

# The Blumenfeld Education Letter



"My People Are Destroyed For Lack Of Knowledge" HOSEA 4:6

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The purpose of this newsletter is to provide knowledge for parents and educators who want to save the children of America from the destructive forces that endanger them. Our children in the public schools are at grave risk in 4 ways: academically, spiritually, morally, and physically — and only a well-informed public will be able to reduce these risks.  
"Without vision, the people perish."

## California Education Dept. Confesses: Whole Language Has Been a Disaster!

Back in 1988, when Bill Honig, then School Superintendent of California, and Francie Alexander, the state's curriculum director, decided to choose only whole-language reading programs for the state's public schools, we knew that a literacy disaster was in store for the Golden State. We wrote in our Sept. 1988 issue: "Functional illiteracy will be booming in California in the years ahead if that state adopts the look-say basal reading programs it has already approved. . . . Because of textbook selection decisions based on ignorance, millions of California children will be condemned to lives as functional illiterates. Such state sanctioned educational malpractice will be doing more damage to more lives than one can possibly calculate."

It was already known in 1987 that California had a serious reading problem. According to the Quincy (Mass.) *Patriot Ledger* of 11/18/87:

Almost one in six adults in California is "functionally illiterate," and most of those who can't read are native English-speakers who went to school in the U.S., according to a new study by the State Department of Education.

The report says 3.1 million Californians can't

read well enough to understand advertising in newspapers, simple recipes or job applications. . . .

The largest group of illiterates is white. More than 43 percent of the group are white, and 56 percent were U.S.-born.

Naturally, the educators saw nothing in the schools to blame for this terrible situation. To them, the reasons for all of that functional illiteracy were obviously social. So when it came time to adopt new reading programs in 1988, the educators of California ignored everything that had been written about the reading problem since 1955, when Rudolf Flesch's famous *Why Johnny Can't Read* was published, and acted as if nobody knew what caused perfectly normal children in school to become reading failures. But now they're beginning to see the light, albeit somewhat dimly. In an article entitled "Rethinking Reading," in the August 1995 issue of *Teacher Magazine*, we read:

Dismal test scores and recent research that warns against a single approach to instruction have spurred California educational officials to rethink their state's pioneering techniques for teaching young children to read.

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(Pioneering techniques?! Whole-language techniques were described in Edmund Burke Huey's book, *The Pedagogy and Psychology of Reading*, published in 1908!)

In fact, a flurry of activity is under way in the state to do what some would say is heretical: meld the whole language program currently in place with a more structured phonetic approach that had been largely abandoned.

The education department currently is drafting guidelines to help schools make the shift to the new wedded approach. The document, aimed at teachers in the early elementary grades, should be ready by the fall, pending the approval of a new reading task force created by state superintendent Delaine Eastin.

"Our goal is not to go back to one or push for the other," says Dennis Parker, manager of language arts and foreign languages for the state education department. "Our goal is to put together a comprehensive program that will work for every child."

Although some California teachers have been frustrated with the state's literature-based reading program for some time, it was students' poor standing on recent state and national reading tests that brought the issue to a head this spring. In a report released in May, the California School Boards Association concluded that "many schools and school districts in California are in the midst of a reading crisis." Although it noted a host of underlying reasons for the predicament, the report ranked "the lack of a structured, sequential reading program" at the top of the list.

California adopted the whole language framework for teaching language arts in 1987. The method relies on the use of appealing stories and "real" literature to teach students to read. It essentially replaced the drill-and-skill routine that many teachers had been taught to use. The framework did not prohibit skills development but gave it short shrift.

Diana Garchow, a veteran teacher and a member of the state's new reading task force, says administrators in some California schools actually seized all phonics books and spellers to ensure that teachers were not ignoring the new instructional framework. In their place, she adds, "we got some beautiful pieces of literature that the children can't read."

Although she wants to keep the rich literature component of the program, Garchow says "it's really important that the state come out and say, 'You have to teach phonics, you have to teach basics, you need a middle-of-the road approach.'"

Bill Honig, who was the state superintendent when the literature-based program was adopted, now

concedes that the framework was fuzzy. "We made our mistakes because we weren't clear enough about this being a balanced approach," he says.

In the past few years, Honig adds, studies have shown that while some youngsters can learn to read without skills instruction, others need the more systematic approach. What's more, he says, research also indicates that even children who learn to read with relative ease can benefit from structured skills instruction.

Still, there are those who worry that the pendulum may swing too far away from the whole language emphasis, for reasons that have little to do with best practice. Mary Ellen Vogt, a board member of the International Reading Association and a past president of the IRA's California affiliate, is one of them. "The teaching of phonics is compatible with literature-based instruction," Vogt says. "Keeping that in balance is the trick."

#### Comment:

So the whole-language chickens have come home to roost! We're delighted that the children of California may actually get a chance to learn to read. But we remain skeptical as the educators speak of "melding" whole language with phonics. It all depends on how you meld them. If by melding you mean teaching a little more phonics in the context of whole-language, holistic strategies, then there will be no real improvement at all. But if you mean helping the children develop a phonetic reflex before giving them "real" literature to read, then we should expect to see real improvement.

Note that it is now being revealed that "some California schools actually seized all phonics books and spellers" to force teachers to use the whole-language programs. If that sort of action were advocated by parents, it would be called "censorship." But administrators can ban phonics and get away with it, despite the fact that it violates the supposedly sacred principle of academic freedom. As for the International Reading Association's fear that the pendulum may swing too far in the direction of phonics, we can only recall how the IRA's anti-phonics militants have always managed to sabotage any real attempt to get intensive, systematic phonics

back in the schools. We'll have to look closely at the new reading textbooks before we can say that a new dawn of pro-phonics reading instruction has arrived in California.

## NEA to Shift Emphasis to School Reform Issues

After having spent the last thirty years emphasizing political and social issues at the expense of academic concerns, the National Education Association announced at its annual convention in Minneapolis in July that it will now devote its attention to the problems of school reform.

"We are shifting the focus of the N.E.A. so we place more emphasis on education reform and we place more emphasis on the public schools of America improving," Don Cameron, the union's executive director said. "We are focusing virtually all our human and financial resources into those goals."

According to *Education Week* of 7/12/95, Cameron and Keith Geiger, the president of the 2.2 million member union, said the N.E.A. can make such a shift because the union's heavy emphasis on collective bargaining over the past 25 years has produced livable wages for teachers.

Leaders of the union, traditionally allied to the Democratic Party, are also anxious about the impact of last November's elections—which put Republicans in control of Congress and installed 14 new G.O.P. governors—and about school vouchers and the move to hire private companies to manage public schools.

Mr. Cameron, who manages the national union's 565 employees, has reorganized its Washington headquarters to reduce the bureaucracy and to steer resources to professional issues. He and Geiger have been crisscrossing the country, urging elected union leaders and staff members to join in

school-reform efforts.

In a videotape Geiger made for regional directors, he throws a straitjacket into a wastebasket to symbolize the abandoning of rigid thinking. He calls for members to take the lead in—and not just go along with—educational change.

## Help from Jesse Jackson

The union's heightened emphasis on teaching and learning also prompted Geiger to interrupt this year's Representative Assembly for a three-hour "Focus on Educational Change" moderated by Jesse Jackson. The presentation was part pep rally, part discussion of education issues, and in part a forum for Jackson to air his own views.

Interspersed with video clips, jazzy music, and somber statistics about the condition of American children were opportunities for the N.E.A. delegates to participate. They used red-and-green hand fans and 2,000 electronic devices called "zingers" to register their views on such questions as school-based management, technology, and the role of local and state unions in school improvement.

The session also featured the results of a questionnaire that delegates filled out at registration. They answered the same questions asked last fall by the Public Agenda Foundation, which found educators and the public at odds over school reform.

Members of the public, the delegates heard, believe drugs and violence top the list of problems in public schools, followed by low academic standards.

N.E.A. delegates, in contrast, said lack of money was the primary problem with schools, followed by drugs and violence, overcrowded classrooms, and low academic standards.

"Parents want their children to be safe in schools and learn the basics," Jackson

said. "And they will desert the public schools if they are concerned that they aren't. We can't take their support for granted."

Next year, for the first time in the union's history, the N.E.A.'s national convention will be devoted to instruction issues and education reform, Geiger said.

## Top Priority: School Reform

The Center for Teaching and Learning, created last fall to be the union's brain trust on educational issues, merges all the union's school-reform and policy programs, including: (1) The National Center for Innovation, created in 1990, which houses the union's Mastery in Learning and Learning Laboratory restructuring projects; (2) the teacher education initiative, through which the N.E.A. is collaborating with 17 colleges of education to improve teacher training; (3) The National Foundation for the Improvement of Education, which is in the midst of a two-year study of professional development; and (4) The Center for Education Technology, which explores ways technology can help restructure the educational environment.

Perhaps the union's most important new project to help classroom teachers is the KEYS project. The Keys to Excellence in Your Schools program is a yardstick that can help teachers measure the organizational quality of their schools against national norms. The study is the first original research on schools conducted by the N.E.A. in 35 years. Researchers surveyed teachers to identify the hallmarks of high-quality schools. Then, researchers tested the 35 conditions the teachers identified against a smaller sample of schools in six districts.

They found that student achievement was higher in schools that incorporated a significant number of the 35 indicators. What were these indicators? Here's a sample: 1.

Parents and school employees are committed to long-range, continuous improvement. 3. Goals for achievable education outcomes are clear and explicit. 4. Teachers, education support personnel, parents, administrators, students, school board, district administrators, and civic groups are all involved in improving education. 5. Teachers, education support personnel, students, and parents believe all students can learn. 8. Teachers assess student improvement daily. 9. Administrators assess student improvement daily. 24. School staff actively seek to identify barriers to learning. 25. Teachers work to remove barriers. 26. Education support personnel work to remove barriers. 27. Students and parents work to remove barriers. 28. School and district administration work to remove barriers to learning. 29. A cooperative problem-solving process is used to remove barriers. 32. There is two-way, non-threatening communication between school employees and school administrators. 33. There is two-way, non-threatening communication between school employees and district administrators. 34. There is two-way, non-threatening communication among teachers. 35. All communication takes place within a climate for innovation.

[We get the distinct feeling that these "indicators" were dreamed up by the OBE implementation team. They sound as phony as the N.E.A.'s alleged interest in academics.]

A national panel of educators is advising the union on how to flesh out its plans for the KEYS program. Members of the panel include Willis Hawley, dean of the college of education at the University of Maryland and Susan Moore Johnson, a Harvard University professor. Part of the plan includes training UniServe representatives to be helpful.

### Comment:

Obviously, the N.E.A. has decided that the public's confidence in public education

has eroded so badly that they'd better begin doing something about improving the public schools. But since they are relying on the brains of professors of education to advise them, it's a foregone conclusion that their efforts will be in vain. Also, the shock of November 1994 has so badly shaken the union's confidence in its ability to control the political scene, that the leaders felt it necessary to call upon Jesse Jackson to stage a pep rally to enliven the troops. Advice from both Jesse Jackson and the professors of education should be enough to sink the union. The N.E.A. is clearly brain dead if it must rely on such resources for inspiration. But as long as the states continue to finance government education, the union will be able to hang on. That is why it is incumbent upon every conservative to press to get the government out of the education business. When the public begins to realize that it is the government monopoly, bolstered by compulsory attendance, that has ruined education, they will no longer want to support it.

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### **D.E.A. to Operate Charter School in Detroit**

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration is getting into the charter-school business, with plans to open a "prototype" residential school for at-risk children this fall in Detroit. Federal drug agents came up with the idea of running a school as an experiment in their efforts to reduce the demand for illicit drugs in troubled urban areas.

Central Michigan University officials last week put the finishing touches on a contract for the D.E.A. school, which will accept 200 students: 40 boys and girls in each of grades 5 through 9. The Michigan charter-

school law, adopted in 1993, allows state colleges and school districts to grant charters.

"This charter school will establish a prototype residential preparatory school to meet the unique needs of *extremely* at-risk youth," the school's mission statement declares. The school, tentatively known as the Woodward Academy, is expected to take over space in a former state mental-health clinic and school.

"When successful," the mission statement says, the facility might be replicated by the agency's 19 field divisions charged with "drug-demand reduction" across the country. The school will be an all-day, all-year boarding facility attuned to bolstering character and self-esteem, while strengthening students' family connections.

Eastern Michigan University will offer courses from its masters of liberal studies in technology program for faculty and staff members of the school. (*Educ. Wk.* 7/12/95)

#### **Comment:**

It's quite possible that the drug agency will do a better job of running a school than the professional educators. But the school sounds more like a reformatory than a place where genuine education will take place. The "drug-demand reduction" idea reminds us of the "paperwork reduction act" alluded to on IRS forms. It brings to mind the story of the government file clerk who asked permission to throw out some old, no-longer needed files, only to be told by the supervisor to make copies before throwing them out. Government education, run by professional educators, is bad enough. But government education run by government agents? That ought to be worth watching.

Then, how about a charter school run by the ATF for kids who bring guns to school or smoke cigarettes? There's no end to the possibilities once the bureaucrats become creative.

## **Cheaper, Purer Heroin Pours Into the Northeast**

Heroin, a scourge of the 1970s that was overshadowed by a national cocaine binge in the 1980s, is once again pouring into American cities and towns.

Officials with the US Drug Enforcement Administration say some of the purest heroin in the nation can be found in Greater Boston. They attribute the steady rise in availability of the drug to entrepreneurial dealers with links to Colombian cocaine suppliers. "We seem to get the highest levels of purity in the Northeast," said George Festa, in charge of the DEA's New England division. "It's puzzling to us and it is something we are monitoring very closely."

In the Northeast, individual bags of heroin that sold for \$30 to \$50 ten or fifteen years ago go for as little as \$5 today. Occasionally, dealers adopt the technique of cigarette manufacturers by distributing heat-sealed plastic bags stamped with the latest brand names, free of charge.

There is compelling evidence that heroin use is rising sharply, and that young people are experimenting with the drug. The number of people entering state-funded treatment programs in Massachusetts because of heroin abuse has increased from 10,545 in 1988 to 17,445 in 1993, a 65 percent increase, according to the state Department of Mental Health. (*Boston Globe*, 7/10/95)

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### **Vital Reading**

## **The Road to Socialism and the New World Order**

by Dennis L. Cuddy, Ph.D.

Florida Pro Family Forum, Inc., P.O. Box 1059,  
Highland City, FL 33846-1059, (941) 644-6218, 80 pages,

\$4.00 plus \$1.75 post. & handling

Dr. Dennis Cuddy, who once worked as a Senior Associate in the U.S. Department of Education, has put together the best, concise compendium of documentation proving the existence of the socialist New World Order conspiracy. It is not really a conspiracy in the sense that the elitists have hidden from the public what their goals are. What makes it a conspiracy is the fact that this elite has managed to gain control of the mass media in order to mold public opinion without the public being fully aware of how it is being manipulated.

The Nazis, Fascists and Communists openly made use of the mass media to unashamedly spread their propaganda. But our elitists operate in a much more subtle way. They know that most Americans expect their media to be objective in reporting events, and so they try to give that impression. But after 50 years of a steady diet of politically correct, liberal bias, conservative Americans are no longer fooled by the media. That's why talk radio has risen to such importance. It's become the only reliable source of news and commentary for conservatives in America.

Dr. Cuddy quotes Rep. Oscar Callaway of Texas in the *Congressional Record* of Feb. 9, 1917, who explains how the "powers that be" went about gaining control of the media:

In March, 1915, the J.P. Morgan interests, the steel, shipbuilding and powder interests, and their subsidiary organizations got together 12 men high up in the newspaper world and employed them to select the most influential newspapers in the United States and sufficient number of them to control generally the policy of the daily press in the United States. These 12 men worked the problem out by selecting 179 newspapers, and then began, by an elimination process, to retain only those necessary for the purpose of controlling the general policy of the daily press throughout the country. They found it was only necessary to purchase the control of 25 of the greatest papers. The 25 papers were agreed upon; emissaries

were sent to purchase the policy, national and international, of these papers; an agreement was reached; the policy of the papers was bought, to be paid for by the month; an editor was furnished for each paper to properly supervise and edit information regarding the questions of preparedness, militarism, financial policies, and other things of national and international nature considered vital to the interests of the purchasers.

That's how it was done. And over the years the process included gaining control of radio and television networks, news magazines, etc. This is the kind of documentation that makes this 80-page paperback an incredibly rich source of information for anyone who wants to do further research.

Dr. Cuddy also does an excellent job of showing the connections between the Fabian Socialists, the Rhodes secret society, the international bankers, the Council on Foreign Relations, the Trilateralists, the World Federalists, the United Nations, GATT, etc.

It was Prof. Carroll Quigley, Bill Clinton's mentor at Georgetown University, who revealed the existence of this international cabal in his book, *Tragedy and Hope*, published in 1966. Quigley wrote:

There does exist, and has existed for a generation, an international Anglophile network which operates, to some extent, in the way the radical Right believes the Communists act. In fact, this network, which we may identify as the Round Table Groups, has no aversion to cooperating with the Communists, or any other groups, and frequently does so. I know of the operations of this network because I have studied it for twenty years and was permitted for two years, in the early 1960's, to examine its papers and secret records. . . .

Money for the widely ramified activities of this organization came originally from the associates and followers of Cecil Rhodes, chiefly from the Rhodes Trust itself, and from wealthy associates such as the Beit brothers, from Sir Abe Bailey, and (after 1915) from the Astor family. Since 1925 there have been substantial contributions from wealthy individuals and from foundations and firms associated with the international banking fraternity, especially the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, and other organizations associated with J. P. Morgan, the Rockefeller

and Whitney families, and the associates of Lazard Brothers and of Morgan, Grenfell, and Company.

The chief backbone of this organization grew up along the already existing financial cooperation running from the Morgan Bank in New York to a group of international financiers in London led by Lazard Brothers. . . . Ramifications were established in politics, high finance, Oxford and London universities, periodicals, the civil service, and tax-exempt foundations.

. . . This front organization, called the Royal Institute of International Affairs, had as its nucleus in each area the existing submerged Round Table Group. In New York it was known as the Council on Foreign Relations, and was a front for J. P. Morgan and Company in association with the very small American Round Table Group. . . .

The American branch of this "English Establishment" exerted much of its influence through five American newspapers (*The New York Times*, *New York Herald Tribune*, *Christian Science Monitor*, the *Washington Post*, and the lamented *Boston Evening Transcript*). . . .

It was this group of people, whose wealth and influence so exceeded their experience and understanding, who provided much of the framework of influence which the Communist sympathizers and fellow travelers took over in the United States in the 1930's. It must be recognized that the power that these energetic Left-wingers exercised was never their own power or Communist power but was ultimately the power of the international financial coterie, and, once the anger and suspicions of the American people were aroused, as they were by 1950, it was a fairly simple matter to get rid of the Red sympathizers. Before this could be done, however, a congressional committee, following backward to their source the threads which led from admitted Communists like Whittaker Chambers, through Alger Hiss, and the Carnegie Endowment to Thomas Lamont and the Morgan Bank, fell into the whole complicated network of the interlocking tax-exempt foundations. The Eighty-third Congress in July 1953 set up a Special Committee to Investigate Tax-Exempt Foundations with Representative B. Carroll Reece, of Tennessee, as chairman. It soon became clear that people of immense wealth would be unhappy if the investigation went too far and that the "most respected" newspapers in the country, closely allied with these men of wealth, would not get excited enough about any revelations to make the publicity worth while, in terms of votes or campaign contributions.

Only the revival of Biblical religion has



been able to slow down the advance of the New World Order juggernaut. This has given the American people time to organize their own resistance to the loss of national sovereignty and individual freedom. As the year 2000 approaches, the New World Order elitists will do all in their power to achieve their ultimate goal of world government. They are so close to world government that they can taste it. Which accounts for the rage and frustration they feel toward those of us who may block their final victory. Thus, we can expect the next ten years to be ones of political turbulence and instability as the showdown between Biblical religion and secular humanism reaches its climax.

Dennis Cuddy's book is like a program describing all of the New World Order actors on the stage of contemporary history. Dr. Shirley Correll writes about the book:

Widespread knowledge of the mechanisms used, as well as the people involved, can save future generations much heartache, if the current generation acts as bravely and decisively as their forefathers. The time is short and the stakes are high. Widespread distribution of this booklet can help to turn the tide.

## Father Fined for Tutoring Son Off Campus

Charles Hayden of New Stanton, Pa., thought he was being a good parent when he decided to take two hours of every day to tutor his son in an effort to help him pass his classes. Instead, he wound up in court.

Hayden found out 11 weeks before the end of school that his 7th-grade son, Chris, was failing five subjects. He called his son's guidance counselor and met with his teachers. They decided that Hayden should work with Chris two hours a day. The problem was finding the extra two hours.

The solution, Hayden decided, was to

take his son out of his last-period class—study hall—and drive him home, which saved a half-hour over his usual bus ride.

Officials at Harrold Middle School told Hayden that the arrangement violated the state's compulsory-attendance laws. But by that time, Hayden said, "we knew it was working."

Hayden continued to take Chris out of school, and the school counted his absences until they came to three full days. Then they filed charges. They claimed that they offered Hayden a private room on school grounds for the sessions. But Hayden said that he wanted his son to have some free time and that the school site would be distracting.

On June 28, a state judge ruled in favor of the district but suspended a possible \$22 fine. (*Educ. Wk.*, 7/12/95)

### Comment:

Compulsory attendance laws have created a tug of war between parents and schools over whose authority should prevail concerning the education of one's children. Before the public schools decided that they now own the children, they were supposed to serve merely in *loco parentis*, that is, at the parents' pleasure. In other words, the schools were granted authority over the children by the parents, just as baby sitters get their authority from parents. However, when parents wish to educate their children themselves, the schools should, accordingly, bow to parental wishes. But the courts believe that the schools were not created to serve the parents but to serve the state, and that the state's authority supercedes that of parents. The judge's ruling in this case simply reaffirmed the principle of state ownership of children. If Mr. Hayden has any sense, he will remove his son from state jurisdiction and educate him at home. Clearly, the state is not educating his son, so why leave him in the state's school?