



# Letter from PLYMOUTH ROCK

NEA: TROJAN HORSE IN AMERICAN EDUCATION  
By Samuel L. Blumenfeld

(Reviewed by W. David Gamble, PhD, Ed. D.)

Question: What organization seeks to control Congress; to dominate all 50 State legislatures; to run the Democratic Party; to govern all schools -- public and private; to bring socialism to America; to promote functional illiteracy; to propagate humanism, behaviorism, and Darwinism; and advocates a host of other harmful things too numerous to mention?

Answer: according to Samuel L. Blumenfeld, it is the National Education Association (NEA). And, in his new book, Blumenfeld has the documentation to back up his charges.

## BEGINNINGS

The NEA was founded in 1857. Its organizers were strong proponents of the public educational system which had been started two decades earlier. The foundation for both public education and the NEA was laid in 1805, when Unitarians seized control of Harvard College, at that time the most important Christian educational institutions in America.

The Unitarians brought with them a new understanding of the purpose of education. Under the old order, education was intended to further man's knowledge of and reverence for God, for His word, and His sovereignty. Under the Unitarians, education became the way to solve society's problems, the way to usher in a new social order. *"Education would eliminate ignorance, which would eliminate poverty, which would eliminate social injustice, which would eliminate crime. (The Unitarians) believed that moral progress is as attainable as material progress once the principles of improvement are discovered. In this scheme there was no place for a triune God or a divine Christ through Whom salvation was attainable."* (pg 9).

Thus, from the very beginning, public education and its cohort, the NEA, have been committed to a non-Christian view of the purpose of education. Unknowing Christians participated in public education endeavours in order that their influence might not be denied to the schools. By 1870, only one Protestant denomination, the Missouri Synod Lutherans, maintained its own system of private schools. Many Christians apparently did not realize the vast implications and aspirations of public education.

At this time, the Illinois state superintendent of public instruction, Newton Bateman, said to an NEA meeting in St. Louis:

*"The amount of latent and dormant power; of wealth-discovering and wealth-producing energy; of beauty-loving and beauty-inspiring taste and skill, that lie concealed and slumbering in the brains and hearts and hands of the keen, shrewd, capable but untutored millions of our youth, is beyond computation. Now over all this unreclaimed but magnificent intellectual and moral territory,*



*over all of these minds and souls and bodies, with their untold possibilities of good, the State has, in my opinion, a sort of right of eminent domain and not only may, but should exercise it in the interest of her own prosperity and dignity." (pg 37)*

### BEHAVIORISM AND DARWINISM

How could this come about? How could education, which was once seen as the domain of parents, private schools, and churches, so quickly become the domain of a statist elite? Mr. Blumenfeld discusses many factors which contributed to this radical change. Among them are the following:

In the mid to late 1800's, the strong Protestant theology which dominated the nation's intellectual climate began to wane. The Biblical view of the nature of man no longer held sway. In its place came the pseudo-science of behavioristic educational psychology. Much research had been done in scientific laboratories on the nervous system of animals. With the advent of Darwinism, it was logical that whatever was true of animals would also be true of humans, since they shared a common ancestry. Animals, it appeared, learned by means of a specific stimulus calling forth a regular response. Thus, man too must be taught by means of Stimulus-Response, or S-R. *("If you detect something mindless about American education, it's because the mind has been taken out of it." (pg 83)*

Mr. Blumenfeld cogently observes that students thus are treated like animals, and the school becomes a zoo. *"In contrast, children in a Christian school are taught that they are human beings created in God's image and accountable to their Creator. These children are expected to act like human beings, and they do. Their link is not downward through evolution to the monkeys, but upward, through the Bible, to their Creator." (pg 53)*

### THE CARDINAL PRINCIPLES

In 1913, the NEA organized its Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education. In 1918, the Commission issued its Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education, an educational manifesto which has set the agenda for NEA activity ever since. Amazingly, the Cardinal Principles were printed by the U.S. Office of Education, giving them a wide distribution and an official look. The Cardinal Principles were humanistic, behavioristic, evolutionary, and reflected the passion of John Dewey for the remaking of America into a socialistic society via education. *"In a sense, the progressives (in the NEA) had staged the most successful political coup in American history by capturing public education and using it to steer America in a socialist direction, and enlisting the help of the federal government to do it." (pg 72)*

### ILLITERACY AND SOCIALISM

The two most important figures in American public education, Horace Mann and John Dewey, both had a strong dislike for phonics as a means of teaching reading. Mann encouraged the use of Thomas Gallaudet's whole-word (look-say) primer in the Boston primary school. Gallaudet had originally devised this method to teach deaf children to read. Later, it was decided that this might be an effective means to teach hearing children also. Dewey taught that the mastery of symbols (phonics) made children independent and competitive rather than developing the strong sense of interdependence necessary for socialism. Advocates of the whole-word method went so far as to say that the ability to read precise words on a page is not important, as long as the student "gets the general drift."



Today there are 24 million functional illiterates in our society, virtually all of whom have from 8 to 12 years of compulsory schooling.

For Dewey, the greatest enemy of socialism was the private consciousness that seeks knowledge in order to exercise its own individual judgement and authority. High literacy gave the student the means to seek knowledge independently and Dewey charged that was an affair so exclusively individual it naturally evolved into selfishness. By contrast, inferior readers with inferior intelligence depend upon socialistic manipulators for guidance and provision. *"The simple truth that experience has taught us is that the most potent and significant expression of statism is a State educational system. Without it, statism is impossible. With it, the State can, and has, become everything."* (pg. 18)

Many of those who were influential in the construction of curriculum materials were, like Dewey, committed to socialism. And this commitment showed through in curriculum materials. Needless to say, the NEA used its considerable power to push this agenda, an agenda to be imposed from above by the educational elites: parents and children were not given the opportunity to choose between the development of the mind or the "blessings" of illiteracy and adaption to socialistic norms.

The advocates of the whole-word method know that it makes reading into a guessing game. Nevertheless, when Dr. William Scott Gray, Dean of the University of Chicago's School of Education, published his whole-word readers in 1930, the NEA Journal began a series of articles promoting them. The illiteracy which has been produced by the whole-word, or look-say, method, has been a bonanza for the educational establishment, which has received millions of dollars to do reading "research". It has also kept many publishing houses in business and provides an income for hordes of "reading consultants". Mr. Blumenfeld points out that most NEA-types have nothing but praise for the Soviet Union's educational system; that, he points out, is ironic, since the Soviets teach their children to read using intensive phonics.

#### UNIONISM AND MONOPOLY

An industry which produces a poor product will not last long -- unless that industry is subsidized and powerful. The educational establishment is both: it is subsidized by the taxpayer and it is a powerful political force by virtue of the NEA labor union. *"The NEA is probably the most intellectually dishonest organization in America. It is part union, part professional organization, and part political party ... Its interest in academics is subordinate to its radical political and social ends."* *"Organized labor is using the teachers to help spread unionism throughout the white collar and public sectors."* (pgs. 139,149)

An educational monopoly is the goal of the NEA. The labor union desires to control the education of every child in America. Those private schools, home schools, and even public school teachers who oppose the quest of the NEA will be the objects of its wrath. *"It is ironic that the teachers in the world's freest nation should have to struggle to preserve their own freedom against colleagues who would impose a professional dictatorship over them. A profession so dominated by the NEA will be unfit to teach children how to preserve American freedom, for the first thing they'd have to teach them is how to get rid of the NEA! Indeed, if American teachers can't preserve their own professional freedom, then it doesn't look too good for the rest of us."* (pg. 212)



TO REMEDY THE EDUCATIONAL DILEMMA

There is no need for an in-depth review of the present status of public education. The NEA has achieved its goals admirably. The humanist world-and-life-view dominates the curriculum of American public education, top to bottom. Phonics are banned from virtually every public school classroom. Billions of dollars flow to the educational establishment each year, and the educationists are responsible to no one but themselves for the product they offer. SAT scores plummet, while educational revenues increase. And on and on. *"The simple truth is that the American classroom has become a place where intense psychological warfare is being waged against all traditional values. A child in an American public school is little more than a guinea pig in a psych lab, manipulated by trained 'change-agents.' All of this is being done with billions of federal dollars in the greatest scam in human history. If Americans put up with this much longer, they will deserve the ruin they are paying for."* (pg 240).

Public schools are not the answer to America's educational dilemma. The recourse is private and home schools. *"The private school and home education represent the only escape routes for those parents who do not wish to submit their children to secular humanist indoctrination. But the NEA is doing all in its power to shut off these escape routes by proposing state laws severely regulating private schools and outlawing home education. Some of these regulations are in direct conflict with the First Amendment guarantee of the free exercise of religion, and some of them have actually forced the closing of church schools and the imprisonment of pastors, teachers and parents. They have precipitated a war for religious freedom between fundamentalist Christians and state education officers."* (pg 214)

According to Mr. Blumenfeld, Christian individuals and churches must build their own schools, colleges, teacher-training institutions, professional organizations and journals and other outlets for information and instruction. We must remain alert to the actions of the NEA, the most powerful engine of legislation aimed at destroying educational and religious freedom in America.

*"America needs schools, but it doesn't need government schools that drain the taxpayer, cripple the children, and destroy our freedoms. The only way to stop being 'a nation at risk' is to move education out of government hands. What we need is more educational freedom, more private schools, and more teachers entrepreneurs. They will give us better education at lower cost, and all of the insoluble problems created by government schools will simply vanish."* (pg. 262)

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Dr. Gamble is a college professor and consultant to Christian schools. He is a founding member of ARM (American Reformation Movement) and a member of Plymouth Rock's Council of Advisors. To order NEA: Trojan Horse in American Education, send \$9.95 plus \$1.50 for postage and handling to RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS, P O Box 39850, Phoenix, AZ 85069. Visa and Mastercharge accepted (call 1-800-528-0559).

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