

PUBLIC EDUCATION: The Backdoor To Education



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The 12 Year Sentence gives Martin Luther's Protestant Reformation movement as one of the first drives to justify forced education on the notion that men are already drafted into the military.

In 1524 Martin Luther wrote to German rulers, "If the government can compel such citizens as are fit for military service to bear spear and rifle, to mount ramparts, and perform other material duties in time of war, how much more has it a right to compel the people to send their children to school."

However, education is not a political process, nor is it something that can be rammed down the child's throat. Education is the development of knowledge, skills and thought, and the ability to employ all three at one's discretion. Government, by nature, is to control, tirelessly proliferating to increase its power, influence and authority by whatever means found at its disposal. The two are worlds apart. To combine education with government is like comparing books and knowledge with guns and swords.

Force is a poor and dangerous excuse to defend education. The parent may scold the truant child that he "must go to school because it is the law," but the child will not understand why education is important. The child will only remember the threat. The child could easily become disillusioned and frustrated with education since education is dependent on force instead of reason. It doesn't become a matter of learning or the desire to be educated, rather, it becomes, as the child sees it, a matter of being at school on time to escape punishment and ridicule. The meaning of education, of course, becomes lost which eventually leads to mindless brutes bored with school and timid sheep too scared to be innovative. In either case, the child is cranked-out of the government educational system, unprepared and uneducated for the real world.

It's time to allow people to be educated in their own fashion without fear of government indoctrination and control. It's time to end the conscription of students into government schools. Government must be separate from education. It can be no other way, for how can a teacher speak glowingly of American Freedom and individualism when students are forced to attend school and parents are forced to pay for their child's chains? It appears that if Socrates were alive today, he just might have to drink that hemlock brew again.

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THE LIBERTARIAN STATEMENT

We, as libertarians, affirm:
 That full individual liberty is impossible in any society other than a voluntary one and was asserted by the full and independent use of their own judgement in order to survive at an optimum level, and therefore have a natural right to do their own thing, providing that they do not physically harm or coercively restrict another individual's life, liberty, or property; That each person owns himself or herself exclusively, and is a slave to no one;
 That the individual is best served by society when he or she is free from governmentally imposed controls of others, acting alone or in concert (as a government);
 That all forms of coercion and aggression are always immoral;
 That the only system consistent with personal freedoms in the economic arena is one that does not interfere with free trade between individuals; THEREFORE, we, as libertarians, resolve to oppose all forms of aggression by any State, Government, self-appointed savior, individual, or association of individuals; We further resolve to oppose taxation, conscription, eminent domain, laws which create victimless "crimes," and all other forms of aggression which are used to restrict individual liberty and the chains of authoritarianism in economics and morality be broken; Individual rights and coercion cannot co-exist. Liberty cannot be compromised, and we will settle for no less than freedom in our time.

Every politically controlled educational system will inculcate the doctrine of state supremacy sooner or later, whether as divine right of kings, or the 'will of the people' in 'democracy.'
Isabel Paterson

The six foot fence is crested with barbed wire. Guards peek around corners to prevent numerous assaults. Roll call is taken daily, and those continuously absent are reported to the authorities. Sounds like a prison, but it is not. Rather, it describes public, tax-supported education from grades 1 to 12.

Public education is becoming an institution of violence, conformity and disillusionment. Last year, more than 100,000 reports of assault on both teachers and students alike were reported. Newspaper stories tell of students who must carry guns and knives just for personal protection. Administrators have been caught telling teachers that the school is only interested in keeping order in the classroom and that education is secondary. And scholastic scores have been declining for more than a decade.

It is ever apparent that government education is an educational fraud, an impersonal prison and a terror-ridden school institutionalized with conformity. It's time to re-evaluate the 'backdoor education' of the State.

HISTORY OF EDUCATION

Government is the biggest plagiarist of them all. Either government takes over education or it tries to destroy education. Ever since Socrates drank the hemlock forced on him by the authorities who disapproved of his teaching, government has tried to control what is taught and those who teach.

It was individual teachers, not government, who first began education on a larger, more massive scale. Joseph Lancaster, a pioneer in non-government education in England, opened his first school in 1798. Lancaster invited the children of factory workers and the poor to attend his school. The sign above his school read, "All that will may send their children and have them educated freely; and those who do not wish to have education for nothing may pay it if they please."

Success was immediate, especially when Lancaster employed the "monitor" program. He would first teach the older pupils the fundamentals. These pupils would then teach other pupils, give exams and even promote others

to teaching positions. In this way, Lancaster could teach 1,000 at one time.

Unfortunately, the non-government schools fell victim to government. Education became a political issue as politicians demanded control of education. By 1833, the English Parliament began offering funds to non-government schools. Most eagerly accepted the hand-outs and were then obligated to submit to government regulations and controls. By 1870, most British schools were funded and operated by government officials.

American education followed the same road. In the beginning, American schools were free from State intervention. In 1805, Dewitt Clinton founded the "Free School Society," modeled after the methods of Lancaster. But in 1812 the first "public" school system was formed in New York State. Partially funded by state funds, the early public schools were supported largely by 'Rate bills' (fees paid by parents of the child). With the Free School Act of 1867, the rate bills were abolished, and public schools became completely tax-supported. The non-government schools could not compete and most were finally merged with the public schools.

Presently, it is generally believed that if compulsory education was suddenly terminated, parents would fail to have their children educated. But records show that in 1821, 342,749 out of 380,000 children between the ages of 5 and 16 were attending schools in New York State. Education was not compulsory, but most parents enrolled their children in a school nevertheless.

However, the major reason cited for government operated schools is that it provides education for those who could not afford it. But after taxes are taken into consideration, government education is by far more costly. Parents without children or those whose children have become adults, must pay school taxes every year for the rest of their lives. Other means, including tuition for a number of years, would be less expensive in the long run. Further, it should be noted that everytime the government operates an enterprise (i.e. U.S. Post Office, Amtrak, etc.) prices increase and quality decrease.

Furthermore, in a study by Harvard University's Christopher Jencks, it has been revealed that "there is still no clear-cut evidence that they [school enrichment programs] improve students' test scores, educational attainment or eventual occupation status." And so, public schools not only cost more,

but scholastic scores decline every year. It seems rather strange that small, poor parochial schools cost half as much, and often result in twice the scholastic quality of government schools.

FORCED EDUCATION

To pay taxes to a compulsory institution is like paying a kidnapper to kidnap. Government education forces parents to send their children to school as well as forces parents to foot the bill. Libertarians ask, "Who is rearing the child, the parents or the State? If the State can tell parents to educate their children, then, what prevents the government from taking children from parents to insure each child with a proper, government-approved upbringing?"

What's more, if you were to ask most high school students, they would likely regard school as a prison, and education as something they are told to learn. But as the old saying goes, "You can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make it drink." Compulsory education "forces" education upon students. However, students cannot be made to learn if they do not want to learn. Worse yet, school officials seem to be more concerned with each student being placed in his classroom seat before the school bell rings (to collect state funds), than with education.

Author John Holt in *The Underachieving School* wrote, "true learning...can arise only out of the experience, interests, and concerns of the learner"; further, that "education is something a person gets for himself, not that which someone else gives or does to him."

In most compulsory schools, a child will think that his "only hope of surviving in this world is to cling to some authority and do what he says...what the children really learn is Practical Slavery." In fact, Holt further points out, most schools treat children as convicts in jail. Like convicts, they cannot move without written permission, buildings are patrolled and during most of the day, the child must sit in silence, allowed to speak only when given permission. In military fashion, most schools, even many non-government schools, make the child truly prepared for slavery.

THE DRAFTED CHILDREN

Just as the drafted soldier is conscripted into the military, so is the school child conscripted into the public schools. In fact, compulsory education was justified on the grounds of conscription. Professor Murray Rothbard in