UN Conferences

Habitat II and Sustainable Development

Although United Nations conferences have been taking place frequently over the last two decades, most Americans have ignored the proceedings and their ominous implications. Recent conferences in Cairo, Beijing, and Istanbul have been a vivid reminder of the radical ideology of the UN and the threat it poses to our faith, family, and freedom.

The direction of the last few conferences illustrates this point. The 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro established an environmental foundation for all the UN's radical social and economic agendas. The 1994 Cairo Conference focused on population control and attempted to push abortion and contraception as solutions to the perceived "problem" of overpopulation. The 1995 Women's Conference in Beijing, China, proved to be the most radical of all. It continued to push abortion as a human right and attempted to make sexual orientation a human right by promoting the idea that genders are not clearly defined but are socially constructed. The White House has already created an Inter-Agency Council to implement the Beijing platform in the private sector and every executive agency.

The recently completed conference in Istanbul, Turkey, built upon the foundation of the other conferences and was the culmination of the conferences. Wally N'Dow, Secretary General of Habitat II, predicted that the conference would be a "new beginning that will reflect and implement the actions called for at the unprecedented continuum of global conferences that have marked this closing decade of the century." He said that "a new global social contract for building sustainable human settlements must be forged" for the "new global urban world order." Mindful of the controversy surrounding the other

conferences, he declared, “There will be no roll-back of any of the conferences, including Beijing.”

Habitat II focused on the problems of urban centers. Its goal was to create “economically, socially and environmentally thriving urban communities” in order to better the lives of people living in third-world countries. Although the goals were commendable, the agenda of the conference participants went far beyond urban blight.

A key concept in the Habitat II agenda was sustainable development. In the school curriculum developed by the UN, sustainable development was defined as “meeting the needs of the present generation without damaging the Earth’s resources in such a way that would prevent future generations from meeting [their needs].” It includes “changing wasteful consumption patterns” and “emphasizing equitable development” in order to “bridge the gap between rich and poor countries.” In practice, sustainable development is a radical concept that will limit the amount of food, energy, or general resources that citizens of a nation can consume. Rather than consuming what they can afford, “rich” nations (like the U.S.) might only be allowed to consume what they need to stay alive.

One UN publication declares that we “must learn to live differently” and calls for this international agency to “ensure that the benefits of development are distributed equally.” To achieve this so-called “equal distribution,” there must be a redistribution of wealth throughout the planet. The UN has already drafted specific plans for implementing sustainable development in the U.S. In spite of the frightening implications of these conferences, U.S. taxpayers have been footing the bill for them and their radical agendas.

Habitat II: Global Taxes and National

Sovereignty

The most recent conference in Istanbul, Turkey, known as Habitat II is illustrative of another major concern: namely, the threat these conferences pose to our national sovereignty.

Habitat II called for national governments to manage economic systems. These include public and private investment practices, consumption patterns, and public policy. UN Secretary Boutros Boutros Ghali told the first plenary session that he wanted the conference to be a "Conference of Partners."

Another section was devoted to the international community and its involvement with national governments. The Global Plan of Action calls for the international community to force changes in the world's economic structures.

The UN also intends to reach sustainable development by changing the structure of national governments. In fact, the Habitat agenda depends upon UN oversight of national, regional, state, and local governments. The document asks city administrators to re-design their regulations, political systems, and judicial and legislative procedures. It was no accident that the conference was filled with mayors from many U.S. cities as well as from cities around the world.

The Habitat document proposed that "government at all levels should encourage . . . walking, cycling, and public transport . . . through appropriate pricing . . . and regulatory measures." Governments are charged with the responsibility of encouraging citizens to walk, ride bicycles, or take public transportation. This would be accomplished by the heavy taxation and burdensome regulations often found in socialist economies.

UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros Ghali has also called for global taxes on international currency transactions, energy,

and travel to fund the United Nations. During the conference, the U.S. was harshly criticized for being delinquent in its payment to the UN. It currently owes $1.5 billion. Currently the U.S. pays about 25 percent of the UN budget and nearly 40 percent of the “peacekeeping” costs. The UN hopes that in the next few years they are able to implement this global tax so they can be free of U.S. influence and enact their radical global agenda.

This global tax proposed by Boutros Boutros Ghali would be received from international currency transactions, energy shipments, and international travel. If implemented, it would remove the UN’s dependence on sovereign nations. No longer would the United States or other countries have a check and balance against an international organization. The UN could pay for its activities, fund UN peacekeeping forces, and conduct many of its affairs independently of the United States.

Canadian developer Maurice Strong is often considered a likely candidate to become the future Secretary General of the United Nations. He has called for a shift in our current thinking. He has stated that this change in thinking “will require a vast strengthening of the multilateral system, including the United Nations. . . . We must now forge a newEarth Ethic’ which will inspire all people and nations to join in a new global partnership of North, South, East and West.”

This global vision should especially concern Christians mindful of end-times prophecy. At the time when the world seems to be moving swiftly towards global government, the prospects of a stronger United Nations autonomous of sovereign nations is a scary scenario. This bolder and stronger United Nations would further erode U.S. sovereignty and strengthen the hand of world leaders who are promoting globalist visions of a one-world government.

UN Conferences: Four Areas of Concern

Now I want to discuss the possible effects of the UN conferences on our families and communities. I see several issues on great concern to Christians.

The first issue is education. Many of the concepts from Habitat II, like “sustainable development,” have already infiltrated America’s schools. Textbooks promote global citizenship and minimize national sovereignty. Other textbooks blame rich northern countries (like the U.S.) for retarding the growth and development in lesser developed countries. “Tolerance” and “global peace” are emphasized as the ultimate aims of society. The Goals 2000 federal program for education in this country provides the perfect mechanism to transmit these global UN philosophies into school curricula. A second issue is the impact on families. The Habitat II conference continued the UN attempt to redefine the family. Many UN leaders see the traditional family as an obstacle to UN dominance.

The Habitat II platform stated that “in different cultural, political and social systems, various forms of the family exist.” Many participants asked that “sexual orientation” be included as a civil rights category. In many ways, this merely extended the concept promoted during the Beijing Women’s Conference that gender be defined not as male and female, but as one of five genders that are socially constructed. Habitat II also promoted “gendered cities” which are to be organized in terms of “gender roles.” The third issue has to do with population. The UN Population Fund says that population growth is a key inhibitor of sustainable growth. UN recommendations of population control are based upon the faulty premise that the world is in the midst of a population explosion that cannot be controlled. Participants raised the fear of losing resources even though there is empirical evidence to the contrary.

Because of the UN's anti-population bias, the Habitat II document emphasizes "sustainable development" as the mechanism for population control. Thus, "family planning" is a key concept, and the document therefore emphasizes surgical abortions and chemical abortions (RU-486). The Habitat platform specifically mentions "reproductive health services" for women in human settlements and calls for government management of economic and population growth.

A final issue concerns the area of ecology and pollution. At the 1992 UN Earth Summit, Canadian developer Maurice Strong stated, "It is clear that current lifestyles and consumption of large amounts of frozen convenience foods, use of fossil fuels, appliances, home and workplace air conditioners and suburban housing are not sustainable." Many believe Maurice Strong will probably succeed Boutros Boutros Ghali as UN Secretary General and are rightly concerned about his New Age views on ecology. The Habitat II document encourages nations to use heavy taxation and various regulations to ensure that citizens walk, ride bicycles, and take public transportation.

The threats posed by these UN Conferences (including the recent conference in Istanbul) are real. American citizens must fight these radical ideas and ensure that our politicians do not give away our sovereignty on the pretext of easing ecological problems. We should be good stewards of the environment, but we should not place that responsibility in the hands of those in the United Nations who want to use it as a tool for global dominance.

Globalism and the Traditional Family

Now I would like to turn our attention to the goals of the globalists. Though they are a diverse and eclectic group of international bankers, politicians, futurists, religious leaders, and economic planners, they are unified in their desire to unite the planet under a one-world government, a single economic system, and a one-world religion. Through

various governmental programs, international conferences, and religious meetings, they desire to unite the various governments of this globe into one single network.

Although this can be achieved in a variety of ways, the primary focus of globalists is on the next generation of young people. By pushing global education in the schools, they believe they can indoctrinate them to accept the basic foundations of globalism. According to one globalist, global education seeks to “prepare students for citizenship in the global age.” Globalists believe that this new form of education will enable future generations to deal effectively with population growth, environmental problems, international tensions, and terrorism.

But several obstacles stand in the way of the globalists’ goals. Consequently, they have targeted three major institutions for elimination because their continued existence impedes their designs to unite the world under a single economic, political, and social global network.

The three institutions under attack by globalists today are: the traditional family, the Christian church, and the national government. Each institution espouses doctrines antithetical to the globalist vision. Therefore, globalists argue, these institutions must be substantially modified or replaced.

The traditional family poses a threat to globalism for two reasons. First, it is still the primary socializing unit in our society. Parents pass on social, cultural, and spiritual values to their children. Many of these values such as faith, hard work, and independence collide with the designs of globalists who envision a world in which tolerance for religion, dependence on a one-world global community, and international cooperation are the norm. These values are not taught in traditional American families, therefore globalists seek to change the family.

Second, parental authority in a traditional family clearly supersedes international authority. Children are taught to obey their parents in such families. Parents have authority over their children, not a national or international governmental entity. Globalists, therefore, see the traditional, American family as an enemy, not as a friend.

Well-known humanist and globalist Ashley Montagu speaking to a group of educators declared that, “The American family structure produces mentally ill children.” From his perspective, the traditional family which teaches such things as loyalty to God and loyalty to country is not producing children mentally fit for the global world of the twenty-first century.

One of the reasons globalist educators advocate childhood education begin at earlier and earlier ages is so that young children can be indoctrinated into globalism. The earlier they can communicate their themes to children, the more likely will be the globalists’ success in breaking the influence of the family.

But the traditional family is just one of the institutions globalists seek to change. We must now turn our attention to globalistic attacks on these other institutions.

Globalism Opposes Christianity and Nationalism

We have seen that globalists oppose the traditional family, but we must also be aware that they believe that the Christian church and a sense of national identity are contrary to their vision.

Globalists feel that the Christian church threatens their global program because of its belief in the authority of the Bible. Most other religious systems (as well as liberal Christianity) pose little threat. But Christians who believe

in God, in sin, in salvation through faith in Jesus Christ alone, stand in the way of the globalist vision for a one-world government and a one-world religion.

The coming world religion will merge all religions and faiths into one big spiritual amalgam. Hinduism and Buddhism are syncretistic religions and can easily be merged into this one-world religion. But orthodox Christianity cannot.

Jesus taught that “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me” (John 14:6). Globalists, therefore, see Christianity as narrow, exclusive, and intolerant. Paul Brandwein even went so far as to say that, “Any child who believes in God is mentally ill.” Belief in a personal God to which we owe allegiance and obedience cannot remain if globalists are to achieve their ultimate vision.

National governments also threaten globalism. If the goal is to unite all peoples under one international banner, any nationalism or patriotism blocks the progress of that vision.

Globalist and architect Buckminster Fuller once said that, “Nationalism is the blood clot in the world’s circulatory system.”

Among nations, the United States stands as one of the greatest obstacles to globalism. The European community has already acquiesced to regional and international plans, and other emerging nations are willingly joining the international community. By contrast, the United States remains independent in its national fervor and general unwillingness to cooperate with international standards. Until recently, Americans rejected nearly everything international, be it an international system of measurements (metric system) or an international agency (such as the United Nations or the World Court).

The globalist solution is to promote global ideas in the

schools. Dr. Pierce of Harvard University speaking to educators in Denver, Colorado, said, “Every child in America who enters schools at the age of five is mentally ill, because he comes to school with allegiance toward our elected officials, toward our founding fathers, toward our institutions, toward the preservation of this form of government.” Their solution, therefore, is to purge these nationalistic beliefs from school children so they will come to embrace the goals of globalism.

All over the country programs on Global Education, Global History, and Global Citizenship are springing up. Children are being indoctrinated into a global way of thinking. Frequently these programs masquerade as drug awareness programs, civics programs, or environmental programs. But their goal is just the same to break down a child’s allegiance to family, church, and country, and to replace this allegiance with the globalists’ vision for a one-world government, a one-world economic system, and a one-world religion. These then are three institutions the globalists believe must be modified or destroyed if they are to achieve their globalist vision. Christians must, therefore, be diligent to defend their family, their church, and their country.

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National Child Care

National Child Care Debate

Imagine a country in which nearly all children between the ages of three and five attend preschool in sparkling classrooms, with teachers recruited and trained as child care

professionals. Imagine a country that conceives of child care as a program to welcome children into the larger community and awaken their potential for learning and growing.

So begins one of the chapters by Hillary Rodham Clinton in her book *It Takes a Village*. The discussion represents yet another attempt to erect a national system of child care. In the early 1970s, Senator Walter Mondale pushed the Child Advocacy Bill through Congress only to have it vetoed by President Nixon. Again in the late 1980s, Congress flirted with socialized day care when Senator Christopher Dodd proposed The Act for Better Child Care.

Fortunately, the bill went nowhere.

But has the time come again for a national discussion of day care? Hillary Clinton proposes that the United States adopt the French model of institutionalized day care: “More than 90 percent of French children between ages three and five attend free or inexpensive preschools called *écoles maternelles*. Even before they reach the age of three, many of them are in full-day programs.” The First Lady then goes on to present the French experience in glowing terms and provides additional examples to bolster her push for a national day care system.

Many social commentators believe our contemporary day care debate has dramatically shifted from whether the federal government should be involved to how the federal government should be involved. What was once in the domain of the family has shifted to the government due in large part to the increasing number of women in the work force. During the Carter Administration, a federal child care tax credit was enacted and the budget for this tax credit has mushroomed to billions of dollars annually.

The debate is changing as well because the child-rearing patterns in America are changing. Through most of our history, women traditionally assumed primary responsibility for rearing

children. Now as more and more mothers head off to work, nearly half of the nation's children under six years old are in day care facilities.

This dramatic shift from child-rearing within the family to social parenting in day care facilities is beginning to have frightening consequences. Stories of neglect, abuse, and abandonment are merely the tip of the iceberg of a multi-billion-dollar-a-year industry that is largely unregulated.

Sadly, this change in the way we raise children has been motivated more by convenience and selfishness than by thoughtful analysis of the implications. Psychologist Burton White, author of *The First Three Years of Life*, laments that "We haven't moved to day care because we were seeking a better way of raising children, but to meet the needs of the parent, mostly the mother. My concern is that this trend constitutes a disastrous effect on the child."

This essay looks at the important issues concerning the subject of day care. What are the implications of a nationally-subsidized day care system? How does day care affect early childhood development? What are the psychological costs? What are the social costs? What are the medical costs? These are just a few of the questions we will try to answer in these pages. Psalm 127 reminds us the children are "a gift of God." Before we develop national programs that may harm our children, we need to count the costs and make an informed decision.

Use and Misuse of Statistics

Hillary Rodham Clinton isn't the only national figure proposing a nationally-subsidized day care system for the United States. In his 1996 State of the Union address, President Bill Clinton also proposed a national day care system.

Before we discuss the potential impact of a national day care system, we must deal with the use and misuse of statistics. Proponents of national day care frequently say that the traditional family is dead and that two-thirds of mothers with preschool children are in the work force.

Let’s set the record straight. Reporters and social commentators have frequently said that less than 10 percent of U.S. families are “traditional families” with a breadwinner husband and homemaker wife. The 10 percent figure actually comes from the U.S. Labor Department and only counts families with an employed father, a stay-at-home mother, and two children still at home. Using that criteria, my own family would not be a traditional family because we have three children, not two children, still at home. Dr. Jim Dobson’s family would not be a traditional family because his two children no longer live at home. In fact, a mother who works out of her home would not qualify as a member of a traditional family. I think you can see the problem. The 10 percent figure is artificially restrictive.

What about the number of women in the work force? Again, we need to check the definition used to define working women. The Department of Labor figure counts mothers who work part time (as little as one hour per week) as well as women who have flexible hours. The figure also counts mothers who work seasonally. Furthermore, it counts mothers who work from their homes. Again, you can see that this number is artificially inflated.

According to the recent Census Bureau data, 54 percent of the 17 million children under the age of five are primarily cared for by a mother who stays at home. An additional seven percent represents “tag-team parents” who work different shifts and share child- rearing responsibilities. And another four percent have “doubletime mothers” who care for their child while they babysit other children or earn income in some other way. Thus, the primary child care arrangement for 65 percent

of all preschool children is care by one or both parents.

This isn't exactly the figure you will hear during a national debate on day care. Instead of hearing that two-thirds of mothers with preschool children are in the work force, we should be hearing that two-thirds of all preschool children are cared for by one or both parents.

Actually the percentage should be even higher. Another 11 percent of preschool children are cared for by grandmothers or other relatives. This would mean that a full 76 percent of all preschool children are cared for by a parent or close relative. But don't expect the mainstream media to use this figure when debating the so-called "crisis of child care."

Perhaps that is the most important lesson of this debate. President Clinton and the First Lady, along with countless child care advocates, want to talk about the crisis of child care. Statistics that do not justify federal intrusion into the family are ignored. Before we start down the road to socialized day care, we need to consider whether the problem is as acute as portrayed.

Psychological Costs

At this point I would like to discuss the psychological costs of day care. Now that we have been effectively conducting an unofficial experiment with day care over the last few decades, the evidence is coming in disconcerting evidence of the psychological harm done by institutionalized care. Jay Belsky, a child care expert at Penn State's College of Health and Human Development, says "It looked like kids who were exposed to 20 or more hours a week of nonparental care in their first year of life what I call early and extensive nonparental care, and here comes the critical phrase, of the kind that was routinely available to families in the United States today seemed to be at elevated risk. They were more likely to look insecure in their relationships to their mothers, in

particular at the end of their first year of life."

Unfortunately most parents are unaware of this growing research. So is the average citizen who will no doubt be convinced by "experts" that we need a nationally-subsidized system of institutional care. Marjorie Boyd, writing in *The Washington Monthly*, found that "Practically everyone is for day care, but practically all the evidence says it's bad for preschoolers in all but its most costly forms. Most people do not know that psychologists and psychiatrists have grave misgivings about the concept because of its potential effect on personality; nor do they know that the officials of countries that have had considerable experience with day care are now warning of its harmful effects on children."

The concerns can be categorized under three areas: bonding, personality development, and substitute care. Bonding takes place in the hours and days following birth, usually between the mother and the child. Bonding demands consistency, and day care interrupts that consistency especially when there is not one person providing the primary care for the child. Children placed in a day care center too early are deprived of a primary care giver and will manifest psychological problems.

Personality development is another concern. Most children will get off to a better start in life if they spend the majority of their waking hours during the first three years being cared for by their parents and other family members rather than in any form of substitute care.

A final concern is the negative effect of substitute care on a child. Jean Piaget has shown that children are not capable of reflective thinking at young ages. For example, they do not have a concept of object permanence. If you hide a ball, the infant will stop searching for it because it has ceased to exist in the child's mind. In the same way, when mom leaves the day care center, she has ceased to exist in the mind of the child. The mother may reflect on her child all day while

at work, but the child has erased her from his or her mind.

These then are just a few of the psychological concerns knowlegeable people have about institutionalized day care. Before we begin to fund national day care, we should stop long enough to discuss the impact such institutionalized care would have on our children and the nation.

Additional Psychological Costs

Another concern is what Dettrick Bonfenbrunner calls “social contagion.” Poorly supervised day care creates an atmosphere that socializes the children in a negative manner. For example, Bryna Siegel (psychologist at Stanford University) reported in her nine- year study that day care children were “15 times more aggressive… a tendency toward more physical and verbal attacks on other children.” By that she did not merely mean that the children were more assertive, but that they were more aggressive.

J. C. Schwartz and his colleagues have shown that children who entered day care before they were twelve months old are more physically and verbally abusive when they are older. They found this abuse was aimed at adults, and also found these children were less cooperative with grownups and less tolerant of frustration than children cared for by their mothers.

Christians should not be surprised by these findings given our biblical understanding of human sinfulness. Each child is born a sinner. When day care workers put a bunch of “little sinners” together in a room without adequate supervision, sin nature will most likely manifest itself in the environment.

Proponents of socialized day care begin with a flawed premise. They assume that human beings are basically good. These liberal, social experiments with day care begin with the tacit assumption that a child is a “noble savage” that needs to be nurtured and encouraged. Social thinkers ranging from Jean

Jacques Rousseau to Abraham Maslow begin with the assumption about human goodness and thus have little concern with the idea of children being reared in an institutional environment.

Christians on the other hand believe that the family is God's primary instrument for social instruction. Children must not only be nurtured but they must also be disciplined. Children are to be reared by parents in the context of the family, not in institutionalized day care.

Over the last three decades, America has been engaged in a social experiment with day care. As more and more children are put into institutionalized care, we are reaping the consequences.

Emotionally scarred children who have been "warehoused" in sub- standard facilities are more likely to drop out of school, be arrested, and end up on welfare rolls. The cost to society in terms of truancy, delinquency, and crime will be significant.

E. F. Ziglar (Yale University) has said that "When parents pick a day care center, they are essentially picking what their child will become." This is not only true for the individual child; it is true for society. As a nation we have been choosing the children we will have in the future by promoting day care, and the future does not look good.

Financial and Medical Costs

Finally, I would like to look at the financial and medical costs of day care. The financial costs can be significant. Many women who place their children into institutional care fail to estimate the additional (often hidden) costs of their choice. Quality day care is not cheap nor are many of the other costs associated with going to work.

Sara Levitan and Karen Cleary Alderman state in their book, *Child Care and the ABCs Too* that "The cost of preschooler's

day care services added to work expenses can easily absorb the total earnings of some women working part time." They continue,

> *Disregarding the cost of transportation and other work-connected expenses or the imputed cost of performing household tasks in addition to work (overtime duty), it is apparent that the daily salary of at least half of working women did not provide the cost of a single child's day care meeting federal standards.*

By contrast, the value of a mother is vastly underestimated. Financial analyst Sylvia Porter states that the twenty-five million full-time homemakers contribute billions to the economy each year, even though their labor is not counted in the gross national product. She calculates that the average mother contributes nearly $30,000 a year in labor and services. She arrived at this figure by calculating an hourly fee for such functions as: nurse-maid, housekeeper, cook, dishwasher, laundress, food buyer, chauffeur, gardener, maintenance person, seamstress, dietician, and practical nurse.

Health costs are also considerable. Young children are still in the process of developing their immunity to certain diseases, and are more likely to get sick when exposed to other children on a daily basis. While some ailments are slight, others can be very serious. For example, infectious diseases (especially those involving the middle ear and hearing ability) are three to four times as prevalent in group care as compared to home care.

Dr. Ron Haskins and Dr. Jonathan Kotch have identified day care attendance as the most significant factor associated with the increased incidence of bacterial meningitis. Likewise, cytomegalovirus (the leading cause of congenital infections in newborns) has also been linked to day care centers. These and

other correlations should not be surprising given the intimate contact with so many unrelated children in an environment of playing, sleeping, eating, and using toilet facilities.

As we have seen in this discussion, the costs of day care are high. As Christians we must begin with the biblical foundation found in Psalm 127 that children are “a gift of God.” God has entrusted us with our children for a period of time. We cannot and should not shirk our responsibility or pass that responsibility on to others.

At the moment, this nation seems poised to implement a comprehensive, national program of day care. Before we develop national programs that may harm our children, we need to count the costs and make an informed decision.

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It Takes a Village

Does It Take a Village to Raise a Child?

We rarely do book reviews on the Probe radio program, but from time to time a book is published that is so significant that we depart from our normal format. This essay is a discussion of the book *It Takes a Village* by Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Now it should be obvious that a discussion of this book will no doubt be controversial. After all, the Clinton administration, as well as the First Lady, has been under attack. We will not even venture to discuss any of the allegations that are so much a part of the news. Likewise we will try to avoid any partisan considerations of particular programs and policies.

The focus of this essay will be on the book *It Takes a Village*. It sets forth a clear-cut agenda, and we as Christians need to ask ourselves if this is an agenda that can be supported from the Bible. Mrs. Clinton epitomizes what many people believe could be called "the new feminism." And it is fair to say that Hillary Clinton is perhaps the most visible, prominent feminist in the world. As First Lady her ideas are given national prominence. As First Lady she addresses international women's conferences (like the ones held in Cairo and Beijing). When she writes a book setting forth her ideas, it is appropriate to evaluate those ideas in light of Scripture.

I would like to begin by focusing on the title of the book, *It Takes a Village*. The title comes from an African proverb which states that "It takes a village to raise a child." This oft-repeated African proverb has become the mantra of recent international women's conferences (Cairo, Beijing). I believe it represents the new paradigm of feminist and socialist thinking.

At its face, there is nothing controversial about the idea that it takes more than parents to raise a child. Grandparents, friends, pastors, teachers, boy scout leaders, and many others in the community all have a role in the lives of our children. In her book, Mrs. Clinton does acknowledge that "parents bear the first and primary responsibility for their sons and daughters."

Unfortunately, the rest of the book contradicts that early statement. The First Lady essentially extends her notion of the village far beyond the family to include various organizations, especially the federal government. By the end of the book, it appears that Mrs. Clinton has never met a government program she didn't like.

She says that those who hold to an anti-government position are the "noisiest" position and getting all the attention from

the media. But she goes on to say that “despite the resurgence of anti- government extremism, it is becoming clear that most Americans do not favor a radical dismantling of government. Instead of rollback, they want real reform. And when a strong case can be made, they still favor government action, as they have demonstrated recently in their support for measures like the Family and Medical Leave Act, the Brady Bill, and the new Direct Student Loan program.”

By the end of the book Mrs. Clinton has endorsed nearly every government program of the last thirty years including those mentioned above and others like Goals 2000, Parents as Teachers, and AmeriCorps. The *village,* in Mrs. Clinton’s book, is much more than the communities in which we live—it is a metaphor for the continued expansion of government into every aspect of our lives.

Areas of Agreement

If you were to pick up Hillary Clinton’s book and begin reading it, you would no doubt be surprised by what you found. Christians will find lots of areas of agreement. In fact, one talk show host even made a confession on air that he expected to find more to disagree with than he did. Instead, he found lots of material in Mrs. Clinton’s book with which he could wholeheartedly agree.

I believe this is precisely the reaction Mrs. Clinton intended. She spends countless pages analyzing the social problems facing our children and providing constructive ideas for parents and communities to follow. Not only is she critical of drugs, violence, illegitimacy, and the plight of American education, she is also critical of such things as the impact of no-fault divorce laws. People looking for a clearly stated liberal agenda will not easily find it in this book. In fact, it is probably fair to say that whole chapters in her book could have been written by Dr. James Dobson.

Mrs. Clinton hastens to add that “this book is not a memoir; thankfully, that will have to wait. Nor is it a textbook or an encyclopedia; it is not meant to be. It is a statement of my personal views, a reflection of my continuing meditation on children.” Though it does contain a fair amount of technical material, it is still a warm, nurturing, and inviting book. The First Lady also tells of her own family, which she describes as looking “like it was straight out of the 1950s television sitcom *Father Knows Best*.” As a counterpoint, she talks about Bill Clinton’s dysfunctional family, and even shares tender, intimate stories about rearing Chelsea.

However, interspersed between these long, warm, nurturing sections which appeal to your emotions are political statements about how government should be used to help the family. I fear that readers without discernment will easily embrace the political agenda of Hillary Rodham Clinton. Each problem or concern is quickly answered by a government program or governmentally-sponsored community program.

Many will remember that the First Lady used a similar tactic in the past to try to sell her plan to nationalize health care. Often she would tell heart-rending stories of families without health insurance in order to bolster her plan to implement nationally- subsidized health care. The same technique can be found throughout *It Takes a Village*.

No one will disagree with many of the problems she catalogs. In fact, former Secretary of Education Bill Bennett catalogs many of these same problems in his *Index of Leading Cultural Indicators*. The source of disagreement comes when proposing government solutions to each problem. Many of these problems themselves are the result of earlier government “solutions” that created these problems. Discerning readers should always be asking whether or not these problems can more effectively be solved by individual initiative, community activities, and church programs.

Is This a “Campaign Book”?

At this point, I would like to raise the question of politics. In particular, many people wonder if this work isn’t just a “campaign book.”

I think we need to be honest enough to say that it is. After all, the publication of this book was originally intended to aid her husband’s campaign. In the book, Mrs. Clinton lists what she believes are her husband’s successes: Family and Medical Leave Act, AmeriCorps, Goals 2000, the Brady Bill, and the Direct Student Loan Program. On the other hand, she soft-pedals the radical parts of the Clinton agenda. Abortion is mentioned once (only in a passing reference to the Cairo Document). Condoms are ignored. Joycelyn Elders and Dr. Henry Foster, Jr., are not discussed. Certainly the book was intended to help the Clinton re-election campaign even if current events surrounding the First Lady have begun to cloud the issue.

In some ways, the book provides the most consistent and comprehensive statement available of the First Lady’s agenda for the rest of the 1990s. Whether the President wins re-election is almost irrelevant to the impact of this book. Mrs. Clinton has become the most visible, articulate feminist in the world. What she says in the United States, and what she says at international women’s conferences (like Beijing, China) hold significant weight. So let’s consider what she says.

Even though Mrs. Clinton attempt to soft-pedal some of the more radical aspects of her agenda, controversy inevitably slips through. For example, many of what she claims are the President’s successes can hardly be considered successes, programs such as: Goals 2000 and Parents as Teachers. Many of her other favorites indicate a clear endorsement of socialist programs by Mrs. Clinton.

Let's look at just one example. Mrs. Clinton believes that the best way to solve what she believes is the problem of adequate day care facilities, is to adopt the French model of day care. She asks us to "imagine a country in which nearly all children between the ages of three and five attend preschool in sparkling classrooms, with teachers recruited and trained as child care professionals." She goes on to say this exists where "more than 90 percent of French children between ages three and five attend free or inexpensive preschools called *écoles maternelles*. Even before they reach the age of three, many of them are in full-day programs."

Her desire is to replicate this system in the United States so that the state can have an early maternal influence on the children of America. She envisions a country in which "Big Brother" essentially becomes "Big Momma."

But is this really what we want in the United States? A nationally subsidized day care system that puts three-years-olds (even two- year-olds) in institutionalized care? Throughout the book Mrs. Clinton seems to be making the tragic assumption that the state can do a better job of raising children than parents. She proposes a system in which the First Lady becomes the "First Mom"—a system in which children are no longer the responsibility of the parents, but become instead wards of the state.

Nostalgia Merchants

Next I would like to discuss the issue of nostalgia. Mrs. Clinton believes that any attempt to return to "the good old days" is flawed. She says, "Those who urge a return to the values of the 1950s are yearning for the kind of family and neighborhood I grew up in and for the feelings of togetherness they engendered. The nostalgia merchants sell an appealing Norman Rockwell-like picture of American life half a century ago." She continues, "I understand that nostalgia. I feel it myself when the world seems too much to take. . . . But in

reality, our past was not so picture perfect. As African-American children who grew up in a segregated society, or immigrants who struggled to survive in sweatshops and tenements, or women whose life choices were circumscribed and whose work was underpaid."

In reality, no one is calling for a return to the evils of earlier decades. Yes, racism and sexism are a sad part of our American history. But pro-family leaders are not calling for a return to those values. They are, however, reminding the American people that there was a time, not so long ago, when values and virtue were a part of the social fabric. Today that fabric is unraveling.

Former Secretary of Education Bill Bennett has compiled an *Index of Leading Cultural Indicators* which compares social statistics from 1960 to the present day. Although the population has increased approximately 41 percent, crime has increased 300 percent, and violent crime has increased 560 percent. The illegitimate birth rate has increased 400 percent, the number of divorces has more than doubled, and the number of children in single parent homes has tripled.

Pro-family leaders rightly call for a return to the fundamental Judeo-Christian values that made America great. They are not calling for a return to segregation or Jim Crow laws. They are not calling for a repeal of laws mandating equal pay for equal work. Mrs. Clinton's comments about these so-called "nostalgia merchants" are disingenuous at best.

Another interesting comment has to do with Mrs. Clinton herself. Anytime someone disagrees with her perspective, the motive is labeled as chauvinism. In other words, if you disagree with the First Lady, it must be because you have difficulty dealing with a strong woman who exercises political power.

Let me say that my concerns with Mrs. Clinton's perspectives

have to do with the issues, not the person. My disagreements are based upon the substance of those programs and are not based upon the fact that they are proposed by a woman. In fact, I highly admire a number of women who have served in political office like Margaret Thatcher and Jeanne Kirkpatrick. The ideas expressed in Mrs. Clinton's book are dangerous regardless of whether they are proposed by a woman or a man. The issue is not the messenger, but the message.

Mrs. Clinton's Government Solutions to Social Problems

At this point I would like to conclude by addressing some additional issues related to the book. First, Mrs. Clinton often proposes socialist solutions to the problems she raises in her book. Earlier I noted that she proposed a nationally-subsidized day care system modeled after France as a solution to her perceived problem of quality day care. In other parts of her book she also proposes liberal, government solutions.

She writes that "Other developed countries, including some of our fiercest competitors, are more committed to social stability than we have been, and they tailor their economic policies to maintain it." She then goes on to make a case for the German economic model, complete with an industrial policy in which "there is a general consensus that government and business should play a role in evening out inequalities in the free market system."

When it comes to education, she proposes a national agenda over local control of the schools. Mrs. Clinton believes education will be enhanced by nationalizing it through such programs as Goals 2000 and School-to-Work programs.

And don't think that Mrs. Clinton has abandoned the idea of nationalized health care. She sees nationally-subsidized health care as the solution to everything from infant morality to health care delivery.

From start to finish, Mrs. Clinton proposes government as the answer to every problem. In some cases, the government is behind the scenes providing funding and direction to community-based organizations. In others, it is the primary provider. But whenever a problem is raised, the First Lady seems content to have government take care of it.

By the end of the book, Mrs. Clinton has endorsed such groups as HIPPY, Parent Education Program, Healthy Start, Children's Defense Fund, Parents as Teachers, Carnegie Council on Children, Head Start, and Zero to Three. Many of these groups, along with the government programs she endorses, make up the foundation of her liberal, big-government agenda for children in the 1990s. Readers without discernment may easily be seduced into believing that these programs are the only way to make life better for their children.

As Christians, I believe we must ask where is the church in this book? Where are communities? Where is individual initiative and responsibility? The world's largest bureaucracy is the Department of Health and Human Services. Mrs. Clinton seems to be saying throughout the book that the solution to nearly every problem will come from enlarging this enormous bureaucracy even more.

I believe the real issue is that Mrs. Clinton's book, *It Takes a Village,* is flawed at its premise. Government is not a village. Parents do not need government bureaucrats and federal programs to raise their children. In many ways, the problems Mrs. Clinton discusses are the result of government "solutions" proposed decades earlier (through the New Deal and Great Society programs). Families don't need more government; they need less government. In a very limited sense we might agree that it does take a village to raise a child, but that doesn't mean it takes the government to raise a child. Children should be raised by families, churches, and communities—not by the federal government.

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Education Beyond the Classroom

What comes to mind when you think of education? School buildings? Libraries? Textbooks? Curricula? Teachers? Most of us probably associate education with at least one of these things, and surely many more could be added. But does education take place outside of such formal settings? Can curricula be found beyond that of the normal course of study? And can teachers be found who are teaching outside of the classroom?

If we simply consider the amount of time students spend outside of class the answer to these questions would surely be a resounding "Yes!" And if we add the strong probability that many of the hours spent outside the class are consumed by various media, for example, we can see another strong reason to answer in the affirmative. Students are virtually suffocated with ideas when they leave the confines of the school building. For many their education has just begun when the last bell rings each day. In fact, many students use whatever mental energy they have to learn only those things that interest them outside of school.

Educational Sources: Parents

What are some of the sources from which students learn? Let's begin with parents. After years of ministry among youth I am convinced that students want to learn from their parents. In fact, some are desperate for their parents' wisdom. Thankfully, I have seen the wonderful effects of respect

between parents and children. The children are taught the most important truths of life in the home and those truths are accepted because there is a large measure of respect for the parents. Such an atmosphere is patiently developed through the parents' concentrated, time-consuming dedication to their children. And I hasten to add that I have observed this in single parent as well as blended families. The result is that children who are raised in such a home will usually compare what they are taught outside the home with what they are taught in the home. And the lessons they learn from parents outweigh other lessons.

Unfortunately, though, this situation is much too rare. Many students, including those raised in Christian homes, are left alone to discover what they can without the guidance of parents. When we realize that "true, meaningful communication between parent and child … occupies only about two minutes each day"(1) there should be reason for concern. That amounts to slightly more that 12 hours per year. If that is compared to the amount of time spent in school, for example, what the parents teach in that brief time can be overwhelmed with contrary ideas. Students spend much more time learning at school per week than they do with parents per year! This situation should be seriously considered by Christians when evaluating the current educational climate. If Christian parents are not willing to educate their children there may not be much room for complaining about what is learned outside the home. Children have always needed parental guidance and they always will.

One of the most important directives for the ancient Jews applies to parental responsibility for the education of their children. Deuteronomy 6:4-7, the revered Shema, states that "(5) You shall love the LORD your God will all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. (6) And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart; (7) and you shall teach them diligently to your sons

and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up." This strategic passage was reemphasized by the Lord Jesus (Mark 12:28-30). What a student learns outside of class should begin at home.

Educational Sources: What is Heard, Read, and Seen

Where and by whom is a student educated outside the school and home? Actually the question should use both past and present tenses. Since we are concentrating on education outside the classroom, it's important to realize that students are constantly being educated, whether they are aware of it or not. Education does not just apply to some type of formal education; it is very much a part of daily life. The Christian student who is attempting to think God's thoughts after Him is profoundly aware of this. He lives in a world of ideas, and ideas have consequences. Those ideas are so much a part of life that it's as if they're a portion of the air we breathe. Students should be conscious of this, but the same is true for all of us. All of us are students.

So where do we find the teachers? There are at least three other sources: what is heard, what is read, and what is seen.

First, what is heard? One morning as I went to the front yard to get the newspaper I heard a loud, repetitive noise that sounded as if it were a woodpecker hammering on metal. When I located the source I realized to my amazement that indeed it was a woodpecker pecking on a metal light covering near our house. My curiosity was aroused so I pursued an answer to my crazy woodpecker question. It turns out that the bird could have heard his prey inside the covering, but couldn't distinguish for the moment the difference between wood and metal.

The point of this illustration is that the wondrous nature of

nature had provided a teachable moment. God’s creation abounds with such opportunities to observe the variety He has given us. And such moments are part of our daily lives.

But most students hear from more obvious sources: peers, radio, television, movies, music, etc. These sources provide a profusion of ideas. They are teachers. And just as in the formal classroom, the student should be listening carefully to see if the lessons should be considered, discarded, or believed.

The second source focuses on what is read. Some studies indicate that people are not reading any longer. This is curious in light of the growth of enormous bookstores filled with many obscure and weighty titles. Be that as it may, the printed word still has an impact. Most students give some attention to reading. Words still have meaning, in spite of the efforts of those who would use words to say that words are meaningless. This is especially true for the Christian student. If he doesn’t revere the Bible to the point of reading and understanding it as the foundation of his education, he is like a ship without a rudder. The ship is afloat but it’s at the mercy of the sea and its currents.

The last of our sources concerns what we see. Since a large percentage of students spend an enormous amount of time viewing television, movies, magazines, and other media, this is a major educational element. Images abound in their lives. This challenges the Christian student to be especially alert to the multitude of ideas that come through her eyes and into her mind.

Educators beyond the classroom are continually vying for the minds of students. Let’s do what we can to lead our students through this maze of ideas.

The Curriculum

One of the major elements of a formal education is the curriculum. This curriculum is usually set for students in the primary grades, it contains some flexibility in middle school, more flexibility in high school, and significant flexibility in college. Regardless of the educational level a student attains, his formal education includes variety. The same is true outside the classroom. The education he receives there includes a varied curriculum. And that curriculum can be found in varied places, from conversations with those with whom he works, to his magazine subscriptions, to the movies he rents. Let's consider several ideas that generally are found in the educational curriculum outside the classroom.

Man is the Measure of All Things

First, man is the measure of all things. That is, man is the focus of what is taught. This course is called naturalism. God either doesn't exist, or He may as well not exist because He has nothing to say to us that has meaning. Thus man is left alone to create meaning, value, morality, religion, government, education, and all other aspects of life. This is probably the most influential way of thinking in this country.

Think, for example, of the television programs you may have seen lately. Now consider whether or not those programs included the presence and guidance of a deity, whether the God of the Bible or not. With rare exceptions, the education one receives through such sources doesn't include any concept of God. Instead, man deals with all problems in his own way, through his own ingenuity. Of course the student usually isn't able to see the long term results of such decisions. As wonderful as the resolution may appear at the end of a program, the ultimate consequences may be disastrous.

Pleasure is the Highest Good

The second portion of the curriculum is based upon the idea

that pleasure is the highest good. This course is called hedonism. Perhaps one of the more obvious places to find this is in your local grocery store. The “textbooks” that are found in the magazine rack near the checkout island contain this message in abundance. The articles, advertisements, and pictures emphasize the supremacy of pleasure above virtues such as self-control and sacrifice. Take a moment sometime just to scan the articles and emphases that are highlighted on the front covers of these magazines. For example, the contents of a recent teen-oriented publication for girls include: “Look Hot Tonight,” “Stud Shopping Tips,” “Love Stories: Secrets of Girls Who Snagged Their Crush,” “Hunky Holidays: Meet the 50 Most Beautiful Guys in the World,” and “The Ultimate Party Guide.” All these titles revolve around the idea that pleasure is the highest good.

True Spirituality Has Many Sources

Third, true spirituality has many sources. This course is called syncretism. Current spiritual emphases have led many students to believe that it doesn’t matter what path you take as long as you are on a path. A trip to a large book store will demonstrate this. For example, you can find many books that contain many ideas about angels, but most of them have nothing to do with biblical doctrine. Or you can find a section dedicated to an assortment of metaphysical teachings, none of which align with biblical teaching. When confronted with such variety the student can be tempted to believe that true spirituality can be found in many places. The Christian student must realize this isn’t possible if his allegiance is to Christ as Lord of all.

What Works is Good

The fourth idea is that what works is good. This course is called pragmatism. This is a particularly attractive part of the curriculum for Americans. And this certainly includes the American Christian student. But it’s a deceptively attractive

course. It may lead to results, but at what cost?

I think of a revealing scene in the disturbing Academy Award-winning movie A Clockwork Orange. A young British hoodlum in a futuristic England is programmed to abhor the violence that he continually practiced with his gang. This abhorrence is brought about by forcing him to watch scenes of horrible violence while his eyes are forced open. When he is brought before an audience to demonstrate the change, his programmer tempts him with several opportunities to do violence while the audience watches. He resists the temptations. After the demonstration a clergyman protests by saying that the "boy has no moral choice." He was manipulated. The programmer scoffs at this claim and states that the result of the experiment is good because "the point is that it works." "It has relieved the ghastly congestion in our prisons."

These first four parts of the curriculum are naively optimistic. They describe either present or future existence positively because of supreme confidence in man and his abilities. Other portions of the curriculum are not so optimistic. In fact, they can be frighteningly pessimistic at times.

There is No Meaning

A fifth aspect of the curriculum denies meaning. This course is called existentialism, and sometimes nihilism. The "big" questions of life are asked, but no answers are found. Then the response is either total denial of hope, which should logically lead to suicide, or living by simply acting in the face of absurdity. These perspectives can be found, for example, in some contemporary music and movies. The songs of Nine Inch Nails, the moniker for a musician named Trent Reznor, sometimes contain ideas that are indicative of this. The movies of Woody Allen often contain characters and scenes that depict a search for meaning with no conclusions other than individual acts.

There is No Truth

The last portion of the curriculum is closely connected to what we have just discussed. This course can be called postmodernism. We are living in a culture that increasingly denies an encompassing paradigm for truth. This can be demonstrated by considering what Francis Schaeffer meant by the phrase “true truth.” That is, there is no “big picture” to be seen and understood. We only have individuals and communities who have their own “little truths.” And nothing connects those truths to something bigger than themselves and more lasting than what might work at the moment. This can be heard, seen, and read incessantly. There are too few teachers in the culture’s curriculum who are sharing ideas that are connected to or guided by “true truth.” The ultimate outcome of such thinking can be devastating. Chaos can reign. Then a sense of desperation can prompt us to accept the “truth” of whoever may claim to be able to lead us out of the confusion. Germany experienced this under the reign of Hitler. We should not be so smug as to think it could not happen to us.

Responding to the Curriculum

Man is the measure of all things! Pleasure is the highest good! True spirituality has many sources! What works is good! There is no meaning! There is no truth! These are the ideas that permeate the education a student receives outside the classroom. How can a Christian deal with such a curriculum? Some suggestions are in order.

First, the student should be encouraged to understand that God is the measure of all things, not man. God is an eternal being who is the guide for our lives, both temporal and eternal. Thus we don’t first ask what man thinks, we ask what God thinks. So this means that the student must decide on his primary textbook. Is it the Bible, or some other text?

Second, the student should be led to realize that God’s will is the highest good, not pleasure. This is very important for

the contemporary Christian to understand in light of the sensuous nature of our culture. A student easily can get the idea that God is a “kill joy” because it may seem that everyone is having a good time, but he can’t because of God’s restrictions. If he can understand that God’s ideas lead to true freedom and joy, the student can more readily deal with this part of the curriculum.

Third, the student should be challenged to realize that true spirituality is found only through a relationship with the risen Jesus. Jesus lives in us through the indwelling of His Spirit. And this indwelling is only true for the reborn Christian. Yes, there are many spiritual concepts alive in this culture. Many people are searching for something that will give meaning beyond man’s ideas. There is a spiritual hunger. But if we try to relieve that hunger through ideas that come from man’s perceptions of spirituality, we are back where we started: man is the measure of all things.

Fourth, the student should be taught that what works is not always good. Satan can make evil work for a time, but he is the father of lies, and lies lead to spiritual and moral decay.

Fifth, the student should be led to believe that life has meaning. The Christian can see the world around him with the eye of hope because God is in control. As chaotic as things may appear, there is a purpose, there is a plan. People have meaning, past events have meaning, present events have meaning, and future events will have meaning. Christ has died to give us salvation, and He has risen from the dead to give us hope for the present and the future. A student whose mind is infused with meaning will be able to handle the despair around him, and he can share his secure hope in the midst of such despair.

Sixth, the student should be guided to think in terms of the big picture. Imagine a puzzle with thousands of pieces. Now

think of attempting to assemble the puzzle without having seen the picture on the box top. That would surely be a frustrating experience. You would have individual pieces but no guide to fit the pieces together. Many attempt to live this way. But the Christian student has the box top. He can begin to put the puzzle of life together with God's picture in mind.

So, does education take place beyond the classroom? Certainly! May God guide us to help students learn the proper lessons.

Notes

1. J. Kerby Anderson, *Signs of Warning, Signs of Hope* (Chicago: Moody, 1994), p. 136.

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Student Rights

Introduction

A number of years ago a school in Missouri was instructed by court order to sponsor school dances over the objections of parents and the school board because the court claimed that the opposition was of a religious nature thus violating separation of church and state. Students have been stopped from voluntarily praying before athletic events, informal Bible studies have been moved off campus, and traditions such as opening prayer and benedictions during graduation ceremonies have been halted by court order or administrative decrees. Textbooks have also been purged of Judeo- Christian values and teachers have been ordered to remove Bibles from

their desks because of the potential harm to students that they represent. Have the schools created an environment that is hostile to Christian belief?

Stephen Carter, a Yale law professor (*The Culture of Disbelief*, Basic Books, 1993) argues that religion in America is being reduced to the level of a hobby, that fewer and fewer avenues are available for one's beliefs to find acceptable public expression. Our public schools are a prime example of this secularization. This has caused undue hardship for many Christian students. Some administrators, reacting to the heated debate surrounding public expressions of faith, have sought to create a neutral environment by excluding any reference to religious ideas or even ideas that might have a religious origin. The result has often been to create an environment hostile to belief, precisely what the Supreme Court has argued against in its cases which restricted practices of worship in the schools such as school-led prayer and Scripture reading. The fallout of removing a Christian influence from the marketplace of ideas on campus has been the promotion of a naturalistic worldview which assumes that the universe is the consequence of blind chance.

This whole area of student rights is a relatively recent one. In the past, the courts have been hesitant to interfere with the legislative powers of state assemblies and the authority of locally elected school boards. But since the sixties, more and more issues are being settled in court. This trend reflects the breakdown of a consensus of values in our society, and it is likely to get worse.

When public schools reinforce the values held in common by a majority of parents sending their children off to school, conflicts are likely to be resolved locally. But in recent decades school administrators have been less likely to support traditional Judeo- Christian values which are still popular with most parents. Instead, schools have often abandoned accommodating neutrality and purged Christian thought from the

school setting. Parents and students have felt compelled to take legal action, claiming that their constitutional rights of free speech and religious expression have been violated.

How should the U. S. Constitution's guarantee of freedom of religion be balanced with the growing diversity in our public schools? In a time of growing centralization in education, how can schools cope with the rights of students that are far more diversified than in the past?

In this pamphlet we will look at some of the specific issues surrounding the concept of student rights beginning with a definition of the often used phrase "separation of church and state." Then we will cover equal access, freedom of expression, the distribution of religious materials, prayer, as well as the Hatch Amendment.

Separation of Church and State

In 1803 Thomas Jefferson helped to ratify a treaty with the Kaskaskia Indians resulting in the United States paying one hundred dollars a year to support a Catholic priest in the region, and contributing three hundred dollars to help the tribe build a church. Later, as president of the Washington, D.C., school board, Jefferson was the chief author of the first plan for public education in the city. Reports indicate that the Bible and the Watts Hymnal were the principal, if not the only books, used for reading in the city's schools. Yet those who advocate a strict separation between church and state usually refer back to Thomas Jefferson's use of the phrase in 1802 when speaking to the Danbury Baptist Association in Connecticut. By using this phrase did Jefferson hope to separate Christian thought and ideals from all of public life, including education? Actually, Jefferson was a very complex thinker and desired neither a purely secular nor a Christian education.

What then, does the phrase "separation of church and state"

mean? More importantly, what did it mean to the Founding Fathers? This is a crucial issue! A common interpretation was recently expressed in a major newspaper's editorial page. The writer argued that public school students using a classroom to voluntarily study the Bible would be a violation of the establishment clause of the First Amendment, and that the mere presence of religious ideas and speech promotes religion. His reasoning was that the tax dollars spent to heat and light the room puts the government in the business of establishing a religion. Is this view consistent with a historical interpretation of the First Amendment?

Recent Supreme Court cases dealing with church/state controversies have resulted in some interesting comments by the justices. In the *Lynch vs. Donnelly* case in 1984, the court mentioned that in the very week that Congress approved the Establishment Clause as part of the Bill of Rights for submission to the states, it enacted legislation providing for paid chaplains for the House and Senate. The day after the First Amendment was proposed, Congress urged President Washington to proclaim a day of public thanksgiving and prayer. In *Abington vs. Schempp* the Court declared that the Founding Fathers believed devotedly that there was a God and that the unalienable rights of man were rooted in Him and that this is clearly evidenced in their writings, from the Mayflower Compact to the U. S. Constitution itself.

The Supreme Court has recognized that every establishment clause case must balance the tension between unnecessary intrusion of either the church or the state upon the other, and the reality that, as the Court has so often noted, total separation of the two is not possible. The Court has long maintained a doctrine of accommodating neutrality in regards to religion and the public school system. This is based on the case *Zorach vs. Clauson* in 1952 which stated that the U. S. Constitution does not require complete separation of church and state, and that it affirmatively mandates accommodation,

not merely tolerance of all religions, forbidding hostility toward any.

Any concept of students' rights must include some accommodation by our public institutions in regards to religious beliefs and practices. The primary purpose of the First Amendment, and its resulting "wall of separation" between church and state, is to secure religious liberty.

Equal Access

On the surface, this issue seems fairly uncomplicated. Do students have the right to meet voluntarily on a high school campus for the purpose of studying the Bible and prayer if other non-curricular clubs enjoy the same privilege? Yet this issue has been the focus of more than fifteen major court cases since 1975, the Equal Access Act passed by Congress in 1984, and finally a Supreme Court case in 1990.

To many, this subject involves blatant discrimination against students who participate in activities that include religious speech and ideas. By refusing to allow students to organize Bible clubs during regular club meeting times, administrators are singling out Christians merely because of the content of their speech.

To others, the idea of students voluntarily studying the Bible and praying presents a situation "too dangerous to permit." Others see equal access as just another attempt to install prayer in the public schools, and they hold up the banner of separation of church and state in an attempt to ward off this evil violation of our Constitution.

Let's review exactly what legal rights a student does enjoy thanks to the "Equal Access" bill and the Mergens Supreme Court decision in 1990. First, schools may not discriminate against Bible clubs if they allow other non-curricular clubs to meet. A non-curricular club or student group is defined as

any group that does not directly relate to the courses offered by the school. Some examples might be chess clubs, stamp collecting clubs, or community service clubs. School policy must be consistent towards all clubs regardless of the content of their meetings. The specific guidelines established are:

- *The club must be student initiated and voluntary.*
- *The club cannot be sponsored by the school.*
- *School employees may not participate other than as invited guests or neutral supervisors.*
- *The club cannot interfere with normal school activities.*

It also goes without saying that these clubs must follow other normally expected codes of behavior established by the school. The federal government can cut off federal funding of any school that denies the right of students to organize such clubs. This is a substantial penalty given that title moneys for special education, vocational training, and library materials are a significant portion of many schools' income.

One would think that the passing of the Equal Access Bill and its affirmation by the Supreme Court would have settled this issue. It didn't. Mostly due to ignorance of the law and occasionally an anti-religion bias, school administrators sometimes still balk at allowing Bible clubs. Unfortunately, it may take a letter from a Christian legal service in order to bring some school administrators up to speed on the legality of the clubs. Even so, some schools are removing all non-curricular clubs in order to avoid having to allow Bible clubs. This is a remarkable position for school administrators to take and is yet another evidence of the polarization taking place in our society between religious and non-religious people.

The way that students utilize the right to equal access is

important. The agenda for any such club should be (1) to encourage and challenge one another to strive for excellence in every area of life and (2) to be a source of light within the secular darkness covering much of our teenage culture today. Angry confrontation with administrators and other students would ruin the positive witness such a club might otherwise accomplish.

Other Rights of Christian Students: Freedom of Speech

In 1969, two high school students and one junior high student who wore black arm bands in protest of the Vietnam war. They were warned of potential expulsion, an admonition which they ignored, and were subsequently removed from school.

The resulting court case made its way to the Supreme Court which determined that students do not shed their constitutional rights at the school house door. This landmark decision, known as the Tinker case, greatly affected the way school administrators deal with certain types of discipline problems. Since the students chose a non-aggressive, non-disruptive form of protest, and since there was no evidence that they in any way interfered with the learning environment of the school, the Court argued that the administrators could not forbid protest simply because they disagreed with the position taken by the students or because they feared that a disruption might occur.

A two-point test has been suggested as a result of the Tinker case. Before setting a policy that will forbid some student behavior, administrators must prove that the action will interfere with or disrupt the work of the school, or force beliefs upon another student. Christians that wear crosses or T-shirts with a Christian message violate neither test. The same idea applies to the spoken word. The Tinker decision embraced the idea that fear or apprehension of disturbance is

not enough to overcome the right of freedom of expression. Words spoken in class, in the lunchroom, or on the campus may conflict with the views of others and contain the potential to cause a disturbance, but the Court argued that this hazardous freedom is foundational to our national strength.

The Supreme Court has affirmed the right of Christians to distribute literature on campus, with some qualifications. In the case *Martin vs. Struthers* the Court equated free speech with the right to hand out literature as long as the literature in question was not libelous, obscene, or disruptive. If the school has no specific policy concerning the distribution of literature by students, Christians may freely do so. If a policy exists, students must conform to it. This may include prior examination of the material, and distribution may be denied during assemblies and other school functions. Outsiders do not enjoy similar privileges. The literature must be selected and distributed by the students.

Although the Supreme Court has outlawed school-sponsored prayer and reading from the Bible, it has not moved to restrict individuals from doing so. Graduation prayers by students have created a legal battle which resulted in *Lee vs. Weisman*, a Supreme Court decision which found that a prayer which was guided and directed by the school's principal was unconstitutional. The Court basically said that the school cannot invite a professional clergyman to a school function in order to pray. Students or others on the program may pray voluntarily. The student body may choose a student to act as a chaplain. Another scenario might have parents or students creating the agenda for the graduation ceremony, thus removing the school from placing a prayer on the program. Students do not shed their constitutional right to free speech when they step to the podium.

Christian students on campus must remember that certain responsibilities coincide with these rights. Proverbs 15:1 states that, "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh

word stirs up anger." If we use our rights and privileges in a Christlike manner we will indeed be His ambassadors, anything less would be contrary to His will.

Other Student Rights

In 1925, the Supreme Court case *Pierce vs. Society of Sisters* debated the right of parents to send their children to private schools. In that case, justice James McReynolds said, "The child is not the mere creature of the State; those who nurture him and direct his destiny have the right coupled with the high duty, to recognize and prepare him for additional obligations." In 1984, Congress held a series of hearings on reported abuses by educators who were attempting to change the beliefs of their students in a way that might again be a challenge to parental authority. Congress found that some schools might be overstepping their traditional role by concentrating more on what students believe than on what they know.

The result of these hearings is a law commonly known as the Hatch Amendment. The law protects students from federally sponsored research and experimental programs that make inquiries into students' personal sexual, family, and religious lives. The law stipulates that all materials, including manuals, audio-visuals, and texts are to be made available to parents for review. And secondly, students shall not be required to submit to psychiatric testing, psychological examination, or treatments which delve into personal areas that might be considered sensitive family matters. But there is one big problem with the law, it only covers federally funded experimental or research-driven programs. What about abusive course-work which isn't funded directly by federal research?

In regards to day-to-day classwork, the courts have made a distinction between mere exposure to objectionable material and a school's attempt to coerce its students to adopt a

particular political or religious viewpoint. Parents who can prove that coercion is taking place will have a much greater chance in court of forcing the school to accommodate to their beliefs by changing the school's practices. If coercion is not taking place, and a child is merely being exposed to objectionable material, being excused from the class is more likely.

On the positive side, Christian students do have the right to include religious topics and research in their school work when appropriate. In *Florey vs. Sioux Falls School District*, Circuit Judge McMillian clarified why students have the right to use religious materials in the classroom. He states that, "To allow students only to study and not to perform religious art, literature and music when such works have developed an independent secular and artistic significance would give students a truncated view of our culture." In another case titled the *Committee for Public Education vs. Nyquist*, the Supreme Court stated, "The First Amendment does not forbid all mention of religion in public schools. It is the advancement or inhibition of religion that is prohibited." When presented objectively any religious topic is fair game for both student and teacher. Indeed, both could make good use of this freedom in covering such topics as the religious views of our Founding Fathers, what role Christian thought has played in important issues such as slavery and abortion, and how Christian thought has been in conflict with other worldviews.

Students can be an effective instrument for reaching other students with the Gospel, but only if they are living consistently with what they believe. This is possible given the rights granted them by the U. S. Constitution. It is our job as parents to see that our schools protect the rights of our children not only to believe, but to live Christianly, for what good is freedom of religion if it covers only our private lives?

Resources

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Congressional Reforms

The Flat Tax

"Our government is too big, and it spends, taxes and regulates too much. Of all the supposed crises we're facing today, this is the one that really matters." So said Representative Dick Armey when he introduced his proposal for a flat tax.

The American public sector is now larger than the entire economy of any other country except Japan. Government employment surpasses jobs in the manufacturing sector. "Today, the average family now pays more in taxes than it spends on food, clothing, and shelter combined. All told, nearly 40% of the nation's income is now spent not by the workers who earned it, but by the political class that taxed it from them."

Congressman Armey believes we need a change. He wants to freeze federal spending, erase stupid governmental regulations, and retire the current Rube Goldberg tax code

with a simple, flat tax and a form that could fit on a postcard.

The proposal has tremendous merit, which is why its chances of passing in this session of Congress are slim and none. But Armey is not a Congressional Don Quixote tilting at bureaucratic windmills. He knows that taxpayers are fed up with waste, fraud, and tax confusion. They are eager to change the system and willing to change congressmen if they won't take action.

In this essay we will be looking at the merits of this proposal. The center piece of the proposal is the flat tax. Seven decades of corporate lobbying and congressional tinkering have left the tax code in a mess. Rates are high, loopholes abound, and families must bear an unfair burden of the tax code. Armey's bill would scrap the entire code and replace it with a simple 17% flat tax for all.

All personal income would be taxed once at the single, low rate of 17%. There would be no special tax breaks of any kind except the following: (1) a child deduction of $5300 (twice what it is today), and (2) a personal allowance – $13,100 for an individual, $17,200 for a single head of a household, and $26,200 for married couples.

Businesses would pay the same 17% as individuals. A corporation would subtract expenses from revenues and pay the same, flat tax. The benefits should be obvious. Americans spend approximately 6 billion person-hours figuring their taxes each year. This lost time costs the economy $600 billion annually, and people spend another $200 billion in time and energy looking for legal ways to avoid taxation. Lawyers, accountants, and all taxpayers will be freed up to focus their time and energy on more productive aspects of the economy.

Economic growth will be another benefit of the plan. Armey's bill not only lowers tax rates but eliminates double taxation

of savings, thus creating a new incentive for investment. No more capital-gains tax, no estate tax, no tax on dividends. This bill will substantially stimulate the economy and create new jobs.

Perhaps the greatest benefit will be tax fairness. We say that in our society everybody should be treated the same, but we have a tax code that does anything but do that. Under the current code, politicians and lobbyists determine which groups should pay more and which groups should pay less. Under the Armey bill everyone pays the same.

The bill does more than simplify the tax code. It has two other major features. First, it would address the issues of spending cuts and program sunsets. Armey's bill uses a variation of the old Gramm-Rudman law to freeze total federal spending for one year and then allow it to grow only at the rate of inflation after that.

This proposal will eliminate $475 billion in currently projected spending increases. It will guarantee the government will become no larger in real terms than it is today.

Armey would cut budgets the old-fashioned way: he makes bureaucrats earn them. If a department or agency doesn't perform, it won't continue to exist unless it can justify its existence. Can you imagine the hearings for various agricultural subsidies, pork barrel projects, or for the Strategic Helium Reserve?

Under this proposal new programs will be especially unwelcome. Currently Congress writes new spending bills authorizing "such sums as may be necessary." Armey's bill would require that "such sums" come from existing programs. Congress will no longer be allowed to write a blank check.

A second feature of Armey's bill is to end indiscriminate regulations. The enormous number of government regulations are effectively a hidden tax on business and individual taxpayers.

Armey estimates these regulations cost Americans $580 billion a year. Thus, these regulations are an even greater burden than the income tax itself.

Armey's bill would force the President to produce a regulatory budget. This would expose, for the first time, the hidden cost of regulations. Congress would then be required to do a cost-benefit analysis and risk assessment on any bill with new regulatory authority.

The bill would also address the erosion of property rights. Any time government regulators write a rule that reduces the value of a person's property, the government must compensate that person just as if the government confiscated the land to build a park or highway. No longer would environmental extremists be able to take a person's land by regulatory fiat.

Finally, the bill ends the deceptive device that has made Big Government possible: income-tax withholding. If taxpayers paid their taxes the same way they pay for their houses or cars, government would not have grown so big. Withholding taxes before the taxpayers see it allows government to grow ever larger. This bill ends withholding and thereby puts one more check on the political class.

The flat tax has merit and is illustrative of the many Congressional reforms being put forward in this session of Congress.

Congressional Privilege

Thomas Jefferson wrote that "the framers of our Constitution… took care to provide that the laws should bind equally on all and especially that those who make them shall not exempt themselves from their operation."

James Madison wrote in the *Federalist Papers* that Congress "can make no law which will not have its full operation on themselves and their friends, as well as on the great mass of

the society. This has always been deemed one of the strongest bonds by which human policy can connect rulers and the people together."

Unfortunately, Congress has exempted itself from many of the laws you and I must obey. Recent votes in the House and the Senate have been an attempt to put Congress under some of these laws. Look at this short list of major pieces of legislation Congress has been able to exempt itself from in the past.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 – Protects against discrimination based on race, color, sex, national origin, religious affiliation.

Americans with Disabilities Act – Protects against discrimination based on disability. Has subjected employers to burdensome architectural renovations and hiring.

Age Discrimination in Employment Act – Protects against age discrimination. Does not apply to House. Applies to Senate through internal rules.

Occupation Safety and Health Act – Sets minimum health and safety standards in the workplace.

Fair Labor Standards Act – Requires employers to pay minimum wage, time and a half, and overtime. Amendments in 1989 covered House employees. Senate is exempt.

Rehabilitation Act of 1973 – Requires federal agencies to submit affirmative action plans for the disabled to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

National Labor Relations Act – Proscribes unfair labor practices, gives workers right to form unions, requires employers to bargain. Congress is exempt.

Freedom of Information Act – Provides public access to government documents. Congress is exempt, although it does

publish floor and committee proceedings.

Privacy Act – Protects individual employees at agencies subject to the act. Congress is exempt.

You might wonder how Congress can justify exempting itself from the laws the rest of us must obey. You might think there would be some Constitutional justification due to the separation of powers. Well, not exactly. Though the argument does have some merit, listen to the justification given the last session of Congress.

Senator Wendell Ford (D-KY) spoke against extending a smoking ban to Senate rooms lacking separate ventilation. He said, "This is going to affect each and every member of this chamber, and the administrative confusion that this will cause for members will be enormous. One day we will have an EPA administrator in our office …telling us our separate ventilation system for tobacco is insufficient. Then the next day the OSHA inspector is going to arrive and tell us we do not have sufficient ventilation for fumes coming from the new carpeting, or the paint or the varnish. Next thing you know, we will have HHS coming in and telling us we cannot eat at our desks."

All I can say to Senator Ford is, "Yes, you will." You will be subjected to the same regulatory insanity most of us have had to live with for years! Perhaps the members of Congress will be more careful about the bills they pass in the future, when they have to live under the same laws we must obey. No one should be above the law, not even members of Congress.

Capital

Last November, the Republicans won a battle for Capitol Hill. Now they are waging another battle for America's financial capital. Nearly every day, Capitol Hill is abuzz with discussion of cuts in the capital gains tax, a middle class

tax cut, and even a whole new tax code. We are going to look at a number of these proposals.

The first proposal is a cut in the capital gains tax. Proponents say that the economy will be strengthened by cutting the capital gain tax and indexing capital gains to inflation. Instead of the current tax rates ranging from 15% to 28%, the rates would be cut to rates ranging from 7.5% to 19.8%.

Opponents of a capital gains tax cut say it would merely be a "tax break for the rich." But statistics show that the middle class would be the primary beneficiary.

President Clinton recently defined the middle class as those making less than $75,000 (his middle class tax cut is intended for those making less than $75,000). Even using this $75,000 cutoff point, we find that 74% of the people who earn capital gains come from the middle class or below. Since 26% of people making capital gains have incomes above that cutoff point, reducing the capital gains tax is *not* "giving a tax break to the rich."

The benefit to the economy would be substantial. By lowering tax rates on capital, capital becomes more plentiful. Making capital more plentiful will make labor more scarce relative to capital and bid up the price of labor, resulting in more jobs and higher wages.

Another way to look at this is to recognize that more capital per worker makes workers more productive (better and more efficient equipment) making businesses willing to pay more for labor.

Another way to strengthen the economy is to replace the current tax system with a flat tax as we discussed earlier. The income tax would be 20% in the first two years and 17% thereafter.

Individuals would deduct $13,100, and married couples would deduct $26,200. Each dependent would add $5300 to the tax-exempt portion of the family. In other words, a family of four would not pay any taxes on the first $36,800 of family income!

If a flat tax is passed, there would be no tax on income from capital gains, interest, dividends, or estates. The current tax code actually discourages capital formation by taxing future financial gains. This plan would promote capital formation by eliminating tax on such investments.

Essentially people can spend their money as they earn it or defer gratification until the future. Currently, if they spend their money immediately, they do not increase their income-tax bills. But, if they invest their money and plan to consume it in the future, they risk paying income taxes on their interest, dividends, or capital gains.

This tax plan would allow businesses to pay the same flat rate on the difference between their gross revenues and their business deductions. It would also change the method of depreciation. Currently businesses must now depreciate their capital expenditures over the life of the equipment they buy. Armey's plan would allow them to fully expense those costs the year they incur.

In essence, the proposals are simple: if you want more of something, reduce the tax on it. If you want more capital, then reduce (or eliminate) the current taxes on capital. In the end, people and the economy will benefit.

Welfare Reform

Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY) has boldly stated, "We have no health care crisis in this country. We do have a *welfare* crisis." The social statistics bear out his conclusion. Since 1960 the welfare rolls have increased by 460 percent. Since 1965 Americans have spent more than $5 trillion

on welfare. Currently more than 14 million individuals (including 1 in 7 children) are on welfare.

The current welfare system rewards dependency and punishes initiative. In Maryland, a single parent with two children would need to earn a minimum of $7.50 an hour to earn the same amount as provided by welfare grants and benefits. No wonder so many welfare mothers therefore conclude that staying on welfare is better than getting off.

Various welfare proposals submitted to Congress attempt to modify the welfare system by addressing the following issues:

The first is child support. Many fathers are not providing child support, and these bills would tighten the loopholes and make these dads pay up. Currently unwed fathers are not named on birth certificates. The omission frequently foils attempts to collect child support. But if dad pays, then mom's check does not have to be so large. The proposed bills would require the mother to identify the father in order to receive a welfare check. States can threaten deadbeat dads with garnishing wages and suspending professional and driver's licenses.

Second is the marriage penalty. If a pregnant teen get married or lives with the father of her child, she is frequently ineligible for welfare. Congressional proposals would encourage states to abolish the "marriage penalty" and make it easier to married couples to get welfare.

A third proposal is a family cap. Welfare mothers in some states can increase the size of their welfare checks by having more children. Congressional bills being considered would allow states to cap payments. If a welfare mother has another child, her check remains the same.

Already in New Jersey, Arkansas, and Georgia, families receive no increase for children born while on the dole. Congressional proposals would extend and encourage this opportunity to other

states. The evidence so far is that this family cap may have some deterrence.

A fourth issue is work. Often if a welfare mother gets a job, her check is reduced, and she is likely to lose such benefits like Medicare and free child care. The new proposals before Congress would drop benefits after two years, but allow welfare mothers to work during that period.

Finally, these proposals address the government bureaucracy. Currently governors have to ask the Federal government if they can revamp their state welfare system. And the federal bureaucracy costs money. If you took the money spent for welfare and gave it to poor families it would amount to $25,000 a year for every family of four.

These bills would also freeze or change welfare payments. They would replace Food Stamps and AFDC with block grants to the states. This money would come from savings from cutting cash payments to women having children out of wedlock. As states receive these block grants, they would be free to design their own system.

The Bible clearly admonishes us to help those less fortunate, but it instructs us to do it intelligently. In 2 Thessalonians 3:10 we read that if “a man will not work, he shall not eat.” We need to revamp the current welfare system to meet real needs and stop subsidizing those who will not work. Congressional proposals are designed to help the helpless but stop rewarding the lazy.

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Government Programs

Affirmative Action, Part One

Janice Camarena probably never heard of *Brown v. Board of Education* when she enrolled in San Bernardino Valley College in California. No doubt she knows about it now. Mrs. Camarena was thrown out of a class at the college because of her skin color. When she entered the class, the instructor immediately told her to leave. That section of English 101 was reserved for black students only. Mrs. Camarena is white.

Mrs. Camarena (who is currently suing the California Community Colleges) has come to personify what is wrong with affirmative action programs in the 1990s. Forty years after *Brown v. Board of Education*, the civil right movement has strayed from the color-blind principles articulated by Martin Luther King, Jr. Government bureaucrats and liberal judges have set up quotas and turned the 1964 Civil Rights Act on its head.

Title VII, Section 703 (j) clearly bans preferences by race, gender, ethnicity, and religion in business and government. The Act was a model of fairness, openness, and equality. Unfortunately the interpretation of the law fell into the hands of bureaucrats and judges who swept away fairness and replaced it with color-based preferences.

No wonder momentum is growing in California for a 1996 initiative (modeled on the 1964 Civil Rights Act) that would amend the state's constitution to prohibit the use of quotas by state institutions. California is often the prairie upon which grassroots grass fires spread, and the California Civil Rights Initiative may be the start of a larger movement poised to spread from coast to coast.

As William Bennett has noted: "Affirmative action has not brought us what we want—a color-blind society. It has brought

us an extremely color-conscious society. In our universities we have separate dorms, separate social centers." One might legitimately ask, What's next? Separate water fountains?

How bad has the problem become? Consider just a few examples of the impact of affirmative action quotas on government.

A Defense Department memo cited on the November 18, 1994, broadcast of ABC's "20/20" declared, "In the future, special permission will be required for the promotion of all white men without disabilities."

Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC) cites a U.S. Forest Service document that actually states, "Only unqualified applicants will be considered."

Now that affirmative action appears threatened, suggestions are being floated by proponents to modify affirmative action rather than abolish it. The growing drumbeat from liberal proponents of affirmative action is that race-based affirmative action must be replaced by class-based affirmative action. After all, ask proponents, why should preferential treatment be given to an affluent, black Harvard law graduate over a poor, white West Virginia coal miner? Class-based affirmative action would supposedly be fairer and arouse less hostility because it was based upon economic need rather than race.

But the weaknesses of such a system should be quickly apparent. Race-based affirmative action has spawned an enormous governmental bureaucracy. A class-based system would no doubt be even larger and more byzantine. How would one qualify for class-based affirmative action? Would we use the income of the supposed "victim"? Would we use the income of the victim's family of origin? Would non-cash governmental support be counted? Who would decide? The questions are endless. At least in a race-based system, we can reach some consensus about what constitutes an ethnic minority.

Affirmative Action, Part Two

Affirmative action has been under review for some time, but it took a 1995 Supreme Court case to dramatically change the civil rights landscape. The case involved Randy Pech (owner of Adarand Constructors) who lost in the bidding for a guard-rail construction project in Colorado's San Juan National Forest because he had the wrong skin color. He had the lowest bid, but was passed over because he was not a minority. The prime contractor was eligible for a $10,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation for hiring minority-owned subcontractors. The grant was greater than the difference in the bids submitted by Pech and a Hispanic-owned firm.

Pech filed a discrimination lawsuit. When it reached the Supreme Court, the U.S. Solicitor General argued that Pech had no legal standing to sue, even though the U.S. Government paid the prime contractor $10,000 to discriminate against him! And this illustrates the double standard currently upheld in the law. Protected minorities have standing to sue even if they were never actually the subjects of discrimination. But victims of reverse discrimination have no such recourse and often do not even have legal standing to sue.

Nevertheless, the court ruled in a narrow 5-to-4 decision that Randy Pech had been discriminated against. Some of the justices even went so far as to argue against the very foundation of affirmative action.

Now that affirmative action appears threatened, suggestions are being floated by proponents to modify affirmative action rather than abolish it. The growing drumbeat from liberal proponents of affirmative action is that race-based affirmative action must be replaced by class-based affirmative action. But a class-based system would even go further in piting one ethnic minority against another. This is already the case with race-based affirmative action. At the University of California at Berkeley, for example, thousands of qualified

Asian-American students are turned away each year in order to increase the percentage of African-American and Hispanic-American students on campus. A class-based system of affirmative action would not only continue this practice but increase it.

The best solution is to abolish affirmative action quotas and move to a society that is truly color-blind. When an employer engages in discrimination, civil rights laws and judicial rulings provide a basis for legal remedy. But current interpretations of civil rights laws and affirmative action quotas do not provide equality before the law. They grant protected minorities racial privilege before the law.

In his famous dissent from the Supreme Court case of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, Justice John Marshall Harlan argued that the Constitution "is color-blind, and neither knows nor tolerates classes among citizens. In respect of civil rights, all citizens are equal before the law."

In his famous 1963 speech, Martin Luther King Jr. dreamed of "a Nation where they [his children] will not be judged by the color of their skins, but by the conduct of their character."

Affirmative action quotas violate the spirit of these dreams and turns the 1964 Civil Rights Act on its head. It's time to return to a Constitutional foundation. It's time to return to the true spirit of the civil rights movement. It's time for affirmative action quotas to go.

Missile Defense

A four-star general calling the President on a hot-line red phone:

"Mr, President, we have a national emergency. Our satellites have detected a ballistic missile launched from a former Soviet republic at the United States."

[Pause]

“No, sir. We cannot shoot it down. We have no ballistic missile defense. There is nothing we can do to stop it.”

While the scenario is fiction (similar to the plot in the movie “Crimson Tide”), the problem is fact. If a rogue Russian or a Islamic fundamentalist or a North Korean general decided to fire a missile at the United States, we would be unable to defend ourselves!

It is not that we cannot deploy the technology to defend ourselves. It is that we choose not to deploy that technology. The reason is simple: the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. Twenty-three years ago, the U.S. made the mad promise that it would not defend itself from ballistic missile attack. The MAD (mutually assured destruction) doctrine was the basis of the 1972 ABM treaty. Incredibly, President Clinton wants to keep this reckless pledge today even though the Soviet Union no longer exists and the world is no doubt more dangerous as nuclear proliferation continues.

Opponents of missile defense systems have argued that they are expensive and technologically impossible. Now a group of 16 eminent scientists formed under the auspices of the Heritage Foundation have put forward an affordable and doable plan.

They propose an upgrade of the Navy’s Aegis air defense system to shoot down long-range and short-range ballistic missiles. The Aegis is a ship-board radar-tracking and interceptor system that directs surface-to-air missiles.

The Navy is already working on an upgrade that would allow it to intercept missiles outside the atmosphere, in what is called the “upper tier.” If developed and deployed on ships scattered around the world, the U.S. would effectively have a protective shield against strategic missiles.

But there is the problem. By agreeing to abide by this

obsolete treaty, the U.S. is prevented from deploying an "upper tier" defense. At his recent summit with Boris Yeltsin, President Clinton reaffirmed his support for the ABM treaty signed with the Soviet Union, a country that no longer exists.

As questionable at the ABM treaty was during the Cold War, it is even more absurd in our current political and military environment. Former Reagan official Frank Gaffney points out that a Navy Aegis commander in the Sea of Japan would be in the absurd position of being able to shoot down a missile in North Korea heading for Tokyo, but would be prevented from shooting down a missile heading for San Francisco! Is it really in the interests of the U.S. to dumb down the "upper tier" system so that we can protect our allies abroad but not our own homeland?

The Heritage Foundation scientists believe an upgraded system could be deployed in three years at a cost of only $1 billion. This is a a plan we need to pursue. The United States is vulnerable to missile attack, and yet has the means to defend itself. In this dangerous post-Cold War world, we need to be able to defend ourselves from missile attack.

Is the threat that great? Well, consider the number of countries already in the nuclear club. They include the U.S., Great Britain, France, China, Russia, India, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan, and South Africa (South Africa is currently dismantling its nuclear program).

But that's not all. Most intelligence experts also put Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus in that list because they control some Soviet missiles. Finally, four other powers Iran, Iraq, Libya, and Syria are working furiously to develop and deploy nuclear missiles. Thus, all of these countries make up what could be called "the doomsday club." They all have the capacity or will soon have the capacity to bring about a nuclear Armageddon!

Intelligence experts estimate is that there are as many as 25 countries that have or will have the technical capability to develop a nuclear weapon, and approximately 26 countries have access to long-range missiles. In many ways, the post-Cold War world is more dangerous now that the Soviet Union has fallen and nuclear proliferation has accelerated.

Soviet scientists are willing to sell their services abroad. Boris Yeltsin seems unwilling or unable to stop the spread of nuclear technology. Likewise President Clinton has been unable to stop nuclear proliferation. If there was ever a time we needed an anti- ballistic missile system, it is now.

The “Crimson Tide” scenario is great movie drama, but it’s lousy foreign policy. A missile launched from Kiev or Baghdad or Pyongyang would devastate an American city, and the U.S. can do nothing to stop it. Although the movie does not mention it, the real reason this potential nightmare is so scary is because the U.S. has no defense against ballistic missile attack.

You must do two things. First, educate yourself and your friends about the danger. America is vulnerable to nuclear attack, and yet most Americans do not know this. Second, call for Congress to deploy an “upper tier” defense to the Aegis system. The cost would be less than one percent of the entire Defense Department budget. Building such a system would protect the United States from rogue leaders and military dictators who might someday decide to launch ballistic missiles on this country.

Corporate Welfare

Cutting a $200 billion deficit from a $1.6 trillion budget is not as difficult as the media might make it sound, especially when politicians target the easier cuts first. One of the most obvious cuts is so-called “corporate welfare.” Both liberals (like Secretary Robert Reich) and conservatives (like Speaker

Newt Gingrich) talk about cutting corporate welfare. When Congress reconvenes, politicians need to stop talking about cutting and begin cutting programs.

What should be placed on the cutting block? Here is a list of examples from the Cato Institute of corporate welfare that should be eliminated.

Department of Agriculture's Market Promotion Program puts $110 million a year into the advertising budgets of major U.S. corporations. In 1991, they spent $2.5 million promoting Dole pineapple products; $2.9 million selling Pillsbury muffins and pies; $10 million advertising Sunkist oranges; $465,000 boosting the sales of McDonald's Chicken McNuggets; and $1.2 million promoting American Legend mink coats.

Farm subsidies also should be cut. Consider the sugar price support program. A full 40 percent of its $1.4 billion in subsidies goes to the largest one percent of sugar producers. The 33 largest sugar cane plantations each receive more than $1 million in federal funds.

The Rural Electrification Administration and the federal Power Marketing Administrations are funneling $2 billion in annual subsidies to some of the wealthiest electric utility cooperatives in the country. One firm (ALLTEL) boasted of sales exceeding $2.3 billion.

Taxpayer-subsidized REA loans have helped big electric utilities serve ski resorts in Aspen, Colorado, and beach resorts like Hilton Head, South Carolina. They have also helped serve gambling resorts communities in Las Vegas, Nevada.

The U.S. Forest Service dished out $140 million for road building projects in national forests in 1994 to help harvest timber for firms like Georgia-Pacific and Weyerhauser. Last year the Clinton administration championed grants through the Advanced Technology Program. Some of the recipients last year

were companies like Caterpillar, Dupont, Xerox, General Electric, and United Airlines.

The administrations also pushed over $500 million through the Technology Reinvestment Project. Many of the recipients are some of the richest companies in America: Chrysler Corporation ($6 million), Texas Instruments ($13 million), Hewlett-Packard ($10 million), Boeing ($7 million), and Rockwell ($7 million).

Recently the Congress considered a bill that proposed $7.6 billion in cuts in corporate welfare. Here are a few highlights of that bill.

It would eliminate the Department of Commerce, beginning with the U.S. Travel and Tourism Administration and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. It would also eliminate federal support for expensive projects with dubious commercial potential, such as high speed rail and “smart” cars.

The bill would also discard needless bureaucracy through the elimination of the Department of Energy, the Interstate Commerce Commission, the Federal Maritime Commission, the Maritime Administration, and U.S. Parole Commission. It would eliminate state and local tree-planting programs run by the Small Business Administration. It would also stop funding “transition expenses” from the Postal Service’s reorganization that occurred 24 years ago.

There are more proposals, but you get the idea. There is a lot to cut. We can balance the federal budget, and a good place to start is with corporate welfare. We need to stop talking about it and do it.

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Evaluating Education Reform

Changes in Education

It’s the end of your child’s first semester of high school and you are expecting the usual report card. Instead, he brings home a portfolio of work which exemplifies his progress towards achieving a series of educational goals established by the district. What’s a parent to think?

Or perhaps you have just found out that your first grader will be attending a multi-aged classroom next year which utilizes a cooperative education format and a whole language, interdisciplinary curriculum. What should a parent do?

How about finding out that your fifth-grade daughter attends a school that endorses mastery learning, site-based management, and an effective schools administrative plan? Is it time to panic?

In such circumstances, what is the proper course of action? Should you pull your children out and home school them? Or, should you enroll them in a private school?

Educational reform, which seems to be never ending, often places Christians in a difficult position. Frequently it’s hard to know which reforms are hostile to Christian truth, which are merely poorly conceived ideas, and which are actually worthwhile changes in the way we educate children? Many Americans, Christian or otherwise, are becoming cynical regarding educational reform. Every new innovation promises to revolutionize the classroom, and yet things seem to get progressively worse. The last decade has brought more sweeping reform to our schools than ever before, yet few seem to be convinced that our elementary and secondary schools are performing as we would like them to.

In this essay we will evaluate the notion of educational reform in America's public schools. First, we will consider how one might evaluate reforms in general and then look at specific reforms that are currently being debated. These debates often center on five concerns, or what some call crises, in our schools. They are the crisis of authority, the crisis of content, the crisis of methodology, the crisis of values, and the crisis of funding. The term *crisis* is used here to connotate "a turning point" rather than "collapse or abandonment." Although your local school district may not be embroiled in all five of these concerns, each are widespread throughout the country.

Never have so many Americans been so unsure of their public schools, and many of these people are looking for answers, any answers that will solve the problems that they feel are destroying the effectiveness of education in America. This time of crisis coincides with a split in our society over some very basic notions of what America should be and on what intellectual and moral foundations its institutions should rest. This makes our response to these crises as Christians even more significant. It is also a time of opportunity to have considerable impact on the way our schools operate.

Although the terminology surrounding these crises can be esoteric, they are anything but ivory tower issues. Not only is a great deal of money involved, literally billions of tax dollars, but how our children or perhaps our neighbor's children will be educated will be determined by the resolution of these issues.

Each crisis also represents an opportunity for the Christian community to be salt and light. In order to act as a preservative we must be a discerning people. Too often the Christian community responds to societal change with anger or passivity, when neither are appropriate. Once we gain an understanding of what is happening to our schools we need to respond in a biblically informed manner that seeks the best

for both our children and those of our community.

How to Evaluate Reform

Your local school district has just announced that it is installing a new grade school curriculum based on the most recent innovations from brain research. The staff touts the program as widely implemented and research based. As a parent you have yet to take a position on the program, waiting until you have more information, but you feel at a loss as to what type of questions might be appropriate to ask in order to begin your evaluation.

The first step is to understand what is meant by a research-based innovation. For a school program to be truly research-based, an incredible amount of effort must be invested. Unfortunately, few educational reforms are based on such foundations. Two professors of education, Arthur Ellis and Jeffrey Fouts at Seattle Pacific University, have written a book titled *Research on Educational Innovations* that offers some realistic guidelines for evaluation. The first step in evaluating any reform is to realize that "Theories of human behavior have real, lasting consequences when we try them out on human beings." For that reason alone we should be careful when applying theory to our classrooms.

There are actually three levels of research that need to be finished before proponents of a theory can claim that their curriculum or innovation is truly "research-based." The first level is what might be called "pure research." This often consists of medical or psychological discoveries from clinical experimentation. This kind of research is most effective when specific in focus and highly controlled in methodology, but it might be also be the result of philosophical inquiry. The thinking and writing of Jean Piaget on the development of the intellect is an example of a theoretical source for educational reform that was derived from both observation and philosophical speculation. Unfortunately, this is where the

research support of many programs ends, but in order to be called research-based much more needs to be done.

The second level of research involves testing and measuring a theory's implications for actual learning. Here, the theory discovered in the laboratory or minds of philosophers must be implemented in a classroom setting. With the help of carefully controlled groups, researchers can determine whether or not the innovation actually aids in achieving stated educational goals— that kids really do learn more. A third level of research requires educators to discern if this innovation can be applied successfully school-wide and in diverse settings.

To complete research on an innovation at these three levels takes time, money, and tenacity, three things that are often found lacking in our schools. With the incredible political and social pressures to fix our system, educators often turn to programs that make dramatic promises yet lack the necessary testing and trial periods to substantiate the claims of their promoters.

For the Christian parent, establishing whether or not an educational reform is adequately researched is just the beginning of the evaluation process. Even if a program works in the sense that it achieves its stated goals, not all goals are equally desirable. Every reform must be weighed against biblical truth, because they often make assumptions about human nature, about morality, and the way we should answer some of the other big questions of life. Christian parents can never sit idly on the sidelines regarding their children's educational experiences, because education, in all its many facets, helps to shape our children's view of what is real and important in life.

Current Reforms

Outcome-based educational reform is causing some very heated debates throughout the country. At its core OBE is a fairly

simple framework around which a curriculum may be organized. It shifts schools away from the current focus on inputs to outcomes, from time units to measured abilities. It assumes all kids can learn, but not at the same speed. Instead of having all students take U.S. history for two semesters of sixteen weeks each, students would be given credit when they master a list of expected behavioral and cognitive outcomes. Not all students will complete the objectives at the same time. The focus is on the tasks to be accomplished, not the time it takes to accomplish them.

OBE would not qualify as a research-based innovation. It claims little or no research at the basic or primary level. At the classroom level, much of the associated research has been done on the concept of mastery learning. There has been considerable amount of work done on this teaching method, and many think that it is a good thing. Others, like Robert Slavin, argue that mastery learning produces short-term or limited results. This still leaves much of the OBE system without a research base. Level three research which seeks to determine if a reform innovation actually works at the district or school level is mostly anecdotal. Stories of how districts have been turned around by OBE are rarely published in journals for critical review.

This doesn’t mean that OBE is without merit; the point is, we really don’t know. What most people get upset about is how many in the educational bureaucracy have used OBE to establish a somewhat politically correct agenda as educational outcomes, often dealing more with feelings and attitudes than with knowledge and skills.

Another reform which creates conflict is the implementation of thinking skills programs. The idea is to formulate content neutral classroom exercises that will enhance thinking skills across the curriculum. This assumes that there are skills that can be isolated from content and be taught to students. Unfortunately, there isn’t an agreed upon list of skills that

should be included. Brain research, cognitive science, and information processing theories are possible sources for such a list, but according to Ellis and Fouts in their book *Research on Educational Innovations*, these have not been tied to basic research programs yet. Since there are ambiguities at the basic level, little level two research has been done to decide if learning can indeed be effected. One study done in 1985 (Norris) concluded that we don't know much about critical thinking and that what we do know suggests that it tends to be context sensitive which strongly argues against the entire notion of thinking skills courses.

School or district wide analysis of these programs tends to consist of "success stories" with little analysis. Again, at this point there is very little evidence that thinking skills can be taught independently of content.

Both outcome-based reform and higher reasoning skills programs are examples of ideas that have found great favor among educators, but little support among Christian parents. This often reflects the imposition of naturalistic or pantheistic assumptions via these reforms by some educators, rather than a critical evaluation of the reforms methods themselves. Unfortunately, some Christians have resorted to personal attacks on the reformers motives, rather than a careful study of the innovation or methodology itself.

Some school reforms are questionable from the beginning—comprehensive sex education being one that comes to mind. But others may contain helpful attributes and yet be poorly implemented or grow into a dogma that drives out other good or necessary parts of the curriculum. Cooperative education and whole language programs can often fit this description.

The two methodologies are different in that cooperative education has a well established research base supporting it, while whole language lacks much beyond the level one or basic research. Christians have generally been against both

concepts, but for different reasons. Let's first describe the innovations themselves.

Cooperative education grew out of Kurt Lewin's research in the 1930s on group dynamics and social interaction. One description, offered by an advocate states, "cooperative learning methods share the idea that students work together to learn and are responsible for one another's learning as well as their own." The idea is to use group motivation to get individuals to excel and grow. Most models of cooperative learning programs stress:

- *interdependence of learners*
- *student interaction and communication*
- *individual accountability*
- *instruction on social skills*
- *group processing of goal achievement.*

Advocates of cooperative learning have been charged by some Christians with wanting to do away with personal excellence and using group pressure to get children to conform to secular moral norms. I am sure that both of these complaints have justification, but this doesn't have to be the case. In fact, many advocates of cooperative learning don't want to do away with the competitive aspect of schooling, they just want to moderate it and to help students to develop the skill of working in groups. Working in groups does not conflict with Christian thinking. In fact, Christian schools and seminaries make use of similar techniques all the time.

A problem occurs when over-zealous promoters of cooperative learning declare all competitive learning to be dangerous, or offer cooperative learning as a schooling panacea equivalent to a cure for cancer. Some teachers fail to hold students accountable for their work which can lead to unequal effort and unjust rewards for individuals. This lesson damages student motivation and the integrity of the teacher.

Whole language has much less research to support its claims, most of which is at the theoretical or basic level. Whole language theorists argue that language is acquired by actually using it rather than by learning its parts. It rejects a technical approach to language which encouraged learning phonics and grammar rules rather than the simple joy of reading and writing. Unfortunately, there is little evidence that this approach teaches students to read and write well. A large study done in 1989 by Stahl and Miller concluded (1) that there is no evidence whole language instruction produces positive effects, and (2) that it may well produce negative ones.

This is not to say that some whole language ideas might not be implemented beneficially with the more traditional phonics, spelling, and grammar instruction. Its emphasis on reading actual literature, not basal readers, is a positive step, as is encouraging students to write often on diverse topics.

There are a number of problems from a theoretical viewpoint that I have with what is promoted as whole language theory, but my response as a Christian should be to work with the teacher and school my child attends, or to find a setting that teaches in a manner that satisfies my expectations. In any case, a Christlike humility should pervade my contact with the teacher and school.

Educators vs. The Public

In spite of the fact that most Americans see the need for improving our public schools, there has been tremendous resistance to reform, both from parents and many teachers. Information found in a recent study titled *First Things First: What Americans Expect From the Public Schools*, published by the Public Agenda Foundation might give us some reasons why.

Focusing on parents of public school children, and particularly on Christian and African-American families, the

report found that these groups support most of the same solutions to our school's problems. Both groups want higher educational standards and clear guidelines for what students should know and what teachers should teach. They reject social promotions and overwhelmingly feel that high school students should not graduate without writing and speaking English well. African-American parents were even more dissatisfied with their schools than others, and more concerned with low expectations on the part of educators.

A second finding was that school reform was viewed in fundamentally different ways by educators and the public. Most educators believe that schools are doing relatively well while the public feels that much improvement is needed. In Connecticut, 68% of educators felt the schools are better now than when they were in school. Only 16% of the public agreed. Educators and parents differ radically in their explanations for our school's problems. Educators blame public complacency, taxpayer selfishness and racism. Although the public supports integration and equal opportunity, it rejects the notion that more money will automatically fix our schools.

Parents' chief concerns are safe, orderly, and focused schools. Nine of ten Americans believe that dependability and discipline will help our students learn better than reforms in test taking or assessments in general. Three out of four parents support permanently removing students caught with guns or drugs from our schools and temporarily removing those who misbehave. Unfortunately, educators rarely make these issues the center of reform proposals. Other findings include the belief that stable families are a more decisive factor for determining student success than a particular school setting is and a perception that educators are often pushing untested experimental methods at the expense of the basics.

Educators and parents were far apart on a number of classroom methods as well. Parents find nothing wrong with having kids memorize the 50 state capitals and where they are located, or

to learn to perform math functions without the aid of a calculator. Educators are much more likely to stress higher-order reasoning skills and early use of calculators. Parents in general are less preoccupied with the need for sex ed, AIDS education, multicultural experiences, and even school prayer. They tend to want schools to be safe, orderly, and academically sound.

There seems to be much common ground that the vast majority of parents, and other taxpayers, agree on. As Christians, we probably would be much happier with our schools if they were safe, orderly, and academically sound. Most Christian parents understand and accept the fact that their public schools will not be overtly Christian. On the other hand, they feel that the Christian faith and its presuppositions should receive fair treatment when reforms are instituted. In recent years many Christian parents have seen their schools initiate programs that both challenge and ridicule their beliefs. This isn't necessary, and it has alienated the very people who must fund and support the schools if they are to be successful.

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Education and New Age Humanism

The Humanistic Charade

Most religions consist of a unified system of beliefs that deals with basic views on such things as God and human ethics.

The two basic elements in all religions are: (1) a view of God or some ultimate reality, and (2) a view of ethics, derived from ultimate reality. Most often these are expressed in some kind of holy book. Each major religion has a holy book or books. Christianity is no exception. Humanism, as well, has its holy books: *The Humanist Manifestos I and II.*

The manifesto itself regards humanism as a religion. The very first sentence reads: "Humanism is a philosophical, religious and moral point of view as old as human civilization itself."(1) So, humanism not only has its "holy books," but has a view of God as well: It says there is no God.

The second *Humanist Manifesto*, published in 1973 states; "As in 1933, humanists still believe that traditional theism, especially faith in the prayer-hearing God, assumed to love and care for persons, to hear and understand their prayers, and to be able to do something about them, is an unproved and outmoded faith.

"Salvationism, based on mere affirmation, still appears as harmful, diverting people with false hopes of heaven hereafter. Reasonable minds look to other means for survival."(2)

The manifesto goes on to say, "We find insufficient evidence for belief in the existence of a supernatural; it is either meaningless or irrelevant to the question of the survival and fulfillment of the human race. As nontheists, we begin with humans not God, nature not deity."(3)

The *Humanist Manifesto* goes on to state, "we can discover no divine purpose or providence for the human species. While there is much that we do not know, humans are responsible for what we are or will become. No deity will save us; we must save ourselves."(4)

Regarding the individual, the *Manifesto* says that "in the area of sexuality, we believe that intolerant attitudes, often

cultivated by orthodox religions and puritanical cultures, unduly repress sexual conduct. The right to birth control, abortion, and divorce should be recognized. While we do not approve of exploitive, denigrating forms of sexual expression, neither do we wish to prohibit, by law or social sanction, sexual behavior between consenting adults."(5)

And humanism has a firm position on ethics. Their "bible" says, "Moral values derive their source from human experience. Ethics is autonomous and situational."(6)

In other words, morals are not derived from absolutes given by God, but are determined by the individual from situation to situation. By and large, the humanists deplore any reference to them as being "religious." However, the Supreme Court identified secular humanism as a religion on at least two occasions: *Abington v. Schempp* and *Torcaso v. Watkins*.

In Torcaso the court spelled out that "religion" in the constitutional sense includes non-theistic, as well as theistic religion and the state is therefore forbidden to prohibit or promote either form of religion.(7)

The concern I have is not whether "humanism" is recognized as a religion by the humanists themselves or not. It is that those who shape the young minds of America are humanists and in most cases they are not willing to be honest about it.

The Great Brain Robbery

Humanism is the dominant view among leading educators in the U.S. They set the trends of modern education, develop the curriculum, dispense federal monies, and advise government officials on educational needs. In short, they hold the future in their hands. As Christian taxpayers we are paying for the overthrow of our own position.

Charles Francis Potter, an original signer of the first Humanist Manifesto and honorary president of the National

Education Association, has this to say about public school education:

> *Education is thus a most powerful ally of Humanism, and every American public school is a school of Humanism.(8)*

Not only are the leading educators of America promoting humanism, but so are those who write the textbooks children use in the classroom.

A sociology textbook dealing with ethics states: “There are exceptions to almost all moral laws, depending on the situation. What is wrong in one instance may be right in another. Most children learn that it is wrong to lie. But later they may learn that it is tactless, if not actually wrong, not to lie under certain circumstances.”(9)

To show how this is coming about, we will go first to the basic issue the change in the philosophy of education. We will then examine some of the fruit the specific programs carrying the humanist message into the classrooms. Finally, we will examine the attitude of those in educational leadership who are trying to promote humanism in the schools, whether it be secular or cosmic in nature.

Educational Philosophy

Most of us have thought that the schools’ basic responsibility is to teach what is known as the three “R’s”: reading, writing and arithmetic. But the fact that many students today cannot pass basic aptitude tests indicate the failure of the public schools in teaching the three “R’s.”

A recent *Time* magazine essay stated that “a standardized math test was given to 13-year-olds in six countries last year,” and that the “Koreans did the best. Americans did the worst.” Besides being shown triangles and equations, the kids were shown the statement “I am good at mathematics.” Koreans were

least likely to agree with this statement, while Americans were most likely to agree, with 68 percent in agreement.(10)

The conclusion one might make regarding these informative results is that American school children are not very good at math, but they feel good about it.

Today leading educators no longer see their job primarily to be the teaching of these necessary skills. The philosophy of education has undergone a fundamental change. Educators now perceive their jobs to be the complete "resocialization" of the child—the complete reshaping of his values, beliefs and morals.

Teaching is now being viewed as a form of therapy, the classroom as a clinic, and the teacher as a therapist whose job it is to apply psychological techniques in the shaping of the child's personality and values.

Teacher as Therapist

S. I. Hayakawa, U. S. Senator from California, was an educator for most of his life. On the floor of the U. S. Senate, he stated:

> *In recent years in colleges of education and schools of sociology and psychology, an educational heresy has flourished . . . The heresy of which I speak regards the fundamental task of education as therapy.(11)*

The National Education Association report, "Education for the 70's," states clearly that "schools will become clinics whose purpose is to provide individualized psycho-social treatment for the student, and teachers must become psycho-social therapists."(12)

The February 1968 issue of the National Education Journal states:

> *The most controversial issue of the 21st Century will pertain to the ends and means of human behavior and who will determine them. The first education question will not be `What knowledge is of the most worth?' but `What kind of human behavior do we wish to produce?'(13)*

Who will determine human behavior, and what kind of behavior do we want? Who will engineer society, and what kind of society shall we design? These are the tasks the educational leaders have set for themselves. They are not thinking small.

Catherine Barrett, a former president of the NEA, said:

> *We will need to recognize that the so-called basic skills, which represent nearly the total effort in elementary schools, will be taught in 1/4 of the present school day. The remaining time will be devoted to what is truly fundamental and basic.(14)*

Barrett wishes to press on to bigger and more significant things, such as redesigning society by reshaping our children's values. Educational leaders are saying the big question in education is: What human behavior do we want, and who will produce it?

The question we need to ask is: By what pattern do these educators propose to reconstruct society, and whose values will be taught? You can believe that it will not be the Judeo-Christian value system.

What are the basic programs carrying the humanist message into the classroom? Senator Hayakawa mentions psychodrama, role playing, touch therapy and encounter groups. Others are: values clarification, situation ethics, sensitivity training, survival training and other behavior-oriented programs. Meditation, visualization, guided imagery, along with self-esteem teaching, represent intuitive learning that has become

known as “affective education.”

Dr. William Coulson of the Western Sciences Institute indicated that affective learning, self-actualization, is at the root of our nation’s illiteracy.(15)

These programs are designed to modify children’s attitudes, values and beliefs. The primary problem is not the teaching of values, but the fact that these new programs are designed to “free” the children from the Judeo-Christian value system taught by parents and church.

These programs cover such topics as sex education, death ed, drug and alcohol education, family life, human development and personality adjustment. The teaching today by humanists is void of absolutes; there is not a basis of discerning right and wrong. The only wrong is having or holding an absolute.

Relativism is the Key

The only basis for developing morals is what the child himself wants or thinks, and /or what the peer group decides is right. Strong convictions of right and wrong are looked upon as evidence of poor social adjustment and of need for the teachers’ therapy. The bottom line is this the major consensus determines what is right or wrong at any point in our culture, there are no absolutes.

Sheila Schwartz is a member of the American Humanist Association, and her article “Adolescent Literature: Humanism Is Alive and Thriving in the Secondary School” appeared in the January/February 1976 edition of The Humanist. In regard to the impact of secular humanist thought in education, she makes the following statements:

> *Something wonderful, free, unheralded, and of significance to all humanists is happening in the secondary schools. It is the adolescent-literature movement. They may burn Slaughterhouse Five in North Dakota and ban a number of*

> *innocuous books in Kanawha County, but thank God [sic] the crazies don't do all that much reading. If they did they'd find that they have already been defeated. . . Nothing that is part of contemporary life is taboo in this genre and any valid piece of writing that helps make the world more knowable to young people serves an important humanistic function.(16)*

Lastly, what are the basic attitudes of the educational leadership in America?

Sidney Simon is one of the educational elite in the U.S. He is a humanist, teaches at the Center for Humanistic Education in Amherst, Massachusetts, and is one of the main architects of values clarification theory, which is widely used in public schools. Mr. Simon is a professor. He teaches those who will later teach your children and mine in the public school. While Mr. Simon was teaching at Temple University in Philadelphia, he commented on his experience teaching high school students:

> *I always bootlegged the values stuff. I was assigned to teach social studies in elementary school and I taught values clarification. I was assigned current trends in American education and I taught my trend.(17)*

Simon goes on to say, "Keep it subtle, keep it quiet, or the parents will really get upset."(18)

Rhoda Lorand, a member of the American Board of Professional Psychology, made some observations about the attitudes of educators before the U.S. House Sub-Committee on Education. Her testimony related to House Resolution 5163 having to do with education. Her words are as follows:

> *The contempt for parents is so shockingly apparent in many of the courses funded under Title III, in which the teacher is required to become an instant psychiatrist who probes the*

> *psyche of her pupils, while encouraging them to criticize their parents' beliefs, values and teachings. This process continues from kindergarten through the twelfth grade.(19)*

As parents, we are expected to fund the very teaching methodology that is designed to destroy our influence upon our children.

The New Age Seduction

However, the humanist perspective on education is not the only threat we face today. The humanists became entrenched in the late 1960s and during the 1970s.

During the decade of the eighties and now in the nineties we have a new threat. Those who have bought into the New Age movement have a goal to influence the young as well. The January/February 1983 issue of The Humanist carried this article titled "A Religion for a New Age." The author stated:

> *I am convinced that the battle for humankind's future must be waged and won in the public school classroom by teachers who correctly perceive their role as the proselytizers of a new faith: a religion of humanity that recognizes and respects the spark of what theologians call divinity in every human being. These teachers must embody the same selfless dedication as the most rabid fundamentalist preachers, for they will be ministers of another sort, utilizing a classroom instead of a pulpit to convey humanist values in whatever subject they teach, regardless of the educational level preschool day care or large state university.(20)*

The main thrust of this new threat is eastern in philosophy and origin. Humanism as a religion represents a real threat to our Christian heritage, but eastern philosophical ideas by comparison are deadly to our way of life.

Instructor magazine, a publication for teachers, carried an article entitled "Your Kids are Psychic! But they may never know it without your help." The article says that "teachers in particular are in a position to play an exciting role in the psychic development of children."(21) The article goes on to identify psychic ability as the practice of telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition and retrocognition.

As teachers continue their path toward enlightenment of their students, they may step into the world of "confluent education." Dr. Beverly Galyean describes confluent education as a "wholistic" approach to learning. The basic premises of "confluent education" should cause great concern within the Christian community.

Among Dr. Galyean's premises are:

> *In essence we are not individuals but part of the universal consciousness [which is God]. Realizing this essential unity, and experiencing oneself as part of it, is a major goal for a child's education.*
>
> *Because each person is part of the universal consciousness which is love, each contains all the wisdom and love of the universe. This wisdom and love is the `higher self.' The child can tap into this universal mind and receive advice, information and help from it. This is usually done through meditation and contact with spirit guides.*
>
> *Each person creates his or her own reality by choosing what to perceive and how to perceive it. As we teach children to focus on positive thoughts and feelings of love, their reality will become that.(22)*

Dr. Galyean sums up her beliefs by saying that

> *Once we begin to see that we are all God . . . the whole*

> *purpose of life is to reown the Godlikeness within us; the perfect love, the perfect wisdom, the perfect understanding, the perfect intelligence, and when we do that we create back to that old, that essential oneness which is consciousness. So my whole view is very much based on that idea.(23)*

As Christians our response to New Age influences in public school education can be carried out in several ways.

First, we must develop a relationship with the school. One possibility might be through actively working as a volunteer on campus in some capacity. Another is getting to know your child's teacher and his or her worldview.

Second, we must discern he particular bias of the textbooks used in the classroom. Whether they are humanistic in their approach or eastern and whether they properly treat the Judeo-Christian world view.

Third, if we discover that our Judeo-Christian perspectives are being sacrificed for the inclusion of alternative views, then we must become politically involved and seek the election of individuals to the school board and other effective positions who reflect a more traditional stance.

Fourth, we must continue to be actively involved in our children's lives. Furthermore, we must teach our children to become discriminators. We cannot ever accept the idea that our child's education is someone else's responsibility.

It is imperative that we educate others as to the problems within the system and then take appropriate action.

As Christians, our response to New Age influences in public school education can be carried out by developing a relationship with the school and getting to know our children's teacher and his or her particular worldview.

We must also be aware of the bias represented in our

children’s textbooks. However, more importantly, we must develop a deeper relationship with our children, thereby becoming the greatest of all the various influences in their young lives. Unless we achieve this goal, we will have emotionally and spiritually lost the battle for our children’s future.

Notes

1. Paul Kurtz, *Humanist Manifesto I* (Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1979), 9.

2. Paul Kurtz, Edwin H. Wilson, *Humanist Manifesto II* (Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1979), 13.

3. Kurtz, *Humanist Manifesto II*, 16.

4. Kurtz, *Humanist Manifesto II*, 17.

5. *Torcaso v. Watkins*, 367 US 488, 1961, 495n.

6. Virginia Armstrong, *Humanism in American Education I*, (Blackstone Institute of Public Law and Policy).

7. Helen M. Hughes, *Inquiries in Sociology* (Newton, Mass.: Allyn and Bacon, 1972), 37.

8. Charles Krauthammer, “Education: Doing Bad and Feeling Good,” *Time*, 5 February 1990, 78.

9. Address to the U.S. Senate, U.S. Department of Education Hearing, March 1984.

10. “Education for the 70’s,” National Education Report.

11. National Education Journal, (Feb. 1968).

12. Timothy D. Crater, “The Unproclaimed Priests of Public

Education," *Christianity Today*, 10 April 1981, 45.

13. William R. Coulson, "Memorandum to Federal Drug Education Panel," 23 April 1988, Program Newsletter (La Jolla, Calif.: May 1988).

14. Sheila Schwartz, "Adolescent Literature: Humanism is Alive and Thriving in the Secondary School," The Humanist, Jan. Feb. 1976.

15. Crater, "Unproclaimed Priests," 46.

16. Ibid., 47.

17. Ibid.

18. John Dunphy, "A Religion for a New Age," *The Humanist*, Jan. Feb. 1983, 26.

19. Alex Tanous and Katherine Fair Donnelly, "Your Kids Are Psychic!," *Instructor Magazine*, April 1980, 65.

20. Frances Adeney, "Some Schools Are Looking East for Answers," *Moody Monthly*, May 1982, 19.

21. Ibid.

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Welfare Reform

Many members of Congress have been pushing to reform the welfare system and break the cycles of illegitimacy and dependency. But changing the existing welfare system will not be easy. In its more than 50 years of existence, the system

has indeed developed into a mass of bureaucratic idiosyncracies, and these experts say the numerous institutionalized workers are likely to resist attempts to reform them or their routines.

Most taxpayers are skeptical that real change will take place, and they have every right to be skeptical. Since 1960, Congress has passed at least six major welfare revisions so welfare recipients can find work. But the rolls increased by 460% in the same period. Nevertheless, welfare must be reformed. Since 1965, American taxpayers have been forced to pay $5 trillion into a welfare system created to end poverty. The result? No measurable reduction in poverty. After three decades of Great Society programs to fight the war on poverty, poverty and families are doing worse.

The most visible and most cost-inefficient segment of the U.S. welfare system today is Aid for Dependent Children or AFDC. AFDC began in 1935 as a little-noticed part of the Social Security Act. Its principal purpose was to aid widows and their children until the Social Security survivors' fund could pay out claims. Currently there are more than 14 million individuals on AFDC, and 1 in 7 children is on welfare.

AFDC is not the only program of concern. In the early 1960s, the Kennedy administration proposed several other welfare programs. Their stated purposes were the admirable goals of eliminating dependency, delinquency, illegitimacy, and disability. And the modern welfare state was born during the flood of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society programs aimed at the war on poverty.

But the road to utopia ran into some devastating chuckholes. Most social statistics indicate that the war on poverty had many casualties. The unintended consequences of these welfare programs was a system which breaks down families, traps the poor in idle frustration, and perpetuates a cycle of government dependency. One aspect of this dependency is family

breakdown. Approximately half of today's AFDC recipients are mothers who have never been married to the father or fathers of their children. Another 40 percent are mothers whose husbands have left home.

Another aspect of this dependency is poverty. Half of the poor live in female-headed households. And welfare has not improved their lot. The poverty level has remained relatively unchanged since that time, while illegitimate births have increased more than 400 percent. In the 1960s we declared war on poverty, and poverty won.

Obviously, reform must take place. In fiscal year 1992, the U.S. spent $305 billion for AFDC. This is more than the current defense budget.

Good Intentions Gone Awry

The dramatic increases in the number of welfare recipients and the length of their dependency on welfare have alarmed both liberals and conservatives. But liberals and conservatives differ in their prescriptions. Liberals argue for more effective programs and for additional job training. Conservatives, on the other hand, argue that the intractable pathologies of the welfare system (the destruction of the family unit and the fostering of dependency) are due to large-scale governmental intervention. Their argument has been strengthened by the earlier research of Charles Murray in his book *Losing Ground*.

His thesis is that our government not only failed to win its war on poverty, but ended up taking more captives. Under the guise of making life better, it ended up making life worse for the poor. Murray said, "We tried to provide more for the poor and produced more poor instead. We tried to remove the barriers to escape from poverty and inadvertently built a trap." Murray proposes radical changes in the current welfare system, and a number of conservative proposals before Congress

include various aspects of Murray's proposals.

But long before Murray's book provided a thorough statistical evaluation, social theorists and even casual observers could see that our current welfare system promotes dependency and destroys the family unit.

Welfare payments provide economic incentives for the creation of single-parent families since they provide a continuous source of income to young mothers. The welfare system was designed to assist when there was no father. But the system effectively eliminated the father entirely by tying payments to his absence.

An irresponsible man can father a child without worrying about how to provide for the child. And a dedicated father with a low-paying job may feel forced to leave home so his children can qualify for more benefits. Eventually the welfare system eliminated the need for families to take any economic initiative by rewarding single parents and penalizing married couples. The result has been an illegitimate birth rate for black women of 88 percent.

A second reason for the breakdown of the family is the "adultification" of children. Various judicial rulings have undercut the role parents can have in helping their children with difficult decisions. Courts have ruled that parental notification for dispensing birth control drugs and devices violates the minors' rights. Courts have ruled that children need not obtain their parents' permission before they obtain an abortion. The natural progression of this continued trend toward children's rights is the breakdown of the family.

The most rapid rise in poverty rates have been among the children the system was designed to help. This astonishing increase of illegitimate births by over 400 percent is a principal reason for poverty and the perpetuation of a poverty cycle of "children raising children."

Third, the current welfare system rewards dependency and punishes initiative. Welfare does not require recipients to do anything in exchange for their benefits. Many rules actually discourage work, and provide benefits that reduce the incentive to find work. In Maryland, for example, a single parent with two children would need to earn a minimum of $7.50 an hour to earn the same amount as provided by welfare grants and benefits. Is it any wonder that so many welfare mothers therefore conclude that staying on welfare is better than getting off.

Can Welfare Be Changed?

Now I would like to focus on the various congressional proposals that seek to end welfare at we know it. Although there has been much talk of welfare reform, there have been very few substantive changes in the welfare system in the last three decades. Since 1960, Congress has passed at least six major welfare revisions so welfare recipients can find work. But the rolls increased by 460 percent in the same period.

A report issued by the Department of Health and Human Services revealed the cost of administering welfare programs grows twice as fast as the number of recipients. According to the Congressional Budget Office, welfare as a percent of the Gross Domestic Product has increased by 230 percent, and its cost will exceed $500 billion by the end of this decade.

Various congressional proposals attempt to either substantially modify or else eliminate the current system. First let’s focus on those proposals that want to modify welfare in the following five areas.

The first change would be in child support. Fathers are not providing child support, and these bills would tighten the loopholes and make these dads pay up. Currently unwed fathers are not named on birth certificates. The omission frequently foils attempts to collect child support. But if dad pays, then

mom’s welfare check does not have to be so large. The proposed bills would require the mother to identify the father in order to receive a welfare check. States can threaten deadbeat dads with garnishing wages and suspending professional and driver’s licenses.

The second change is in the so-called marriage penalty. If a pregnant teen get married or lives with the father of her child, she is frequently ineligible for welfare. Congressional proposals would encourage states to abolish the “marriage penalty” and make it easier to married couples to get welfare.

Creating a family cap is another significant change. Welfare mothers can increase the size of their welfare check by having more children. Congressional bills being considered would allow states to cap payments. If a welfare mother has another child, her check remains the same.

Already in New Jersey, Arkansas, and Georgia, families receive no increase for children born while on the dole. Congressional proposals would extend and encourage this opportunity to other states. The evidence so far is that this family cap may have some deterrence.

Another change is to emphasize work. Often if a welfare mother gets a job, her check is reduced, and she is likely to lose such benefits like Medicare and free child care. The new proposals before Congress would drop benefits after two years. If an able- bodied welfare recipient does not find a private-sector job then she would be assigned a minimum-wage government job.

A final change would be to keep teenage mothers in school. In the current system a teenager can receive a welfare check, get her own apartment, and drop out of school. Congressional proposals would require a teen mother to live at home until age 18. She has to stay in school or she will lose her benefits. If the family’s income is high enough, she does not

receive any check at all.

These then are a few of the elements of the congressional proposals to end welfare as we know it. They take some solid steps toward ending illegitimacy and dependency. But there are even more radical proposals, and we will consider them next.

Congressional Proposals

Now we will turn our focus to some of the bills that attempt to do more than just modify the system and actually propose elimination of certain aspects of welfare.

One bill by Congressman James Talent would no longer provide welfare checks, food stamps, and public housing to women under 21 with children born out of wedlock. The justification for such actions stems from the original work by Charles Murray who believes that only this radical solution will cause teenage mothers to change their behavior.

Illegitimacy is the underlying cause of poverty, crime, and social meltdown in the inner cities. Proponents of these more radical proposals believe it is better to stem the tide of illegitimacy than trying to build a dam of social programs to try to contain the flood of problems later on.

Illegitimacy leads to poverty and to crime. Nearly a third of American children are born out of wedlock, and those children are four times more likely to be poor. And the connection between illegitimacy and crime is also disturbing. More than half the juvenile offenders serving prison time were raised by only one parent. If birth rates continue, the number of young people trapped in poverty and tempted by the values of the street will increase. Illegitimacy is essentially a ticking crime bomb.

Welfare is supposed to be a second chance, not a way of life, but tell that to some children who represent the fourth generation on welfare. Proponents of these radical reforms

believe we must scrap the current system.

Another concern is the entangled bureaucracy of welfare. Currently governors have to ask the Federal government if they can revamp their state welfare system. And the federal bureaucracy costs money. If you took the money spent for welfare and gave it to poor families it would amount to $25,000 a year for every family of four.

These bills would also freeze or change welfare payments. They would replace Food Stamps and AFDC with block grants to the states. Each state would then be free to design its own system.

These proposals also emphasize work by providing a transition for able-bodied welfare recipients into the workplace. The federal government would double welfare payments during the transition period, but would send the check to the employer rather than directly to the welfare recipient. This would no doubt provide greater incentive to work hard and stay on the job.

Many in Congress are skeptical of proposals to provide jobs through job training programs. In the past job training has been relatively ineffective. One 1990 study of New York welfare recipients found that 63 percent of black recipients and 54 percent of whites have received training while on welfare, but few left the rolls for employment. Even with the training, less than 8 percent of blacks and 5 percent of white recipients were working.

Finally, these proposals would also encourage marriage. Currently the welfare system encourages fathers to leave. These proposals would not only provide social incentives but economic incentives by providing two-parent families with a $1000 tax credit.

These then are a few of the elements of the congressional proposals to end welfare as we know it. They do take some

solid steps toward ending illegitimacy and dependency.

Biblical Principles

I want to conclude this discussion of welfare and welfare reform with some biblical principles that we should use to understand and act on this vital social issue.

The Bible clearly states that we are to help those in need. Christians may disagree about how much is necessary and who should receive help, but there should be no disagreement among Christians about our duty to help the poor since we are directly commanded to do so. Let’s then, look at two important questions.

First, who should help the poor? The Bible clearly states that the primary agent of compassionate distribution of food and resources should be the church. Unfortunately, the majority of poverty programs in existence today are government programs or governmentally sponsored programs. While we can applaud the excellent programs established by various churches and Christian organizations, we must lament that most poverty programs are instituted by the state.

Poverty is much more than an economic problem. It results from psychological, social, and spiritual problems. Government agencies, by their very nature, cannot meet these needs. The church must take a much greater role in helping the poor and not be content to allow the government to be the primary agency for welfare.

A second important question is who should we help? Government programs help nearly everyone who falls below the poverty line, but the Bible establishes more specific qualifications. A biblical system of welfare must apply some sort of means test to those who are potential recipients of welfare. Here are three biblical qualifications for those who should receive welfare.

First, they must be poor. They should not be able to meet basic human needs. We should help those who have suffered misfortune or persecution, but the Bible does not instruct us to give to just anyone who asks for help or to those who are merely trying to improve their comfort or lifestyle.

Second, they must be diligent. Some people are poor because of laziness, neglect, or gluttony. Christians are instructed to admonish laziness and poor habits like drinking, drugs, or even laziness that lead to poverty. Proverbs says, “Go to the ant, you sluggard, and observe her ways and be wise.” The Apostle Paul more pointedly says, “If a man will not work, neither let him eat.” Lazy people should not be rewarded by welfare, but rather encouraged to change their ways. Third, the church must provide for those thrown into poverty because of the death of the family provider. The Bible commands us to provide for widows and orphans who are in need. Paul wrote to Timothy that a widow who was 60 years or older whose only husband has died was qualified to be supported by the church.

I believe the needs of the poor can and should be met by the church. Churches and individual Christians need to do their part in fighting poverty in their area. Homemakers can provide meals. Educators can provide tutoring and counseling. Businessmen can provide employment training. The church as a whole can provide everything from a full-time ministry to the poor to an occasional collection for the benevolence fund to be distributed to those facing temporary needs brought about by illness or unemployment. The key is for the church to obey God’s command to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. Helping the poor is not an option. We have a biblical responsibility which we cannot simply pass off to the government.

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