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Economic Stimulus Package Will Profoundly Impact Education

On February 17, President Barack Obama signed the \$787 billion American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (known as the Stimulus). Only three Republican senators voted for the bill. It passed the House without any Republican votes. The bill designates a total of \$128.2 billion for education and job training. About \$91 billion of that amount goes toward K-12 education, including \$53.6 billion in aid for K-12 for states that are in a deficit, \$13 billion for schools serving low-income children, and \$12 billion for special education. Another \$2.1 billion goes toward Head Start and Early Head Start, the federal programs for children from birth to age five.

Experts on both Left and Right agree that this massive influx of federal aid

will remove even more control of education from local and state governments, transferring the balance of power further toward the federal level. "It not only makes it more legitimate for the federal government to ask for accountability," said Jack Jennings of the Center on Education Policy, "It also [opens up] the question of what should the feds be doing to help schools." Dan Lips, a senior policy analyst at the Heritage Foundation, said that the stimulus bill's provisions mean that more education decisions will ultimately be made in Washington, D.C. (*Los Angeles Times*, 2-13-09)

The law vastly increases the power of Obama's Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan. Duncan will now control \$100 billion in "emergency aid" for public schools and colleges, which he can distribute basically however he likes. That amount more than doubles the Department of Education's budget. \$59 billion of the sum is designated for "stabilization," to stop education cuts in states that are low on funds. Governors who wish to receive stabilization funds must promise Duncan that they are following a number of steps outlined in the bill, including creating statewide databases to track every individual student, and assigning experienced teachers evenly across wealthy and poor districts. (*New York Times*, 2-16-09)

Republicans, even those who supported each of the individual federal programs receiving billions of dollars of new funding, questioned the basis for the new funding. "The question is: Do [these programs] stimulate the economy? How?" asked Sen. Thad Cochran of Mississippi. Cochran is the top Republican on the Senate Appropriations Committee. "Is it realistic to expect funding levels for these programs to revert to today's levels once the economy recovers? I think it is safe to expect just the opposite," said Cochran.

"If we're looking to stimulate the economy, simply dramatically increasing federal spending on education isn't the right solution," said the Heritage Foundation's

Dan Lips. "This is basically an education budget offering dramatic increases buried in an economic stimulus package."

When the Senate version of the bill scaled back aid for education, the National Education Association teachers union clamored in protest. "We're obviously very upset about the proposed cut," said Randall Moody, the NEA's chief lobbyist. "We think the education part of the package is the crucial part because it will save jobs and put people back to work. We don't understand how they can look at school construction, Head Start, and special education and say that those aren't stimulative."

The House version of the bill subjects Title I money to "maintenance-of-effort" provisions, requiring states to keep up current funding levels for Title I rather than simply replacing state money with federal money from the stimulus package. The final version asks states to fund programs at 2006 levels. Importantly, the bill now also allows the Secretary of Education to waive maintenance-of-effort requirements for Title I, special education, and other programs, for any states he believes may have trouble meeting 2006 funding levels. At least three states, Florida, Nevada, and California, are expected to request and receive extra money under this clause.

Amy Wilkins, a vice president of the Education Trust, said it is very likely that the replacement of state money for education with federal money will be permanent. "How do you get the state to replace the dollar that they've converted to a federal dollar? That leaves a big problem at the end of this," said Wilkins. (*Education Week*, 2-11-09)



New Analysis of HPV Vaccine Shows Troubling Side Effects

Gardasil, the vaccine against the sexually transmitted Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), was approved in the United States two and a half years ago for girls as young as age nine. Dozens of states passed legislation promoting the routine administration of the HPV vaccine to school-age girls, even though HPV is not transmittable in a school setting. Merck, Gardasil's manufacturer, now seeks FDA approval to market the vaccine for young boys as well as girls.

Merck's massive, pull-out-all-the-stops marketing campaign has convinced about five million American girls to receive the \$360 three-shot series since 2006. The marketing campaign encourages girls to become "one less" victim of cervical cancer. "It was like a big hype among my friends," teenager Gabby Swank told CBS News, "because we're like, 'we're gonna get it' because we felt almost pressured by the commercials." Gardasil helps to prevent two strands of HPV that are linked to about 70% of cases of cervical cancer.

Critics of the vaccine accuse Merck of creating a false sense of security among girls who may not understand the limited protection the vaccine actually offers. Critics also point to the many adverse side effects that girls receiving the vaccine have experienced. For example, Gabby Swank, quoted above, has suffered seizures, strokes and heart problems since receiving the shots. Her neurologist believes Gardasil is to blame.

A new report from the National Vac-

cine Information Center (NVIC) compares Gardasil to Menactra, the meningitis vaccine administered to patients in the same age group, and shows that Gardasil's side effects vastly outnumber Menactra's.

The report uses data from the federal Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System (VAERS) to compare adverse events associated with the two vaccines. About three times as many patients — more than 5,000 in all — reported visiting the emergency room after receiving Gardasil as reported going to the ER after receiving Menactra. 29 patients died after receiving Gardasil, while only six died after receiving Menactra. Gardasil was associated with five times more "Did

Not Recover" reports and seven times more "Disabled" reports than Menactra. All these data are especially significant because Menactra has been available for over a year longer than Gardasil, yet has resulted in many times fewer adverse side effects.

The NVIC report points out that before FDA licensing, Gardasil was tested on fewer than 1,200 girls ages 16 and younger. The Centers for Disease Control released a statement in October of 2008 maintaining that girls and women who receive Gardasil have no higher incidence of health problems, hospitalizations, injuries, or deaths than those who do not receive the shot. "This analysis comparing adverse events reports to VAERS following receipt of Gardasil and Menactra appears to contradict that assertion," concluded the NVIC report. (CBS News, 2-6-09)



Protesters Attend Bill Ayers Lecture

St. Mary's College in Moraga, California recently hosted a lecture series intended to feature and honor the work of Bill Ayers. Ayers, most famous as a founder of the domestic terrorist group the Weather Underground, is now a leader in the field of education and a notable advocate of "social justice" education. Ayers's radical views attracted national attention during the 2008 presidential campaign, since he is a close friend and associate of now-Pres. Barack Obama.

A large group of protesters gathered both inside and outside the hall where Ayers spoke in late January. In the 1960s and '70s, the Weather Underground set off bombs in government buildings to protest the Vietnam War. Not far from St. Mary's College, the site of the 2009 lecture series, one of those bombs killed Sgt. Brian V. McDonnell at San Francisco's Park Police Station in 1970.

The charges against Ayers were dropped because of illegal FBI surveillance. "Now [my past] is being blown

into dishonest narratives about hurting people, killing people, planning to kill people," Ayers told ABC7 reporter Alan Wang. "That's just not true. We destroyed government property."

"Did you make bombs?" asked reporter Wang.

"I'm just not going to talk about it," replied Ayers.

Although he chose not to talk about it that day, Ayers reminisces about his days with the Weather Underground in frequent appearances on other college campuses across the country. He has also frequently written about his subversive activities. In a piece of memoir that appeared in the *New York Times* on September 11, 2001, Ayers wrote, "I don't regret setting bombs. I feel we didn't do enough."

Larry Grathwohl, who infiltrated the Weather Underground as an undercover FBI agent, says that Ayers was intent on overthrowing the government. "The most bone-chilling thing Bill Ayers said to me



was that after the revolution succeeded and the government was overthrown, they believed they would have to eliminate 25 million Americans who would not conform to the new order," says Grathwohl. Ayers denied this charge and called the FBI "an organization built on lies." (ABC East Bay News, 1-28-09)

EDUCATION BRIEFS

The 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that it was legal for the Miami-Dade School Board to remove a pro-communist book from school libraries. The board granted a parent's petition to remove 49 copies of the children's book *A Visit to Cuba* and its Spanish version, *Vamos a Cuba*. The parent, a former political prisoner in Cuba, complained that the book contained misconceptions about personal freedoms in a communist country. Another parent and the ACLU then challenged the book's removal on First Amendment grounds, but the 11th U.S. Circuit Court overturned the July 2006 injunction. (schoollibraryjournal.com, 2-11-09)

Officials in Birmingham, the United Kingdom's second-largest city, decided to drop all apostrophes from street signs. Champions of the queen's English (not "the queens English") protested that it is simply incorrect to call "St. Luke's Road" "St. Lukes Road," or to drop other apostrophes from place names. Councilor Martin Mullaney, who made the decision, says apostrophes are unnecessary. "More importantly, they confuse people," he said. "If I want to go to a restaurant, I don't want to have an A-level [high school diploma] in English to find it." (Associated Press, 1-31-09)

Several Florida lawmakers introduced bills that would require "comprehensive" sex education in Florida schools, instructing students as young as 6th grade in condom usage and other contraceptive methods. State Sen. Jeremy Ring said that the current law on sex ed, which requires teachers to endorse sex only within monogamous, heterosexual marriage, is "offensive." (Orlando Sentinel, 1-29-09)

Obama's inauguration prompted some to call for the end of Black History Month, which Americans celebrate in February. "I propose that, for the first time in American history, this country has reached a point where we can stop celebrating separately, stop learning separately, stop being American separately," wrote columnist Rochelle Riley. (Detroit Free Press, 2-1-09)

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Behavioral Intervention Can Help Autism

Parents of severely autistic children face many additional challenges in communicating with and disciplining their children. A recent CNN story followed one autistic girl as she and her family received professional help over the course of a week from a behavioral therapist.

Parents John and Mary Bilson sought help because their daughter's tantrums were affecting every area of their lives. 13-year-old Marissa would scream for hours unless she got her way. Her tantrums made life miserable not only for her parents, but also for her 15-year-old sister and 6-year-old brother. The Bilsons couldn't go anywhere together because Marissa might start screaming at any moment, and would attempt to steal any object she saw and liked in a store.

Behavioral therapist Rick Schroeder, with the group Autism Partnership, agreed that Marissa was "out of control." Schroeder worked with Marissa in the Bilson's home for five days, using a behavior-modification technique called "applied behavior analysis." Through this technique, Schroeder broke down Marissa's behavior patterns into their components and showed her parents how to lay down boundaries and rules in a way that takes Marissa's autism into account.

"It's all about the teaching," said Schroeder. "With a child like Marissa, we can't sit down and discuss it with her — she's just not going to get that. So we have to take it in small steps. Make them understandable and move on, one step at a time."

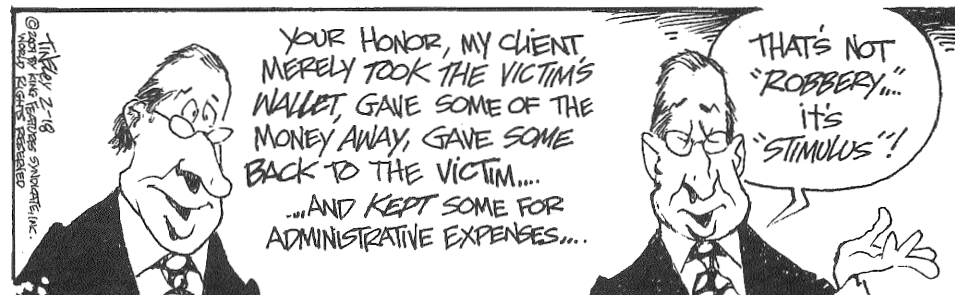
The Bilsons have had notable success in continuing the progress they made with Schroeder's help during the intervention. "I learned that Marissa is smart," said Mary Bilson. "Smarter than I thought." With new knowledge of what Marissa does and doesn't understand, Mary and John now reward their daughter for following the rules they have set down. Marissa has abandoned some of her most disruptive behaviors, including her fits of screaming. The Bilsons can even go out in public together without fearing that Marissa will create a scene.

Because the Bilsons allowed CNN to observe and tape the process, Autism Partnership provided the intervention free of charge. Normally, the week-long process would have cost about \$20,000. Although many families can't afford such an expensive treatment, the fact that such behavioral interventions can succeed may give hope to parents struggling with this little-understood and traumatic problem. Perhaps over time such treatments will become more accessible, and the principles that worked so well for Marissa will be popularized for other families who are at a loss to cope with their autistic children. (CNN, 02-04-09)



Marissa practices behaving well while walking through a store with her mother.

MALLARD FILLMORE / by Jeff Tinsley



Solar Panel Manufacturer Teaches Children about Global Warming and Solar Power

Sharp Electronics Corporation has begun a new program to teach American elementary-school children about climate change. Sharp, one of the world's largest manufacturers of solar panels, spins the program with special emphasis on the importance and benefits of solar energy.

Stewart Mitchell, chief strategy officer for Sharp, is quite frank about how the program is supposed to work. "The big picture is, you really want to try to tie your focus on social responsibility as a company into your business model," he told the *New York Times*. "The more that students learn about climate change, and the more they learn about the importance of renewable energy — it ties back to feeding into our business model of being in the solar business." Mitchell started the American version of the Solar Academy program in October of 2008. So far, the program has reached a handful of elemen-

tary schools in California, New York and New Jersey. In Japan, 50,000 students at 700 schools have already gone through the Solar Academy program.

The opening slide of Sharp's presentation shows a cartoon of a sick planet Earth with a thermometer in its mouth. "It turns out that the temperature of the Earth is actually rising," Sharp employee Martha Harvey recently told a class of 5th-graders in Mahwah, New Jersey. Harvey went on to teach the children about solar panels through a short movie and a demonstration. She sent students home at the end of the presentation with workbooks and solar-powered calculators made by Sharp.

Science teachers at Joyce Kilmer Elementary School were enthusiastic about the Solar Academy. No one seemed to see any problem with presenting a one-sided view of the science of climate change in order to market a specific product to future consumers. (*New York Times*, 2-2-09)

Book of the Month



48 Liberal Lies About American History, Larry Schweikart, Sentinel 2008, 300 pp., \$25.95

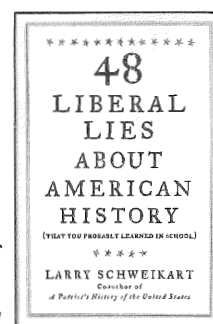
In his latest book, the author of *A Patriot's History of the United States* takes on some of the most egregious misrepresentations of the past that appear in popular textbooks of American history.

Schweikart's greatest strength is going straight to the source. Again and again, he uses primary sources and words from the very mouths of the people involved to prove the truth of his assertions about historical events. For example, on the subject of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, Schweikart quotes former U.S.S.R. premier Nikita Khrushchev, who said that the Rosenbergs "provided very significant help in accelerating the production of our atom bomb." Schweikart also goes straight to the source when he quotes books that propagate the 48 lies. "Although they were not major spies and the information they revealed was not important, the Rosenbergs were executed, to the consternation of many liberals in the United States and elsewhere," Schweikart quotes from *American Destiny*.

The lies Schweikart addresses have political implications for the present day. (Otherwise, perhaps, biased textbooks would not consider them worth lying about.) If there really were Communists and spies in various federal departments in the mid-20th century (and there were), then the Left should stop using the specter of "McCarthyism" to shut down political debate. If Reagan's tax cuts were incredibly successful (and they were), then the *New York Times* should no longer mislead readers with one-sided statements like this one: "some economists believe [tax cuts] will not create as many new jobs as \$70 billion in spending would." (2-18-09)

Schweikart's coverage of Reagan is of special interest, since four of the lies he counters concern Reagan's presidency. "The wanton disregard of facts when it comes to 'Reaganomics' constitutes what I call the 'pregnancy test' for bias in college textbooks," writes Schweikart. A text's coverage of Reagan quickly reveals where the authors stand. Take this example, from *A Concise History of the American Republic*: "It was hard to connect so likeable a man to the mean-spirited programs with which he was too often associated."

It is imperative that Americans learn the truth about the past, so they won't make voting and policy decisions based on distortions and outright lies. *48 Liberal Lies* reveals how little some of the most-used textbooks can be trusted — and sets the record straight on matters of great national importance.



FOCUS: Multiculturalism and 'Social Justice' in American Public Education

by Robert Holland and Don Soifer

When local school boards send teachers to professional conferences, they no doubt expect the teachers will gain new knowledge and skills to take back to their classrooms to help their students learn. In many cases, there is hopefully a positive return for their investment of time and resources. But boards would be wise to look much more carefully at the advocacy being urged upon their teachers at certain conferences, notably those that purport to promote "multiculturalism" and so-called "teaching for social justice."

Certainly, there are different and sometimes competing

philosophies of teaching. Some schools of thought emphasize the teacher transmitting basic information and knowledge to children. Others stress the value of student discovery. Of course, these approaches are not necessarily in conflict; excellent teachers blend methods. But whatever techniques come into play, few parents send their children to school believing teaching should be about ideological indoctrination.

Good teachers encourage students to think for themselves. The object is to make them independent learners and thinkers, not to do the thinking for them. Mind control is not what education is all about.

At certain conferences to which perhaps unsuspecting school boards send their teachers, however, indoctrination is the name of the game. A leading example is the National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME), which has conducted national and regional workshops for thousands of teachers annually since 1991. Those doing much of the indoctrinating are typically left-wing university professors, who often are connected with the schools of education (teacher-training institutions). Their subjects, unwitting or not, are K-12 teachers.

Schools and universities often shell out significant sums to send teachers and professors to such conferences. Sometimes school officials discover after the fact that sending teachers to distant conferences can be an expensive proposition. An audit found that the Dallas Independent School District in May 2007 sent 166 teachers to an international literacy conference in Toronto at an expense of \$265,000. Federal grants paid the freight, which means that payers of federal taxes picked up the tab. Some teachers shared \$400-a-night hotel rooms; a few enjoyed Nova Scotia lobster on the public tab.

NAME and Social Justice Activism

The theme of NAME's 2008 national conference in New Orleans, Louisiana was "Beyond Celebrating Diversity: ReACTivating the Equity and Social Justice Roots of Multicultural Education." (The letters "act" in Reactivating are in upper-

case in an apparent attempt to stress the need for action.) The title accents what has been a standard NAME message for years: that the essence of multiculturalism is not celebrating ethnic holidays or heroes, but advocating for "social justice" via the public schools.

One of NAME's preconference institutes was "Our Work as Social Justice Educators: A Workshop for First Timers." This session promised to introduce first-

time attendees to "the concepts of teaching for social justice through highly interactive, engaging activities." The sponsors promised to "explore concepts of oppression theory, ally building, exclusion, marginality, and privilege as well as some

exciting ways to make the world more inclusive and multicultural."

Teaching for social justice has been the central focus of academic multiculturalists for many years. Brazilian Marxist Paulo Freire, author of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, is the leading light of the movement. Freire practiced a form of critical pedagogy with peasant children in the 1950s, seeking to make them equals with their teachers in analyzing the causes of their oppression and devising ways to overthrow it. Today, U.S. multiculturalists seek to institute that way of thinking in U.S. classrooms and teacher training, in pursuit of a societal transformation in this country.

Among proponents in American academe, one of the most prominent is William Ayers, founder of the Weather Underground, a radical organization that planted bombs in the Pentagon and other government facilities in the 1960s. Now an education professor at the University of Illinois in Chicago, Ayers has written books on the imperative of teaching for social justice that remain best-sellers in the nation's teacher-training institutions. Some controversy surfaced in the 2008 presidential campaign with regard to how closely Ayers worked with Senator Barack Obama when both were high-ranking officers in a well-financed school "reform" effort in Chicago a decade ago.

Obama has denied that Ayers was ever his philosophical partner. What is chilling is the available documentation of Ayers's ability to work within the education and political establishments to indoctrinate students in his version of "social justice." Consider some of the evidence presented by two well-respected writers — Stanley Kurtz, a senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center, writing in *The Wall Street Journal* (9-23-08); and Sol Stern, a Manhattan Institute fellow, writing in the *City Journal* (Summer 2006):

"Mr. Ayers is the founder of the 'small schools' movement . . . in which individual schools built around specific political themes push students to 'confront issues of inequity, war, and

violence.' He believes teacher education programs should serve as 'sites of resistance' to an oppressive system. . . . The point, says Mr. Ayers in his *Teaching Toward Freedom*, is to 'teach against oppression,' against America's history of evil and racism, thereby forcing social transformation." (Kurtz)

"In works like *City Kids*, *City Teachers* and *Teaching the Personal and the Political*, Mr. Ayers wrote that teachers should be community organizers dedicated to provoking resistance to American racism and oppression. His preferred alternative? 'I'm a radical, Leftist, small 'c' communist,' Mr. Ayers said, in an interview in Ron Chepesiuk's *Sixties Radicals*, at about the same time Mr. Ayers was forming CAC [the Chicago Annenberg Challenge]. . . . CAC translated Mr. Ayers' radicalism into practice. Instead of funding schools directly, it required schools to affiliate with 'external partners,' which actually got the money. Proposals from groups focused on math/science achievement were turned down. Instead CAC disbursed money through various far-left community organizers, such as the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (or Acorn)." (Kurtz)

"The readings that Ayers assigns [to future teachers in his classes] are as intellectually stimulating and diverse as a political commissar's indoctrination session in one of his favorite communist tyrannies. The reading list for his urban education course includes the bible of the critical pedagogy movement, Brazilian Marxist Paulo Friere's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*; two books by Ayers himself; another by bell hooks, a radical black feminist writer and critical race theorist; and a 'Freedom School' curriculum. That's the entire spectrum of debate." (Stern)

Ayers's writings are widely taught in schools of education around the country.

Radical Agendas at Educator Conferences

At NAME's annual national conference, and at several regional conferences around the country, numerous public and taxpayer-funded entities are listed in promotional materials as co-sponsors. NAME held its November 2007 national conference in Baltimore, Maryland. According to the organization, the conference was co-sponsored by several organizations, including the Maryland Department of Education, the Baltimore City Public Schools and the Carroll County Public Schools. At the conference, the program included these workshops for teachers sent there by school districts from all states:

- ▶ "Teaching for Social Justice in Elementary Schools"
- ▶ "The Unbearable Whiteness of Being: Dismantling White Privilege and Supporting Anti-Racist Education in our

Classrooms and Schools"

- ▶ "Integrating Social Justice Curriculum in a Preservice Teacher Training Program Through Planned Class Activities"
- ▶ "Undoing Whiteness in the Classroom: Critical Educational Approaches for Social Justice Activism"
- ▶ "Talking About Religious Oppression and Christian Privilege"
- ▶ "Preparing White Middle-Class Preservice Teachers (and Others) to Become Proactive Change Agents Who Teach for Social Justice"

The national conference had much in common with regional conferences, including the 2007 New England Conference on Multicultural Education, held in Connecticut. According to conference organizers, co-sponsors included the Connecticut State Department of Education. Other taxpayer-funded co-sponsors included the University of Connecticut's Near School of Education, Eastern Connecticut State University, and Central Connecticut State University. The agenda of workshops for the 2007 New England Conference included: "More Than Men in White Sheets: Helping White Students Understand Systemic Racism," "Unpacking Religious Oppression and Christian Privilege," and "Why Aren't All the White Kids Learning About Privilege and Power?"

In 2006, NAME convened in Phoenix, Arizona, and took dead aim at the very concepts of citizenship and citizenship education. At a session on "Educating Citizens for Diversity and Social Justice in Contested Lands Around the World," Dr. James A. Banks, a University of Washington professor who is widely regarded as a founding father of multiculturalism, put forward as a counter to citizenship the concept of "cosmopolitanism," which he defined as "allegiance to the worldwide community of human beings," and "community to humanity, not a nation."

A discussion by an international panel cast light on how professional multiculturalists view the United States as little more than a contested land from which they hope to diminish if not purge European-based culture through a mixture of open-borders immigration, encouragement of minority resistance to assimilation, and guilt-inducing indoctrination of the children of the old, "oppressive" American culture, and their teachers.

Banks concluded that multiculturalists "can be cosmopolitan and keep our commitment to our ethnic group." However, the NAME panelists regarded commitment to one's nation as much more tenuous than fidelity to group.

While indoctrinating teachers preservice and inservice is a high priority for multiculturalists, so, too, is attitudinal adjustment for children beginning at very young ages. Participants at one NAME workshop in Phoenix were told how Project Children LEAD (Learning Early to Appreciate Diversity) trains early childhood educators to begin instilling the "correct" sociopolitical attitudes in children as young as age two.

The desire to launch "social justice" instruction at such a tender age may help



explain the enthusiasm for universal, government-run pre-kindergarten among some advocates.

Propaganda in the Classroom

A Milwaukee-based organization/publication called Rethinking Schools, which works in close association with NAME, offered in 2006 a catalogue of "Education Resources for Equity and Social Justice." Among the materials offered for sale: *Reading, Writing, and Rising Up: Teaching About Social Justice and the Power of the Written Word*; *Rethinking Mathematics: Teaching Social Justice by the Numbers*; and *Transforming Teacher Unions: Fighting for Better Schools and Social Justice*.

In its 20th anniversary issue (Spring 2006), the editors argued that "in order to protect and nurture academically rigorous social-justice teaching, educators need to see themselves as activists beyond the classroom — and in alliance with parents and other groups." In truth, this approach contemplates teachers as politicized activists within the classroom as well, seeking to instill an ideology in children. The same issue contains a spread on so-called "radical math," which entails using math to make points about such issues as "environmental racism" and the "racial wealth gap."

Rethinking Schools publishes many materials designed to guide teachers in their classroom approaches. One example is *Whose Wars? Teaching About the Iraq War and the War on Terrorism* (2006). A blurb on the back cover by none other than Prof. William Ayers asserts that the booklet "is filled with powerful ideas and reflections, units, and lessons that probe deeply into the official and ominous silence all around us. In these perilous times, this book is essential reading for teachers seeking the truth and some higher ground."

In a chapter entitled "A Pedagogy of Resistance," Howard Zinn, author of *A People's History of the United States*, urges teachers to inject their viewpoint into their teaching and reject the mission that the public expects them to perform. "The first thing teachers have to do," declared Zinn, "is make a decision for themselves that they will not be obedient in staying within the boundaries that are usually set by the principals, school administrators, and parent-teacher associations. The teacher has to make a decision right from the start that 'I am not here just to prepare these students to pass tests so they can move ahead and become successful and take their dutiful place in society.'"

Zinn's books are based on the premise that the United States has been an oppressive society from the start and that it needs to be thoroughly transformed on a redistributionist model. In the interview, Zinn rejects the concept of American exceptionalism and urges teachers to present the U.S. as "just one other nation in the world."

"Give students heroes other than the traditional heroes — other than the presidents of the United States who dominate most history instruction," Zinn urged K-12 teachers. "Give them the story of Cindy Sheehan. Give them the story of the Iraq Veterans Against the War. Give them the story of the environmentalists — the tree-huggers — and the people who are protesting what's happening to our forests."

The *Whose Wars?* guide devotes three full chapters to telling teachers how to incorporate use of the so-called documentary, *Fahrenheit 9/11*, by leftist filmmak-

er Michael Moore in the curriculum. According to the film's official website, the film is a "searing examination of the Bush administration's actions in the wake of the tragic events of 9/11." The release describes "a nation . . . lulled into accepting a piece of legislation, the USA Patriot Act, that infringes on basic civil rights," and "illustrates the awful human cost to U.S. soldiers and their families."

The prominence given such a propagandistic work to the exclusion of more even-handed analyses speaks volumes about the point of view that teachers are being urged to advocate in their classrooms. One chapter advises that since the Moore film "tackles complicated issues and is filled with information many students may be unfamiliar with," teachers should have their students draw pictures that allow them to express their "feelings." So rather than teaching children useful knowledge in an objective way, what really counts is to manipulate their attitudes and exploit their feelings.

There is, he said, "too much celebrating diversity and not enough combating the evils of racism." Gorski made clear that he believes multiculturalism is about power politics. Rather than celebrating ethnic foods and fun, he told the teachers, multicultural education "is a political movement and process that attempts to secure social justice for individuals and communities, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, home language, sexual orientation, disability, religion, socioeconomic status, or any other individual or group identity." In handouts given the teachers, he added, "Multicultural education insists that comprehensive school reform can be achieved only through a critical analysis of systems of power and privilege." The ultimate goal, he concluded, "is the elimination of educational inequities," which include "racism, sexism, heterosexism, and classism."

Social Justice as Redistributionist Political Agenda

So what is the "social justice" for which the multiculturalists wish retrained teachers to advocate? How does it differ from ordinary justice? A review of their materials indicates they never quite define the term; however, clearly it anticipates some sort of state-ordered redistribution of power and economic resources — a "spread the wealth" ethos.

Noting that justice pertains to the rules of individual conduct, Nobel laureate economist F. A. Hayek once pointed out that "no rules of the conduct of individuals can have the effect that the good things of life are distributed in a particular manner." He added that, "the idea that things ought to be designed in a just manner means, in effect, that we must abandon the market and turn to a planned economy in which somebody decides how much each ought to have, and that means, of course, that we can only have it at the price of the complete abolition of personal liberty."

In other words, social justice is a redistributionist political agenda any individual or party is free to advocate. But when a teacher does that advocacy in lieu of teaching children literature, math, history, and computer skills, the teacher is engaging in indoctrination, pure and simple.

In 2007, the National Association of Scholars (NAS) discovered in modern social-work education a similarly scandalous penchant for indoctrinating. In the process of strongly condemning this trend in higher education, NAS provided the following thoughtful definition of "social justice" as currently practiced: "Use of the term 'social justice' today generally equates with the advocacy of more egalitarian access to income through state-sponsored redistribution. The phrase is also frequently used to justify new egalitarian rights for individuals and whole categories of people — i.e., legally enforceable claims of individuals or groups against the state itself."

As for multicultural education, cur-

rent NAME president Paul C. Gorski, an assistant professor of "interdisciplinary and integrative studies" at George Mason University's New Century College in Fairfax, Virginia, has asserted that "the transformation of society" is the ultimate goal.

Targeting "Oppression"

Gorski doesn't seem to believe that social justice is achievable within a capitalistic society, which he condemns as "oppressive." "This is precisely the reason," he asserts, "that it is not enough

to continue working within an ailing, oppressive, and outdated system to make changes, when the problems in education are themselves symptoms of a system that continues to be controlled by the economic elite."

Conducting a workshop at the 2006 NAME gathering in Phoenix, Gorski derided what he characterized as public schools' token displays of multiculturalism, along the lines of "Taco Night." There is, he said, "too much celebrating diversity and not enough combating the evils of racism." Gorski made clear that he believes multiculturalism is about power politics. Rather than celebrating ethnic foods and fun, he told the teachers, multicultural education "is a political movement and process that attempts to secure social justice for individuals and communities, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, home language, sexual orientation, disability, religion, socioeconomic status, or any other individual or group identity." In handouts given the teachers, he added, "Multicultural education insists that comprehensive school reform can be achieved only through a critical analysis of systems of power and privilege." The ultimate goal, he concluded, "is the elimination of educational inequities," which include "racism, sexism, heterosexism, and classism."

School boards and administrations may think they are sending teachers to NAME in order to learn ways to wholesomely "celebrate diversity" in their schools. But Gorski and other NAME officials consider the celebratory "Heroes and Holidays" stage only a small step toward the desired curricular transformation.

Compelled Ideology

After studying social work education, the National Association of Scholars reported last year that the accrediting body — the Council on Social Work Education — requires social work programs to prepare students to advocate for "social and economic justice," "distributive justice," and "nondiscriminatory social and economic systems," and to have students grasp something called "the global interconnections of oppression."

Social work students also are obliged to abide by the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers, which means they must "engage in social and political action that seeks to ensure that all people have equal access to resources, employment, services, and opportunities to meet their basic human needs and to develop fully," and to "advocate for changes in policy and legislation to improve social conditions to meet basic human needs and promote social justice."

NAS called upon U.S. colleges and

universities that offer social work education to eliminate such "ideological tests and dogmatic commitments." Using classrooms for indoctrination is problematic in higher education but even more insidious when practiced on impressionable elementary and secondary students as a result of teachers traveling at taxpayer expense to workshops such as those NAME conducts in the name of multiculturalism.

Teachers and teachers-in-training need to know that when they are urged to be multiculturalists and social-justice warriors in their K-12 classrooms, they are being asked to do a lot more than teach an appreciation of America's component cultures. They are being asked to sign on to a political agenda.

School boards and administrators using tax dollars to pay the way for multicultural training also ought to know what they are buying. They may think they are sending their teachers to acquire new knowledge and skills. Instead, their teachers are being asked to come back and spread left-wing political dogma in their teaching.

The cost to send a classroom teacher to one of these five-day indoctrinating sessions is not a minor item. The registration fee for NAME's New Orleans conference is \$375 per NAME member or \$475 per non-member. Each day-long or half-day institute costs an additional \$60 to \$175. Despite its stated aversion to economic elitism, NAME always schedules its meetings at pricey hotels — in this case, one charging \$159 per night for a single room. And of course, there is the cost of airfare from different cities, ranging from a few hundred to a few thousand dollars.

Not to be forgotten is the cost of a substitute teacher for a week, and the loss of quality learning time for students left behind. Indeed, an opportunity-to-learn cost is exacted when teachers are sitting in a circle speculating about Christian privilege instead of teaching their pupils U.S. or world history, math, or computer skills. The cost mounts when factoring in the time lost for teachers to be engaged in constructive professional development focusing on their subject-matter mastery and instructional skills. Ultimately, the heaviest cost comes in precious time lost for learning because teachers have been convinced they need to push a leftist agenda.

As Sol Stern suggests, little chance exists that a challenge to "the hegemony of social justice teaching" will ever emerge from within the closed-minded circle of education schools and organizations. However, it is perfectly legitimate for school boards to exercise oversight over what kind of training their district's teachers are receiving at taxpayer-funded conferences and courses. The budget line item justifies scrutiny as a starting point. In addition, it is reasonable for school boards and administrators to examine the content of what teachers are being urged to carry back into their classrooms.

State legislatures and governors legitimately could get involved as well. Academic freedom gives Bill Ayers and Paul Gorski and other social-justice educators the right to say and write whatever they want about this country and its education system. However, they do not have a right to force their particular brand of social-justice activism on the public schools.

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