



The Phyllis Schlafly Report



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Are Schools and Colleges Worth Their Cost?

"There is manifest in the country -- for the first time in our history -- an active loss of enchantment with our schools . . . from kindergarten through graduate school. . . Americans in significant numbers are questioning the purpose of education, the competence of educators, and the usefulness of the system in preparing young minds for life in these turbulent times." So said Dr. Sidney P. Marland, Jr., U.S. Assistant Secretary for Education in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Dr. Marland is correct. Americans are disenchanted with our schools. And why shouldn't we be disenchanted? We have seen the cost of education soar seven times faster than the population while, at the same time, the quality of education falls lower and lower.

For the last generation, parents have generally accepted the slogan, "Leave education to the educators." This slogan has convinced parents that education is such a complicated matter that they can't possibly understand it or cope with the needs and problems of their own children, and, therefore, education should be left completely in the hands of the professionals.

As a result, parents spend all their time caring for the material and physical needs of their children, providing them with spending money, transporting them hither and yon, seeing that they have the right clothes to wear and the right food to eat -- but parents have divorced themselves from the most exciting and important part: the feeding and developing of their children's minds.

Let's take a look at some of the results of leaving education wholly in the hands of the professionals.

S.A.T. Scores Decline

What American parents and taxpayers have intuitively sensed about the failure of the schools to teach our children the fundamentals, is now proved by the statistical record. The Scholastic Aptitude Test, the principal admissions examination used by most colleges, recently reported a steady ten-year decline in the scores of high school students. Every year, from 1963 to 1973, showed a significant drop in average scores in both the verbal and the mathematical tests.

The S.A.T. scores are an embarrassment and a puzzlement to the educators who have been telling us that students have been getting smarter. The fact is that the S.A.T. scores prove that elementary and secondary

schools are not preparing students as well in verbal and mathematical skills as they did in former years. College Board officials admit that the drop in average scores cannot be explained by a larger number of students taking the tests because the number of students leveled off several years ago.

It shouldn't be any mystery why today's students are so deficient in these basic learning tools. When the educationists eliminated phonics from the teaching of reading and substituted the "look-say" method, and when they replaced drilling in multiplication tables with the New Math, they handicapped our students in learning verbal and math skills as much as if they had put a blindfold over one eye of every child.

When a student hasn't been taught phonics, he cannot spell and he has an artificially limited vocabulary. This is why it has become popular to read the classics in comic book editions. When a student hasn't memorized addition sums and multiplication tables, he cannot solve the simple arithmetic problems that confront us in everyday life such as adding up a restaurant bill or balancing a check book.

Progressive educationists seem to stubbornly adhere to the dogma that anything new must be superior to whatever is old. It isn't, and the S.A.T. scores prove it. Our educational system needs a fresh willingness to replace the failures of the present with the successful teaching techniques of the past.

Phonics: The Key To Reading

Every fall, millions of six year olds start to school, eager to learn to read. Three months later, they are bored and disorderly, for they still haven't started to learn. Instead, they are subjected to volume after volume of boring, repetitious, stupid books, in which the child is taught to memorize a few dozen words by guessing at them from the picture on the page.

This is called the "whole-word" or "look-and-say" method. The child is inflicted with endless pages of "Look up; Look down; Quack, Quack, said the duck," and similar nauseating nonentities.

Three years later, many children still cannot read, and many more cannot read well. They limp along from year to year, frustrated and discouraged. Courses in "remedial reading" endeavor to teach them in the fourth or fifth grades what they should have learned in the first.

When they get to high school, they have had so many years of what is called the "controlled vocabulary" that they cannot read the classics. So they are fed great literature which has been rewritten in the vocabulary of the elementary grades.

You can measure the decline in reading skills by comparing current readers with the old McGuffey readers which our grandparents studied. The McGuffey readers are about two years advanced over modern readers of the same grade level in all the reading skills, including vocabulary, comprehension, spelling, writing, pronunciation, grammar, and intellectual and spiritual content. The first grade McGuffey reader, for example, uses two or three times the vocabulary of most modern first grade readers.

The problem is not with our teachers, most of whom are hard-working and conscientious. They, just as much as the children, are the victims of the system which is imposed on them, and the texts which are put into their hands.

Can it be that our grandparents, in the one-room schoolhouse, with wooden stools and little heat in winter, got a better education than our own children in their fancy new buildings with gymnasiums and cafeterias?

It was 19 years ago that Rudolf Flesch's Book, *Why Johnny Can't Read*, became an overnight best-seller and shook the educational world by exposing how the progressive educationists had eliminated the teaching of phonics from the first grade. He exposed the fallacies of the "look-and-say" method and conclusively proved that phonics is the indispensable key to reading the English language.

As a result of Flesch's book, a few phonics lessons were reintroduced into the schools. Most schools now stoutly maintain that they do use phonics. But this usually means that it is taught separately from reading, and usually only in the second or third grade after the child has been given a year of bad reading habits. Phonics should be used as the key to reading at the very start of the first grade.

I followed Flesch's advice and personally gave all my six children the first grade at home, using a 100 percent phonics system. Now that they are all well along in school and college, it is time to report that my project was a total success. Parents teach their children to ride a bike, to swim, to cook, to sew, to drive a car, and many skills. Why not teach your children to read -- the most important skill of all -- and give them the key to a sound education?

In teaching my children to read, I used the system Rudolf Flesch recommended: *Reading With Phonics* by Hay and Wingo. It is available in both a pupil's edition, and a Teacher's Edition which includes the pupil's edition, from the J.B. Lippincott Company, 230 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. There are also three workbooks to go with this reader, available separately in the pupil's edition and the Teacher's Edition. An advertising brochure for this phonics primer makes this boast: "Any normal child can finish the first grade with the reading competence of at least one full grade above today's accepted national reading norm?" From experience with my own children, I know this is true.

Federal Spending For Education

One of the evidences that our society has become more materialistic than idealistic is the general presumption

that all problems can be solved by spending more money. Nowhere is this delusion so rampant as in the field of education. Between 1961 and 1972, enrollments in public elementary and secondary schools increased 26 percent, while school spending increased a tremendous 186 percent. Yet, the quality of education has steadily deteriorated.

In 1965, the spending syndrome took a giant leap forward when Congress passed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Its alleged purpose was to create compensatory educational programs for the "educationally disadvantaged" (Title I). However, it also created many other categorical programs, providing funding for such things as library services (Title II), exemplary elementary and secondary school programs (*i.e.*, experimental programs) (Title III), state departments of education (Title IV), and bilingual education (Title VII).

Supposedly designed to create programs for the educationally disadvantaged, ESEA quickly became nothing but a poverty program to redistribute the wealth. The formula for distributing funds is based entirely on the income of the children's parents. Federal educators attempt to determine how well Johnny can read simply by asking how much money his father makes. Johnny's answer supposedly determines his reading level, and his level of educational advantage or disadvantage.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act marked the first major Federal involvement in and control of public education in the United States. Under this law, the U.S. Commissioner of Education has spent more than \$13 billion. Funds are distributed to state and local education agencies provided, of course, that they comply with Federal controls including counseling, psychological testing, and experimentation on our children.

During the hearings on ESEA, an endless procession of witnesses appeared to testify about the great "need" for Federal funding of education. Almost all the witnesses were from the educational establishment and, of course, could not be expected to testify *against* legislation in which they had a vested interest. Nothing was said, however, about four crucial issues:

1. *Federal control.* ESEA has greatly increased the degree to which the Federal Government controls education. This is the unavoidable result of Federal aid: he who pays the piper calls the tune. But, should a few individuals at the Federal level determine educational policy for most of the public schools in America? Or, should educational policies be decided by parents and educators at the local level? If we continue down the ESEA road, total Federal control is inevitable.

Parental Rights

2. *Parental rights.* There are many programs in the public schools in which children are forced to participate without the knowledge and consent of their parents. Some of these programs are funded under ESEA. Is it not a violation of a parent's (and pupil's) rights to subject a student to educational practices to which the parent objects? If we continue to build on the groundwork laid by ESEA, a total usurpation of the parent's right to determine the nature of his or her child's education is inevitable.

3. *Content of educational programs.* Traditionally, we have expected our public schools to provide *basic* education; that is, teaching the student the basic *skills*

(reading, writing, arithmetic) needed to think and acquire knowledge, and teaching the student the basic facts (of history, geography, government, etc.) needed to form the foundation of the student's knowledge. Historically, public schools have not attempted to change or affect a student's values. Educational practices and programs which attempt to change a student's values and beliefs are called *affective* (as opposed to cognitive).

Many programs funded under Title III of ESEA can be classified as *affective*: programs in behavior modification, programs utilizing sensitivity training and other psychotherapeutic techniques, programs in "child advocacy" (encouraging the child to question and disagree with the values held by his or her parents). Behavior modification programs are designed to "modify" (*i.e.*, to change) a child's behavior so that he acts in accordance with certain norms prescribed by whomever designs the program.

If there were a free market in education, whether the child were subjected to *affective* education would be decided by a free interaction of producers (educators) and consumers (parents and students). If parents wanted their children to have *affective* education, they would send them to schools which provide it. If, on the other hand, *affective* education turned out to be the "Edsel" of the education industry, it would lose out in the free marketplace.

With public schools, however, the situation is different. With the Federal Government providing the funding, it is difficult for the parents to control the nature and quality of education, and, indeed, even to know what kind of education is being provided. If we continue to finance ESEA, the Federal Government will continue to finance attempts to change the values and behavior of public school students.

4. *Results.* There have been numerous studies to evaluate the results of the ESEA programs. The most comprehensive of these studies, a March 1972 evaluation of Title I conducted by the American Institute for Research, concluded that "participants [in Title I programs] gained less during the period of instruction than nonparticipants and consequently fell further behind their nonparticipating [*i.e.*, non-Federally-funded] peers and national norms."

While the results of the other studies were not always so well defined, none of them could find any clearcut evidence that the \$13 billion spent under ESEA resulted in any educational improvement. By continuing ESEA, we will be wasting the taxpayers' money on a program which is merely enriching the Federal bureaucracy, but not improving the education of students.

The Freer Schools Act

In the light of all this evidence, one would expect those concerned with education to question further Federal involvement in education in general, and ESEA in particular. Instead, the educationists are presently pushing for a simple extension of ESEA for another five years.

There is an old motto which asks the question: "Are you working on the solution, or are you part of the problem?" In education, Federal spending is not only *not* working on the solution, but it is part of the problem.

Congressman Earl Landgrebe has devised a most sensible solution. He has introduced the Freer Schools Act

which would phase out Federal intervention in primary and secondary schools over a four-year period. During the phase-out period, Title I programs would be restricted to basic cognitive skills, particularly reading and math; Title III programs would be restricted to cognitive development (as opposed to social development or behavior modification); the moral and legal rights of parents regarding the development of their children would be respected; parental permission would be required for participation in experimental programs; psychotherapy techniques such as group therapy and sensitivity training would be prohibited.

Congressman Landgrebe's bill will mean local control, decentralized schools, and freedom from Federal interference. The result will be a better education for all our children. You are urged to contact your Senators and Congressmen and ask them to support Congressman Earl Landgrebe's Freer Schools Act, H.R. 10639, and/or the "parental rights" amendments to H.R. 69.

Federal funding must inevitably result in more Federal control. We can't have it both ways, and the American people are kidding themselves when they think they can get huge checks from Washington without controls.

Is College Worth It?

By next autumn, it is estimated that the annual cost of room, board and tuition at such prestigious Ivy League colleges as Harvard and Yale will run to approximately \$5,400. The cost at other colleges will be between \$3,000 and \$4,000. The rate of increase is alarming. A recent report by the College Entrance Examination Board shows that the cost of attending some colleges in the 1974-75 academic year will be 80 percent greater than in 1970-71.

The implications of this tuition-inflation are clear. College is pricing itself out of the market for middle-income Americans. The wealthy can afford it, and the poor can get full-tuition scholarships.

Compounding the problem is the fact that the college/university system is suffering from a bad case of over-expansion. New facilities were built and more faculty were hired in the 1960s to accommodate more and more students. But now, the population is no longer expanding, and our school-age population is shrinking. As a result, many colleges are now wooing students through newspaper advertisements, direct-mail appeals, and radio commercials.

Meanwhile, many young people are wondering if a college education is really essential to their future well being. If one assumes that a student could earn \$5,000 a year at a job and that college costs about \$5,000 a year, both parents and students are asking if this is truly the best way to invest \$10,000 a year for four years, or \$40,000.

Business Gifts To Colleges

"Don't bite the hand that feeds you" is an old aphorism that most people abide by except colleges and universities. I've been waiting for years for some courageous soul to object to the way universities not only bite, but chew up the businessmen who feed them generous contributions. Finally, it happened.

Mr. David Packard, chairman of the Hewlett-Packard Company and one of the business geniuses of our time, was invited to address a prestigious fund-raising group called the Committee for Corporate Support of American

Universities. There at the University Club in New York City, in the august presence of the country's educational elite, including the presidents of Harvard, MIT, Cornell, Pennsylvania, Chicago, and Stanford, Mr. Packard gave it to them straight.

He said that a survey shows that 90 percent of university students believe -- as they have been taught -- that "American corporations are evil and deserve to be brought under government control." Pointing out that business recruiters and ROTC units have been rudely kicked off many college campuses, he said that control of the universities has shifted from the trustees to the faculty, and too often "decisions are determined by a militant minority of the faculty." He said that university trustees could no longer be counted on to spend the money in ways which the corporation could defend to its stockholders.

Mr. Packard's stunning conclusion was that corporations should no longer make unrestricted gifts to private education, but contribute only for specified purposes.

His speech was an embarrassing disappointment to the university administrators who had assembled for what they elegantly called "the symbiosis between the private corporation and the private university."

Maybe one reason why universities are so antagonistic to business is that college professors are a privileged class immune from the discipline of the free market. Their income and their job security do not depend on the quality of what they produce. Even private universities receive a large share of their income from the Government and from foundations. Professors have job tenure and cannot be fired whether they do a good job or not.

It is no wonder that corporate philanthropy to higher education has declined in recent years. It is a hopeful sign that American businessmen such as David Packard are providing the leadership to call a halt to the teaching of untruths about the American free enterprise system.

The Prayer Amendment

It has been eleven years since the U.S. Supreme Court handed down its decision banning prayers from public schools, but it still is a mystery how any judge could say that prayer violates the First Amendment, when all that Amendment says is that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion." Saying a prayer is certainly not the same thing as establishing a Federal religion.

Justice Hugo Black simply rewrote the First Amendment to inject in it a new meaning which for 171 years no President, no Congress, and no Court had ever detected. This new meaning, according to Justice Black, prohibits children in public schools from saying this prayer: "Almighty God, we acknowledge our dependence upon Thee, and we beg Thy blessings upon us, our parents, our teachers and our country."

In writing this opinion, Justice Black not only ignored the clear language of the Constitution, but he also ignored American history. The men who wrote the Constitution and the First Amendment were educated in schools where daily prayers were recited. Prayer has always been, and still is a part of our official public life; beginning with the Declaration of Independence.

The Supreme Court and other Federal courts open each day with this prayer: "God save the United States and this Honorable Court." Both the Senate and the House of Representatives open each session with a

prayer. The U.S. Government has always approved and supported chaplains to lead prayers for the armed forces, in our military academies, and in our prisons. Our Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag contains the words "under God," and our currency bears the legend, "In God We Trust."

In dissent, Justice Stewart expressed the views of the majority of Americans when he said he could not "see how an 'official religion' is established by letting those who want to say a prayer say it. On the contrary, I think that to deny the wish of these schoolchildren to join in reciting this prayer is to deny them the opportunity of sharing in the spiritual heritage of our nation."

The trouble with some Supreme Court Justices is that, once they are appointed, they begin to think they have been anointed as high priests to rewrite our Constitution and laws. Justice Jackson once stated the Supreme Court's attitude rather bluntly in these words: "We are not final because we are infallible, on the contrary, we are infallible only because we are final."

However, the Supreme Court is not final. The truly final authority is in the people through amendments to the U.S. Constitution. It is time to pass a series of constitutional amendments to undo the mischief the Supreme Court has wrought in many areas, and there is no better place to start than by restoring prayer and moral training to our schools.

Phyllis Wins Awards

Freedoms Foundation of Valley Forge, Pennsylvania announced on February 18 that Phyllis Schlafly is the recipient of two more George Washington Honor Medals. One is for her speech called "What Our POWs Can Teach Us About America," which was originally published in the *Phyllis Schlafly Report* for November, 1973, and subsequently reprinted in the *DAR Magazine* of February 1974.

The other Medal was given for her article "Food for Freedom -- Or Folly," originally published in the *Phyllis Schlafly Report* of June 1973, and used as the basis for a "Women's Summit Conference on Food" held in St. Louis on June 5, 1973, attended by women leaders from all over the country. Phyllis was the first national figure to sound the alarm about the impending food shortages. Her original television commentary on the CBS Spectrum series, aired on June 4, 1973, called for a fullscale Congressional investigation into the problem of food. The *Phyllis Schlafly Report* of October 1972 contained the first published expose in any national publication of the high cost to American taxpayers and consumers of the Soviet wheat deal. Phyllis' original research on this food issue was corroborated some eight months later by the report of the General Accounting Office.

This brings to a total of six the George Washington Honor Medals awarded to Phyllis by Freedoms Foundation of Valley Forge.

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