



The Phyllis Schlafly Report

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Hypocrisy About Banned Books

Many bookstores and libraries this fall displayed posters headlined "National Banned Books Week." The poster featured, among others, pictures of William Shakespeare and Alexander Solzhenitsyn.

There is an old expression that the thief cries "Stop, thief" in order to divert attention from his own thievery. Put another way, an old adage reminds us, "The guilty flee when no one pursueth." If, indeed, anyone really banned Shakespeare and Solzhenitsyn, such incidents must be as a flyspeck on the window compared with the millions of Americans who are permanently disabled because they are not literate enough to read those great authors.

Although the National Commission on Excellence stated in 1983 in *A Nation At Risk* that America has 23 million illiterates, the 1985 national report by the Committee for Economic Development, called *Investing In Our Children: Business and the Public Schools*, places the figure even higher. This report found that 25% of young adults are functional illiterates and another 40% are marginal illiterates.

That means more than half of our young people are effectively prohibited from reading Shakespeare or Solzhenitsyn. The reason why they are illiterate is not that they are stupid or poor or disadvantaged. It is because the schools did not teach them how to read. Phonics books are banned from the first grade in 85% of public schools even though phonics is the proven, best method of learning to read the English language.

Investing In Our Children, the result of a million-dollar, three-year research effort headed by the board chairman of Procter & Gamble, is addressed particularly to the responsibility of the schools to teach children those skills and attributes that will enable them to get and hold jobs. It is clear that employers look, first of all, for job applicants who can read and write the English language.

But employers look for much, much more. They look for what this new report calls the "invisible curriculum." This report says that public schools today transmit important invisible messages that adults will tolerate tardiness and absenteeism, that assignments do not have to be submitted on time or even completed at all

in order to receive a passing grade.

Anyone who is familiar with what is going on inside the public schools today could add many other lessons included in the current invisible curriculum. It teaches students that acceptable behavior includes slovenly dress, unkempt hair, vulgar and profane language, vandalism of property, premarital sex, use of illegal drugs, and disrespect for teachers.

We've been hearing about the problems of schools through some 30 reports of national educational commissions over the past 10 years. We all know what's wrong; how did this come about?

The most influential American educator in the 20th century was John Dewey of the University of Chicago and then Columbia University. He fashioned the social philosophy of education on a foundation of humanism and behaviorism. Dewey believed that the mind is not really the property of the individual but of humanity, which means the collective or the state. He opposed what he called the "purely individualist notion of intelligence." He urged that the goal of education be to adapt the child to the group rather than to learn knowledge and skills.

Dewey identified high literacy as a chief factor opposing his new philosophy. He called it a "perversion" to attach great importance to "the predominance of learning to read in early school-life." He brought about a de-emphasizing of literacy skills in favor of his brand of social skills. That's how the proven best method of teaching reading, phonics, went out of vogue, and was replaced by a system that kept half of the children unable to read. That's why the other half of students, with their limited and controlled vocabulary, could read only books which are "dumbed down."

John Dewey and his behaviorist professors are the real book banners. They started the process of prohibiting the majority of young people from reading the great works of literature, biography and history.

What Did We Get For Our Money?

Although a taxpayer-financed school system has been part of the American culture for a century, it was traditionally almost wholly financed at the local and state levels. This fall marks the 20th anniversary of

Congress' decision to put schools on the Federal Government's agenda.

President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society began pouring billions of dollars into taxpayer-financed schools for the avowed purpose of lending a special hand to the impoverished, handicapped, and otherwise disadvantaged. Once the commitment was made, the escalator started going up. Annual Federal outlays for education rose from \$1.1 billion in 1964 to \$19 billion in 1984. Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act was the foundation-stone of this giant expansion. It has poured \$42.4 billion into programs purportedly to compensate for learning disabilities.

Even the *New York Times*, in a recent anniversary analysis, admits that "the programs have not come close to fulfilling their initial goals of eliminating disadvantages that stood in the way of an equal educational opportunity for all Americans." The *New York Times* goes on to admit that, "despite the size of the expenditures, Washington has never determined what long-term differences the aid has made in education." A Federally-sponsored study released in August found that the children in the much-acclaimed Headstart program for disadvantaged children retained no benefits after a very few years. The failure of Federal aid to education is really far more dramatic than the *New York Times*, in its muted prose and liberal orientation, will admit.

Illiteracy statistics in America in the 1930s show that the problem was small and could be soon solved: native-born whites 1.5%, foreign-born whites 9.9%, blacks 16%. A 1935 survey of Civilian Conservation Corporation (CCC) enrollees, presumably from low socio-economic groups, found only 1.9% to be illiterate.

Today the national illiteracy rate is estimated at 25%, and at least 40% for blacks. Inner-city schools are a disaster almost beyond comprehension. In Chicago inner-city schools (which are 82% black or Hispanic), the high school dropout rate is over 50%. Of those who remain in high school, more than half are marginally illiterate and fail at least two courses a year.

Nobody can say that the taxpayers have been penurious about minority schools. Chicago taxpayers spend \$3,574 per pupil, which is \$300 more than is spent in white suburban counties adjacent to Chicago. Money is not the problem; most private schools educate children for half the cost of the public schools.

In the face of this incredible failure, the reforms suggested by the taxpayer-funded school lobby can be summarized as follows: (1) give pay raises (to all the same people who have produced such tragic results), (2) force children into public institutions at an earlier and earlier age, (3) intimidate the parents who complain and smear them as "censors," and (4) use legislative and judicial powers to obstruct the parents' right to choose alternative schooling for their children. The bills introduced into state legislatures try to do such things as reduce the mandatory school age, impose mandatory kindergarten, mandate state courses in a variety of non-academic subjects, and require more non-teaching per-

sonnel in schools.

The biggest problem with the taxpayer-financed school system is its arrogant monopoly status. If parents had the right, not only to transfer their children from public schools to private schools, but also from one public school to another of their choice, education "consumers" would bring about the reforms we so desperately need.

Strange Religions in the Classroom

The first time a mother called me about her first-grade child being required to lie down on the floor of the classroom to eliminate "stress," I thought she was an overreacting parent who had misunderstood something. Then a second mother said the school had told her first-grade child that he has a "person living inside him" and "no one else is to know; it's a secret."

A third mother said her third-grade child reported that his class had been taken on a trip to "Aquatron," but they were not to tell their parents. A Colorado newspaper published the picture of a pathetic third-grade boy forced to simulate stress in the classroom. Children are told that stress occurs "when parents get into the picture."

This strange course inflicted on children is usually called "Q.R.," which stands for Quieting Reflex. That's a deceptive label. Q.R. is very different from the "peace and quiet" that most parents would appreciate.

Q.R. is experimental psychological treatment which, variously, (1) takes little children on a guided-imagery "trip" into a fantasy world, (2) subjects them to the early stages of self-hypnotism, or (3) takes them into Transcendental Meditation (TM), Eastern mysticism, Yoga, or the occult.

In Q.R., children are programmed to escape from the real world into an imaginary fantasy world, where they go for advice to the "wise man" living inside their body (instead of to their parents or to God). No wonder parents complain that Q.R. victims don't want to pray to God any more; He's been replaced.

Here are some samples of the Q.R. lessons used in the classroom on children in a captive classroom setting. "Pretend you are soaring through space. Pretend you are on a soft, fluffy cotton cloud. Stretch out your wings and fly back to earth." "Breathe slowly through imaginary holes in your feet." (This seems to be a Q.R. favorite and is an effective technique to induce self-hypnosis.) "Put your head down on your desk, close your eyes, imagine a candle floating in a dark room, changing colors, dropping in a bucket of water." "Visualize an eight-legged teacher, picture a purple elephant sitting on a mountain smoking a cigar."

"Place yourself on a Calm-Upset Scale. Are you a ONE lying on your waterbed, or a shocked SEVEN? Use this page to keep track of things that bother and upset you." Q.R. tells children to record their feelings in a log. They are instructed, "This log is private. You don't have to show it to anyone. Q.R. is something you learn to do on your own whenever and wherever you choose to. It's private and it feels good."

The Alabama law, which was recently declared

unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court, called for a period of silence "for meditation or voluntary prayer." The law said nothing about God or religion, but it was self-evident that "prayer" would be directed to God. It is likewise obvious that Q.R. is the linkage between the real world and Eastern religions, hypnosis, and the occult. As a combination of unconstitutional religion and unlicensed psychiatry, Q.R. has no place in the public schools.

"Incest" Courses in Primary Grades

If you thought children in the first three grades of school were spending all their time learning the basics (reading, writing and arithmetic), you will be surprised to learn that some schools are teaching a new subject in those tender years. It's a course about incest, physical and sexual abuse, alcoholism, and domestic violence.

These courses have exotic names and enjoy taxpayer funding. One, called "Protective Behaviors Anti-Victim Training," is claimed to be in use in 34 states.

If this is news to you, you might think that some useful purpose would be served by warning little children not to get in the automobile of a stranger who offers a candy bar. But that isn't what this course is about. Only one out of 86 pages concerns dangers from strangers; the rest of the course is about dangers the child may face in the home. The course consists of a series of lessons about horrible hypothetical experiences that allegedly may occur to a child in his own home or as a result of the misbehavior of his parents.

No wonder parents object to the course; they perceive it as anti-parent, as indeed it is. It scares the child into believing that home is a hostile environment and that the chief threat to his safety is from someone in his own family. The child is taught to expect that his parents will probably not believe him if he tells them his fears. So, the child is required to set up a network of mostly NON-parents in whom he is to confide.

Even the semantics of the course are anti-parent. The manual never mentions mother, father, mom or dad, but refers exclusively to "grown-ups at home" or "household people." The only mention of "parent" is about a parent abusing his own child.

The course includes a "Bibliography of Children's Literature" made up exclusively of depressing books about disturbing events in the home, ugly remarks, family quarreling, divorce, domestic violence, alcoholism, or mental illness. It doesn't include any book of hope, inspiration, nobility, or family love.

The child is led to believe the gigantic falsehood that these evils are typical, normal, or common to most homes. Child abuse is a terrible crime, but it is no justification for scaring the overwhelming majority of children who come from normal homes where parents observe standards of morality and courtesy and do not indulge in violence or abuse of their own family members. Nor is it any justification for inflicting group therapy on the majority of children who come from homes which do not have these problems.

The authors of "Protective Behaviors" asked 2,000 teachers, school administrators, and social workers to evaluate this course in terms of a fruit or vegetable.

Responses included: "Cauliflower, because lots of little pieces go together to make the whole head" and "Broccoli, you have to learn to accept it for what it is." Those answers give a good indication of the nonprofessional level of the course.

A similar course for early elementary grades, currently used in Nebraska, is "Bubbylonian Encounter." It's a play with classroom discussion about a creature named Bub who arrives from Bubbylonia to teach about good touching and bad touching. The course compels a classroom discussion of incest and forced sexual touching by little children.

These are examples of the experimental psychological courses which address feelings, attitudes, behavior, and family relationships, and which consume hours of the school day, thereby displacing traditional academic subjects and basic skills. Little children are being used for "guineapiggism" by unlicensed psychologists in the classroom.

Suicide Courses in School

At a two-day conference on Teenage Suicide in Washington, D.C. in 1985, there was an undercurrent among some speakers and social workers to demand mandatory "suicide" courses in the schools. Other speakers said this would be the worst thing that could possibly happen and would probably induce more teen suicides.

If you assume that "suicide" courses would tell teenagers that suicide is wrong, unhealthy, socially irresponsible, and a mistake, you are living in a dream world about public education today. More probably, suicide courses would tell teenagers that suicide is a matter of personal choice and that lots of people do it, including famous people.

Such courses would probably turn into a rap session at which students would be encouraged to invent, fantasize about, and discuss all the reasons why they might commit suicide. Such sessions would promote a venting of criticisms of parents and classroom discussion of private family problems. If you think this is an exaggeration, you should investigate the death, dying and suicide lessons already appearing in public school classrooms without parental knowledge or consent.

Nevada legislators were shocked this spring when one parent provided a copy of a Suicide Quiz given in a public high school in that state. Here are the questions on that quiz given after the showing of a film on teenage suicide and a classroom discussion of whether or not carbon monoxide is a painful way to die. "(1) Write down two reasons that Skip committed suicide. (2) If you help a person commit suicide, could you be charged with a crime? If yes, what crime? Could you be convicted and what should the sentence be? (3) Why do they have laws that are generally not enforced regulating suicide? (4) Generally discuss two arguments in favor of suicide. (5) What would be the public consequences if society repealed the laws about suicide?"

At the end of this quiz, one student said to the teacher, "Why didn't you ask any questions about what

is wrong with suicide?" The teacher's answer was, "We have enough questions on the test."

The plan of action of the social workers in the face of today's problem of teenage suicide is best described in the old saying, "When in danger or in doubt, run in circles, scream and shout." They don't have any solution for the problem; the only thing they know for sure is that they want taxpayers' money to finance a new "suicide" bureaucracy.

What we are witnessing is an attempt by unlicensed psychologists (teachers, counselors, guidance people, social workers) to conduct group therapy in the classroom. They have no professional credentials for this, and they are dealing with a psychological dimension in which anything they do is apt to be far worse than nothing at all.

NEA Action Against Parents

The National Education Association's 1985-86 edition of *Today's Education*, a 166-page yearbook documenting the NEA's radical agenda, itemizes the specific goals and objectives for which the NEA's \$97.5 million budget will be spent during the current school year.

A significant addition to the usual radical agenda is the establishment of a gestapo-like clearinghouse and communications network to identify opponents of NEA and to provide dossiers on them to local NEA members.

"The NEA will provide information to state and local affiliates regarding anti-NEA individuals and organizations. Such information will include at least: (a) their specific anti-NEA positions and the NEA response, (b) background information on each individual, and (c) any known scheduled appearance in the area of local affiliates." (p. 142) The NEA also will "prepare a booklet to assist local association leaders in dealing with harassment" including a "model action plan to combat such harassment." (p. 142)

The NEA stridently asserts that "teachers and librarians must have the right to select instructional/library materials without censorship or legislative interference." (p. 156) That means they want the right to spend the taxpayers' money without supervision by taxpayers, citizens, or parents.

Testing our children's teachers is strictly taboo. "Competency testing must **not** be used as a condition of employment, recertification or relicensing, evaluation or promotion of certified teachers." (p. 154)

The NEA opposes "tuition tax credits" (p. 139) and even the selling or leasing of "closed public school buildings" to private schools. (p. 147) However, the NEA wants "child care programs which are coordinated with the public school system." (p. 140)

The NEA wants children in school by age five and seeks "legislation to ensure that early childhood developmental programs offered primarily through the public schools be fully funded and culminate in mandatory kindergarten." (p. 148)

Concerning "Family Life Education" (translation: sex education), the NEA supports programs "including information on birth control and family planning, par-

enting skills, prenatal care, sexually transmitted diseases, incest and sexual abuse." The NEA asserts "the right of every individual [including children] to live in an environment of freely available information, knowledge, and wisdom about sexuality." (p. 150)

The NEA actively encourages "state affiliates to conduct comparable worth projects" and promises that "consideration for major NEA funding will be given to those projects that NEA determines will have national impact." (p. 142) Says the NEA, "the 'market value' means of establishing pay cannot be the final determinant of pay scales." (p. 157)

The Association supports the Equal Rights Amendment, "reproductive freedom" and "affirmative action," (p. 138) as well as "equal opportunity and responsibility for women and men in military service" (translation: drafting women into military combat). (p. 140) The NEA defines "civil rights" to include "sexual orientation" (a euphemism for "gay rights"). (p. 163)

As for any hope of balance or objectivity in the classroom, the NEA opposes "regulations that mandate the teaching of so-called 'creation science,'" and "urges its affiliates to seek repeal of such mandates where they exist." (p. 156)

The NEA urges a "freeze on the testing, development, production, upgrading, emplacement and deployment of nuclear weapons." The union urges the use of classroom courses on nuclear war which "show the effects of nuclear weaponry and demonstrate strategies for disarmament..." (p. 165)

"The NEA urges that the United States make every effort to strengthen the United Nations to make it a more effective instrument for world peace." (p. 164) "The NEA urges the U.S. Government to refrain from any U.S. plan for covert or overt action that would destabilize Nicaragua." (p. 144)

Concerning a balanced budget, "the NEA opposes any constitutional amendment respecting tax limitations or the federal budget" and supports the "repeal of tax indexing." (p. 139)

No wonder polls show that most NEA members do not agree with these objectives.

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