in charge" failed to see anything wrong with the production, "especially around Christmas." According to the Associated Press, the performance artists hired to produce the show said the subject matter was part of the state-approved curriculum.

Huntington Beach, CA city council kills DARE. The community just south of Los Angeles has sponsored the program since 1983, but the price tag — \$77,320 for the spring 2003 semester — and the fact that DARE does little to prevent youth from taking drugs, caused council members to vote it down. One resident told a local newspaper that while he does not advocate drug use, DARE "is just as effective as if we did nothing at all."

The U.S. National Park Service is making Civil War monuments safe for political correctness. According to a report on BayArea.com (12-22-02), 28 Civil War sites including Gettysburg, PA, stand accused of "southern bias" because they focus on "the personal valor of the soldiers" who fought there instead of on the issue of slavery. Gettysburg is currently undergoing a make-over at a cost to taxpayers of \$95 million. A new visitors center and museum "will completely change the way the conflict is presented," and will move away from the story of who shot whom to discussions of "why they were shooting one another." Gettysburg Park Superintendent John Latschar, who got his inspiration from the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., said the reinvented historic site will now tell a story, "putting the battle into its larger context."

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increase. Alabama's "Smart Start" and Arkansas's "Better Chance (ABC)" programs are also geared to "at-risk" toddlers but have the potential to become more inclusive.

NAEYC Certification

Hand-in-hand with the nationwide preschool push is the effort to expand teacher certification. According to *Education Week* (12-4-02), "earning a national teaching certificate is now the ultimate credential quest for a small but growing number of early-childhood educators."

These educators perceive that certification will make them better teachers and pave the way for higher wages. In North Carolina, Bright Beginnings has spurred more preschool teachers to obtain national certification because state certification is already required to work in the program.

The NAEYC is one of two major organizations providing national certification, and NAEYC also provides curricula for early childhood "education" programs. Readers of *Education Reporter* (April 2002) are familiar with the organization's "Anti-Bias Curriculum," which promotes "diversity" and teaches sex education to preschool children.

In the January 2003 issue of *Georgia Insight*, Sue Ella Deadwyler describes how "diaper-changers take it upon themselves to explain to toddlers the genital differences between boys and girls." She explains that "NAEYC instruction trains children to use gender-neutral vocabularies," replacing words like man, woman, boy and girl with non-gender-identifying terms. "NAEYC, the accrediting agency for preschool and kindergarten programs in Georgia, wants children to change their vocabularies by using terms such as

'firepeople' instead of 'firemen.' "

"NAEYC-approved teachers alternate using male and female pronouns when reading to children," Mrs. Deadwyler explains. "NAEYC admits that '[These are] small changes, but it is the numerous, repeated small steps that provide two-year-olds with the data they need to begin to construct non-sexist gender identity.' "

"NAEYC leaves nothing to chance," she concludes. "The curricula overtly teach acceptance of alternative lifestyles. Four-year-olds are taught about children with two mommies or two daddies from books their teachers read to them in preschool. The primary goal of the Anti-Bias Curriculum is to destroy traditional values in very young children."

At the NAEYC's November conference, U.S. Department of Education assistant secretary for elementary and secondary education, Susan Neuman, challenged the organization to devote more energy toward defining what young children should know and be able to do. She added that states are not taking full advantage of the "freedom" they have to divert funds to early childhood programs under No Child Left Behind.

But many observers, including North Carolina's Warren Smith, believe that there is too much taxpayer money already being poured into preschool programs, with little or no accountability. Referring to North Carolina's Bright Beginnings program test results, Smith wrote: "The expectations of the program have been cleverly managed. We were told not to expect to see results for years. Now, years have gone by and still no results. In the meantime, \$62 million has been poured down the drain."



No Improvement (Continued from page 1)

time the 'experts' fix the situation, it becomes worse. Now, the child is to learn to read by the 4th grade. Why so long? I am no genius, but I learned to read before the first year was over."

Brogley recalled that public education began "a fast downward trend" — from which it has never recovered — in the mid-1960s with the granting of federal aid. She urged Arkansas officials to "Get copies of the Goals 2000/School-to-Work legislation and compare them with

Vladimir Turchenko's book *The Scientific Technological Revolution in Education.*" She suggested: "Also, obtain a copy of *We the People*, mandated by H.R. 1, to learn what children will learn about government!"

"Will education be improved [by enrolling young children in preschool]?" Brogley asked rhetorically, then answered her own question: "No, but it will cost billions of dollars . . . Adding more school years to a child's life will accomplish nothing."

Book of the Month



George Washington Carver, *His life & faith in his own words*, William J. Federer, Amerisearch Inc., 88 pps., \$17.49

In this interesting biographical compilation, Bill Federer explains the renowned agricultural scientist George Washington Carver through Carver's personal correspondence. Over the years Dr. Carver wrote many letters to benefactors, friends, students, colleagues, and even critics, manifesting his amazing faith and personal philosophy.

George Washington Carver was born a slave in Neosho, Missouri at the end of the Civil War, probably in 1865, although there are no records. Orphaned by marauding killers who took the lives of his mother and brother when he was very young, Carver was taken in by well-meaning people in his young life, and through hard work and determination, obtained an education. He earned both bachelor's and master's degrees in Scientific Agriculture from Iowa State College. He also studied art, literature, and music at Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa. In 1928, he received an honorary doctorate from Simpson College.

Despite his education, Dr. Carver insisted that his work was inspired by his Creator. He willingly shared his strong faith in his letters and speeches. In 1920, he told an audience of young Christian men: "the Great Creator taught me to take the peanut apart and put it together again. And out of the process have come forth all these products!"

In 1897, the distinguished educator, Booker T. Washington, persuaded Carver to leave his comfortable position on the staff of Iowa State College to come to the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, a struggling school for blacks. "Our students are poor, often starving," Washington wrote. "We teach them to read and write, but words cannot fill stomachs. They need to learn how to plant and harvest crops."

Dr. Carver dedicated the rest of his life to research at Tuskegee. In his laboratory, he discovered 300 uses for the peanut, more than 118 uses for the sweet potato, 60 for the pecan, and dozens of uses for other crops, including soybeans and okra. Always, he was inspired, motivated by, and devoted to his God.

Author Federer credits his maternal grandfather with introducing him to the life of Dr. Carver. "Many times we visited the George Washington Carver memorial in Diamond Grove (Mo.). We would imagine young George touching the tiny plants and flowers, knowing someday he would touch the world."

Call 1/888-USA-WORD, or visit www.amerisearch.net.

FOCUS: Fed Ed in Minnesota's Classrooms

By Senator Michele Bachmann

'Smaller Learning Communities' prepare workers for a state-planned economy



Until 1965, public education was truly a local affair, with state departments of education stepping in to assist local school districts. In an unprecedented move, President Lyndon Johnson created the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which for the first time provided federal money to the local classroom.

Federal money was targeted specifically to lower income students to help "level the playing field" of educational opportunity. Unfortunately, the practical effect of pumping millions of federal dollars into the classroom was to *lower* the playing field, not *level* it.

With the public clamoring for answers, the federal government responded in 1994 by creating a top-down reform movement known as Goals 2000/School-to-Work/Workforce Investment.

Designed as a mandate for all publically educated youth, these three federal bills work together like interlocking puzzle pieces to reveal the picture of a restructured American society focused on the best interests of the state rather than on the best interests of the child.

Educational 'Reform'

Heavy on bureaucracy, light on academics, Goals 2000 and the accompanying reauthorization of the ESEA forced all 50 states to accept federal education standards. The latest reauthorization of the ESEA, known as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), continues the school restructuring that was set in motion in 1994 with Goals 2000/School-to-Work and the education funding bill, H.R. 6. Assistant Secretary of Education Mike Cohen stated in a presentation to Fordham Foundation's NCLB conference in February 2002, "This legislation builds squarely on the foundation laid in 1994, and extends it..." NCLB seeks to "raise academic standards for all" with a bizarre twist: by *lowering* the bar of achievement to a level where *all* children could pass the tests.

Goals 2000's eight national standards focus heavily on attitudes, values, and beliefs instead of on academics, giving us dumbed-down national standards, a national test, and national teacher licensing standards.

School-to-Work/ Smaller Learning Communities

Goal 6 of Goals 2000 states in part, "Every major American business will be involved in strengthening the connection between education and work." Implicit in Goals 2000 was the creation of a space for the silent but more revolutionary twin of the educational reform movement: School-to-Work.

School-to-Work (STW), renamed under NCLB as Smaller Learning Communities (SLC), is actually the star and the purpose of education reform, and it is **mandated** for all children *and* adults in the public system.

It is a philosophy and the focal point of the new restructuring of American society. It is a means for appointed bureaucratic central planners to link *government-directed* education with *government-directed* economic development and workforce preparation.

STW/SLC slots children into career clusters which determine their high school coursework, often by the 8th grade. The only career paths available to students are those determined by bureaucrats appointed to seats on state and local workforce boards. Career paths are pre-selected by these boards, based on *their* perceptions of the needs of local industries, and guided by government generated labor market statistics.

Children are, in practice, human resources for a centrally planned economy. Taxpayers shoulder the burden of financing job training for businesses. Academics are substantially reduced; vocational education is mandated. Local control means local implementation of pre-determined results dictated by government workforce boards.

While STW/SLC is a revolutionary approach for *American* schools, the concept is anything but new to nations around

There is no longer a traditional, academic, four-year high school education available to all Minneapolis youth.

the globe. Implemented particularly in the last century, STW/SLC is the practical outworking of a state planned economy, with government bureaucrats making basic life choices once properly deferred to the individual. Freedom to truly choose an occupation is gone under this system.

In South Carolina, the Career Pathways program begins tracking students in the 5th grade, and suggests "selecting" a career pathway by the 6th grade. All classroom studies from that point forward will focus on the skills required by the student's career path.

Texas was the first state to widely implement STW/SLC, with Dallas-area 10th graders spending part of the school day learning how to place lemon wedges on luncheon glasses. In Minneapolis, Minn., all 8th graders were required to "apply" for a career cluster by January

2002. Only 60% of the students applied, the other 40% were *assigned* a career. Students will spend the next four years focusing on careers in beauty, automotive mechanics, or childcare, per their government pre-selected options.

A liberal arts career-track exists, but it will accept only a limited group of applicants. There is no longer a traditional, academic, four-year high school education available for **all** Minneapolis youth.

STW/SLC Evangelists
The adjective most often employed by early promoters of STW/SLC was "revolutionary" and, unfortunately, they weren't kidding.

Dr. Robert Beck of the University of Minnesota wrote a 1990 report urging American schools to adopt an eastern European version of School-to-Work called Polytechnical Education.

State marketing literature called STW/SLC "a whole new way of thinking, a *revolutionary* approach to education and workforce development."

Marc Tucker, originally of the Carnegie Forum and later president of the National Center on Education and the Economy, was an early key player in the promotion of STW/SLC. Tucker became one of the largest commercial distributors of STW/SLC promotional materials, parlaying his efforts into a multi-million-dollar scheme to transfer U.S. tax dollars through his various non-profit organizations.

Dr. Shirley McCune of the U.S. Department of Education said, "What we're into is the total restructuring of society. What it means for education is that we no longer see the teaching of facts and information as the primary outcome of education." Dr. McCune wasn't shy about disclosing the radical goal of STW/SLC when she said, "What we're into is the total restructuring of society."

Initially promoted for acceptance by all nations through UNESCO, the educational and cultural arm of the United Nations, STW/SLC was designed to bring about third-way economics similar to that promoted by renowned economist Peter F. Drucker.

In his book *Post-Capitalist Society*, Drucker called for a new economy based *not* on proven free market principles, but rather on an economic hybrid between capitalism and socialism. That's like arguing a mother is "just a little bit pregnant." An economy is either free market based, or it is at some level of slippage toward centralized economic planning.

Drucker proposed that America move even further away from the concept of freedom of individual economic choice. But what would this mean? Economic choices would continue to be made, but **who** would make them? Advocates of STW/SLC long for an economy that puts more choices in the hands of business and government conglomerates, thus re-

ducing the economic choices available to the individual.

Economic socialism has long been the goal of radical economic progressives, but socialistic philosophy has consistently failed to take root in American experience and culture. Why? Because American public schools, for the most part, taught young minds the basics of free market thought. STW/SLC changes all that by teaching a new way of thinking through the new federal curriculum, and by restructuring the school experience.

New Federal Curriculum Delivers STW/SLC Philosophy

In effect, American classrooms now have a federal curriculum based on the newly written national standards. Chief among the newly adopted standards are those for civics education, written by the federally subsidized nonprofit organization, Center for Civics Education (CCE).

Adopted in January 2002, the reauthorized ESEA (known as NCLB) **mandates** that schools receiving federal ESEA money assess children in grades 3-8 with state tests that *mirror* the national NAEP test. The National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) in turn, is based on the national standards, including those written by the CCE during the 1990s.

In the classroom, the simple maxim prevails: *Tests drive the curriculum*. **National** tests, based on **national** standards, now drive locally administered curriculum. The burning question becomes, what information or attitudes are assessed by the newly mandated national tests?

It is difficult to determine what is measured, because the NCLB federal law actually *prevents* parents or citizens from discussing the content of the mandated tests, stating specifically that revealing a test question is punishable as a felony! Without meaningful public access to the nationally aligned assessments, accountability to the public is a near impossibility.

Although NCLB prohibits discussion of the actual content of the NAEP, we can review another government document that tells us what 9th graders are learning in Civics education.

In April 2001, the National Center for Education Statistics issued a report entitled, *What Democracy Means to Ninth-Graders: U.S. Results from the International IEA Civic Ed Study*.

Results show that 84.2% of the American 9th graders surveyed believe it is government's responsibility to keep prices under control; 65.4% believe it is government's responsibility to guarantee everyone a job; 63.5% believe government should reduce differences in income and wealth among people; 66.2% believe government should provide industry with the support they need to grow, and 87.6% believe government should provide basic health care for everyone.

(See *Fed Ed*, page 4)



Michele Bachmann

Million-Dollar Shopping Spree

WTU officials spend members' dues

WASHINGTON, DC – On Dec. 23, the FBI filed papers in U.S. District Court alleging the misuse of more than \$2 million in union funds by Washington Teachers Union (WTU) officials. The *Washington Post* reported (12-20-02 and 12-24-02) that federal agents confiscated hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of clothing, shoes, original artwork, furs, a \$57,000 Tiffany tea set, a \$13,000 television, dozens of wigs, and designer handbags from the residences of WTU president Barbara A. Bullock and her former assistant, Gwendolyn M. Hemphill.

Agents also seized computer equipment, tax records and phone numbers from the office of Hemphill's son-in-law, Michael Martin, a supervisory programs analyst at the Washington, D.C. office of HIV/AIDS prevention. According to the *Post*, a company run by Martin called Expressions Unlimited "billed the union for false or misleading expenses." The FBI affidavit alleges that Martin conspired with Hemphill "to channel more than \$120,000 in union funds through his company."

AFT Files Suit

While no criminal charges have been filed, the WTU's parent organization, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), filed a racketeering lawsuit on Jan. 16 against Bullock, Hemphill, and former WTO treasurer James O. Baxter. Baxter allegedly used union credit cards to charge thousand of dollars for personal expenses at stores, restaurants, bars, nightclubs, and to fuel multiple vehicles at gas stations.

The AFT disclosed in a press release that a "forensic audit" showed that more than \$5 million in union funds have been misappropriated by WTU officials. The RICO lawsuit was filed "on behalf of the nearly 5,000 members of the WTU."

Bullock was elected president of the WTU in 1994, and financial records dat-

ing back to 1995 are under scrutiny. Bullock, Hemphill and Baxter resigned from their posts last fall when agents from the FBI, IRS, and the U.S. Labor Department began closing in.

The extent of the fraud has generated widespread outrage. Syndicated columnist Walter Williams wrote on Jan. 9 that "while Washington's criminal education establishment robs its teachers, the damage to teachers pales in comparison to the damage to the children of the district." Williams called education in the nation's capital "disastrous," pointing out that "at only one of the city's 19 high schools do as many as 50% of the students test as proficient in reading. At no school are 50% of the students proficient in math."

Misuse 'Breathtaking'

The *Washington Post* editorialized that the extent of the misuse of funds was "brehtaking," and asked an obvious question: "How could such an allegedly massive misappropriation of union funds occur over such a long period of time and under the noses of so many people, including the union's board of directors, the union's members and the American Federation of Teachers?"

On Jan. 21, the California-based Education Intelligence Agency (EIA) reported that AFT auditors confirmed that the WTU's "LM-2 report to the U.S. Department of Labor does not accurately depict the true nature and amount of the transactions discovered during our investigation."

Illegal Political Contributions

EIA also stated that the AFT audit "revealed details unmentioned even in the FBI affidavit." For example, the WTU made two political contributions in violation of federal law: a \$9,000 contribution to the Democratic National Committee and a \$2,000 contribution to Hillary Clinton's 2000 election campaign. 



Errors and Censorship

U.S. textbooks tell distorted story

For years, the textbooks used by most American children have been riddled with errors. A few brave reviewers, including the Gablers' Educational Research Analysts of Longview, Texas, have tried to alert parents and educators about the problem. Recent publicity has once again brought to light the issue of factually incorrect yet politically-correct textbooks.

Mistaken History

The Gablers' November 2002 newsletter disclosed a sampling of the errors they found in high school U.S. History textbooks submitted for approval last year in Texas. Textbooks adopted by the states of Texas and California often end up in schools throughout the country.

It was the first time in 11 years that publishers had submitted U.S. History textbooks for review in Texas. In 1991, the Gablers found 231 undetected factual errors in six high school history books after the state review process had certified them error-free. When they completed their review process in 2002, they found 249 uncorrected factual errors in four U.S. History textbooks. This, they say, "is despite publishers' claims to have beefed up their fact-checking, despite Texas Education Agency emphasis on verifying accuracy to the State Textbook Review Panel, and despite an \$80,000 Texas Tech review panel backing them up."

A few of the errors include:

- ◆ "Columbus first reached North America in 1492." Columbus never reached North America. He explored Caribbean islands and the northern coast of South America.
- ◆ "James Monroe was the last president to have fought in the Revolutionary War." Andrew Jackson, not James Monroe, was the last president to have fought in the American Revolution.
- ◆ "The Fourteenth Amendment extended the right to vote to all 21-year-old males, including former slaves." It was the Fifteenth Amendment that gave blacks the right to vote.
- ◆ "Before the Civil War, greenbacks were redeemable for either gold or silver coins." There were no greenbacks before the Civil War. They originated during the war with the 1862 Legal Tender Act.

Of the U.S. History textbooks they

reviewed, the Gablers recommend *The American Republic Since 1877* (Glencoe, 2003). It contains: (1) a more positive view of multicultural consensus and unity, with less negative politically-correct emphasis on race conflict and ethnic alienation; (2) exceptional inclusion of Jeffersonian-Jacksonian limited government perspectives on U.S. Constitutional issues; and (3) exemplary presentation of recent interpretations of industrialization, big business, and supply-side economics.

Bad Science Books

Last year, physics professor John Hubisz reviewed middle school physical science textbooks with a grant from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. According to CNN, Hubisz reported finding scores of errors. Among them:

- ◆ A map showing the equator running through Texas and Florida, although the equator is about 1,500 miles south of the southern United States.
- ◆ A discussion of sound that claims humans cannot hear below 400 hertz, but 47 notes on the piano are below 400 hertz.
- ◆ A description of the Statue of Liberty explaining her "bronze outer structure." The statue is copper.
- ◆ A compass with east and west reversed.
- ◆ Simplified chemistry formulas and physics laws that are completely wrong.
- ◆ Pictures of prisms bending light the wrong way.

Hubisz also discovered that political correctness complicates the problem of factual errors. His report stated: "Publishers now employ more people to censor books for content that might offend any organized lobbying group than they do to check the correctness of facts."

Michigan State University statistics professor William Schmidt told CNN that part of the reason U.S. students score low on math and science tests compared to students in other countries is the "mile-wide, inch-deep curriculum, where you have coverage of lots of topics but very shallow coverage of each one."

In attempts to remedy the situation, Hubisz now has a website www.sciencehouse.org/middleschool where textbook errors can be posted, and Schmidt is working to streamline information in textbooks. 

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The new federal curriculum appears wildly effective in capturing the hearts and minds of the uninitiated, as youth now overwhelmingly demonstrate agreement with the socialistic basis for a state-planned economy. With the next generation buying into third-way economics, students may hardly blink an eye when they find their school day restructured around entry-level job skills training.

STW/SLC Restructure the School Day

Not only is STW/SLC a new way of thinking for all students, it radically restructures the school experience and the school day by joining with the third piece of the puzzle, the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Passed in 1998, WIA erects in every state and local community an appointed workforce board charged with the practical impossibility of determining local economic and workforce needs.

Bureaucrats determine which career paths will be offered in local schools, with

schools acting as human resource suppliers filling labor needs for local industry.

There are three core elements common to every state and locally created STW/SLC program:

1. **School based learning** restructures the educational experience so that all students learn how academic subjects relate to the world of work and develop workplace skills. The limited class time spent on academics will now focus on how a particular subject—math, for example—relates to a career path such as small engine repair. Students will learn only the math, history, or English needed to function as a worker in small engine repair.

2. **Work based learning** focuses on career exploration, work experience, structured training and mentoring for all students at job sites. All students will leave the school campus to work off-site during regularly scheduled school hours, at local places of employment, often in violation of former child labor laws. Work-

based learning is the reason many schools are adopting block scheduling, so that students will have the time to leave campus to become worker/learners.

3. **Connecting activities** impose involuntary community service, invasive career and labor data collection systems, training for mentors and work supervisors according to government standards, and partnerships to match students with participating employers as dictated by government fiat. All are components of the ever-burgeoning bureaucracy necessary to advance a centrally planned economy.

Conclusion

STW/SLC emulates the failed, centrally-planned economic systems littering the trash heap of history. With its heri-

tage of freedom and free market economics, America has produced the most prosperous and educated nation in the history of the world. The question is whether, through implementation of NCLB and the WIA, we will accept bureaucrats choosing careers for our children and directing our economy, or whether liberty will remain our children's future.

Minnesota State Senator Michele Bachmann, a champion of traditional education, easily won re-election last November. (See Education Reporter, Dec. 2002.) This article was excerpted from a booklet she wrote and produced. Complete unabridged version (including footnotes) is available from Sen. Bachmann's office, 100 Constitution Ave., 141 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Saint Paul, MN 55155.