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Education and Treason

by Ian Hodge, Ph.D.

Introduction

It has been recognised that many areas of life, law, economics, politics, money and finance are in an era of change. It requires no genius to recognize that education, not only in Australia but the whole of the western world in particular, is in a major dilemma. Students, in the words of educator Samuel Blumenfeld, "read poorly, write miserably, have stunted vocabularies, cannot do arithmetic well, know little geography and less history, and know virtually nothing about the economic system in which they live."¹

If we add in other areas of concern, such as values clarification teaching as presently offered in the public schools, the list of problems with education grows to horrendous lengths. Children are encouraged to be morally autonomous they are taught that traditional Christian values of the family and the sanctity of marriage are old fashioned, outdated, and no longer relevant.² The individual is encouraged to give way to the group in a new socialist order. The unique individual, with his God-given gifts and abilities, is prevented from developing his abilities in order that no one may appear better than anyone else.

And we wonder why we have social problems. The individual, with his character and personality repressed in an oppressive educational system, revolts in fits of frustration and anger. The result is an increase

in petty crime and a major increase in physical and verbal abuse of other people, directly attributable, I believe, to the failure of our public education system in particular, and our general education philosophy in general.

Education has lost its emphasis on teaching which has been replaced with the purpose of moulding the student to fit a preordained social pattern. In the New Age of the 20th century man's aspirations, like of old, are to build a tower unto heaven, made of his own hands. This new humanity needs no Saviour, since it is apparently capable of saving itself. This it will do through education, and the all-embracing control of the people by those elected over them. But even that does not satisfy those bent on remoulding society. This New Age requires a New Man, a global man, with a global government, centrally controlled and administered. This New World and its New Order, the remaking of man in his own image, are *The Vision of the Anointed*, to borrow a phrase from Thomas Sowell.³

This is the new hope of the future. Once it was believed that God predestined all things which came to pass. Now it is insisted that those in authority will decree whatsoever shall come to pass. And they will not tolerate any deviance from their insatiable aspirations. In this new world, being politically correct is more important than being factually correct; government social welfare is

better than private charity; and government controlled-education is the tool to create the new man and the new order.

On top of all this, there has become a "new" crime labelled "child abuse," often levelled at parents who attempt to rescue their offspring from a system. When parents can be charged with child abuse merely because they wish to protect the best interest of their children's moral development, we can determine just how far we have gone down the track of educational decline.

Yet these are symptoms. If we mistake symptoms for causes, however, we can end up treating the symptom instead of that which is really the cause of the symptoms. Our analysis here is intended to show that education in its current form is treasonous. While it is generally understood that treason is concerned with betrayal to the political state, in this essay we are interested in showing that modern education is treasonous first, to the child, second to the family, and thirdly to God.

Definitions

Treason, according to the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* is "the action of betraying; betrayal of the trust undertaken by or reposed in any one; breach of faith."

Education, according to the same dictionary, is "the systematic instruction, schooling or training given

1. Samuel L. Blumenfeld, *Is Public Education Necessary?* (Old Greenwich, CT: Devin-Adair, 1981), pp. 6-7.

2. At one time it was thought AIDS was about to give the educators another lesson on this score, but AIDS has fizzled as a major threat to humanity.

3. Thomas Sowell, *The Vision of the Anointed: Self-Congratulation as a Basis for Social Policy* (New York: Basic Books, 1995).

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to the young (and, by extension, to adults) in preparation for the work of life. Also, the whole course of scholastic instruction which a person has received. . . . Often qualified, as intellectual, moral, etc."

An earlier definition of education, however, is enlightening. According to the original *Webster* dictionary, education is "the bringing up as of a child, instruction; formation of manners. Education comprehends all that series of instruction and discipline which is intended to enlighten the understanding, correct the temper, and form the manners and habits of youth, and fit them for usefulness in their future stations. To give children a good *education* in manners, arts and science is important; to give them a religious *education* is indispensable; and an immense responsibility rests on parents and guardians who neglect those duties."

Note major differences between these definitions. When Noah Webster, a Christian who believed that a dictionary of the English language would help spread the gospel, published his dictionary in 1828, education was thought of *first*, in terms of moral education, and *second*, as training for one's vocation. Hence the thoughts of one preacher at that time, Dr. Heman Humphrey, in an address given in 1823:

What would a finely cultivated mind, united to the best physical constitution, be without moral principle? What but mere brute force, impelled by the combined and terrible energies of a perverted understanding and a depraved heart? How much worse than physical imbecility is strength employed in doing evil? How much more to be dreaded than the most profound ignorance, is a high state of mental cultivation, when once men have broken away from the control of conscience and the Bible?

Without fear of God nothing can be secure for one moment. Without the control of moral and religious principle, education is a drawn and polished sword, in the hands of a gigantic maniac. In his madness, he may fall upon it, or bathe it in the blood of the innocent. Great and highly cultivated talents, allied to skepticism, or infidelity, are the right arm that "scatters firebrands arrows and death." After all the dreams of human perfectibility, and all the hosannas which have been profanely lavished upon reason, philosophy and literature, who, but for the guardianship of religion, could protect his beloved daughters, or be safe in his own house for one night? What would civil government be in the profound sleep of conscience, and in the absence of right moral habits and feelings — what, but an iron despotism on the one hand, or intoxicated anarchy on the other?⁴

Treason

Thus we may conclude that modern education is treasonous in several respects.

- 1) It is treasonous against the best interests of the child
- 2) Since modern education is statist controlled, it is also treasonous against parents and the family as God created it.
- 3) This leads to the basic root problem, that modern education is treasonous against God almighty, since He, as the Creator of all things, alone has legitimate power and authority to declare who should control education.

Year 2000

by Ian Hodge, Ph.D.

From time to time I am asked what I think about Gary North's claims about the Year 2000 problem (abbreviated to Y2K problem) in computers. For those of you who don't already know, this problem has to do with dates within computer programs. Many programs use two digit dates and assume the century. Thus the date '89' means 1989. The year '00', though, means 1900, not 2000. So when these programs operate on January 1, 2000 they will not work properly because the wrong century has been assumed.

It is a brave man who will disagree with Gary North. Even though he is not always right, we should not dismiss his claims too lightly.

More importantly, however, what are the ramifications of the problem in Australia. Will our banking system fail to operate? Will the airlines be able to fly? Will the Australian Tax Office be able to collect its money? (On this one, who cares?) Will companies be able to continue to pay their employees and keep them employed?

Someone told me recently the problem doesn't really matter anyway. Assuming your alarm clock can handle the century change, you might get out of bed in time to catch the train to work. If the trains are working that is! If you drive, better hope the traffic lights are operational, otherwise you might not get there so easily. And once you get to work, if the lifts aren't working then you won't be able to get into the office to turn on the computer to find out if everything is OK. Small consolation!

Given the publicity the problem has had, there will hardly be a company that will not endeavour to fix the problem. Due diligence demanded of directors and officers will put pressure in many organisations to solve the problem. In Queensland, for example, the Education department has identified all programs with potential problems and plans to eliminate them or change them by the due date. The Federal Government has even suggested that public companies be required to incorporate a note in their annual returns to notify shareholders how they are progressing towards resolving the issues. The federal government is requiring quarterly reporting from its own departments to monitor progress.

The problem is not a difficult one to fix. The real issue is this: are there sufficient resources to fix the problems. A recent report out of the US indicated that one company had 100 million lines of code to check and fix. It has been estimated that one person would take over 13 years to fix the problem if they could change

4. *American Journal of Education*, 1826, p. 494, quoted in Samuel L. Blumenfeld, *ibid.*, pp. 46-47.

Education: The Problem

In attempting to state the problem, it is tempting to imply that this view of education is the only dilemma with modern education. This is not necessarily true, for it is possible to approach problems and difficulties in modern education in many ways. Not only is there often a lack of factual content in the teaching (e.g. scientific proof for evolution), there are also faulty methodology and pedagogy.

For our purposes in this essay, we just want to make a simple but embracing statement: The educators cannot teach. And the reason they cannot teach is because they have no definition of education. If we refer to the definitions above and the comments made by Dr Humphrey more than 170 years ago, we see the major problem of educators today: they cannot teach. Why?

The answer to that is quite simple. Consider again Webster's definition of education, that it is primarily *moral* education. This involves the teaching of something that modern educators deny is possible: the teaching of *truth*.

If we are to give moral instruction, we must teach that some actions are right and other actions are wrong. We must, in short, place all human actions into either of these two categories. If we are to give a moral education, we must say this is right and that is wrong. But this is what modern educators cannot do, and there is a reason for it.

Epistemology

If we were to trace the history of modern philosophy, say since the time of Rene Descartes, we would discover the results of the futile attempts to build a system of knowledge without God as the starting point. Starting with himself, man can only come to the conclusion that there is no reality other than what man himself defines. In this world, he cannot tell if the things he sees, smells, touches, or hears are real objects or just the result of his fertile imagination. There is no way to bridge the gap between Kant's *noumenal* and *phenomenal* realms, be-

tween the subjective and the objective.

In this world, education in the older sense is impossible. Since reality is what *each person* determines, then reality for me is not necessarily the same as reality for you. Therefore, there can be no teaching of facts, because facts are, in the end, defined by each person. In this world, education can only be one of creating "learning experiences" for the student. He must come to his own conclusions about reality, about what is true.

NO EDUCATION

This is the crisis in education in the world today. If knowledge is no more than my opinion or your opinion, then what use is education. Why should your opinion take precedence over my opinion or any one else's opinion?

If you have understood my very brief outline of modern philosophy, you will understand why modern education methods have replaced traditional procedures.

Once, educators taught and students learnt. But if all knowledge is merely a matter of one's own perception of things, and this perception cannot be tested against the world of reality, then there is little use in imparting the knowledge that I have to another person. Now, educators provide an environment where the student may have "learning experiences." This is why, for example, the educators will not use a systematic phonics system to teach students how to read, write and spell. "We do use phonics," claim the educators. This is partially true. They do use a *modified* phonics system, but they throw in with it other methods, some of which completely undermine the phonic system. But this is understandable given their philosophy. Their intention is not to teach but to provide learning experiences. Therefore they will throw in a phonics system, a look-and-say reading system, or some other program that will give the students a learning experience.

But if this is true, then modern education is not a tool for education but a tool for the opposite result: "dumbing down" the citizens. As Dr. Rushdoony has observed:

one line of code per second. They can't, and any changes need to be tested. So two people might do it in 13 years, but there are not 13 years left to resolve the issues. It must be done in the next 24 months or less.

At the end of the day this is a resourcing issue. Are there sufficient people who can fix the problem before midnight on December 31, 1999? If not, which businesses and departments will fail to meet the deadline? One or two key businesses missing the deadline could put whole industries at risk. Imagine if one of the phone companies could not operate. It would affect many callers even from other suppliers.

In this country, many businesses have been progressive in dealing with the problem. Can we be so sure that the same determination has occurred in other parts of the world? If not, what will happen if one nation fails to meet the deadline? In the banking sector, this could be disastrous for many.

One major bank sent to all its customers a notice on the Y2K problem. It reminded them that the problem was real and that everyone should make sure they are year 2,000 compliant. But most of the banks have had a head start on the problem. They have been dealing with 21st century dates for years in the mortgage market and have been well aware of the limitations of their computer systems.

On the other hand, there are serious reports about some airports in the US being unable to meet the deadline for change.

The problem is real. The urge to fix the problem in time for the new century will increase. One large Australian company I was involved with recently had instructed all staff that no-one was to make any comment about the company's year 2,000 compliance except the appointed Y2K staff member.

Unlike Gary North who has headed for Arkansas as a means of escape, most of us will remain in our homes. We do not have the luxury of relocating and maintaining an income. We will, like so many others, hope that the problem is exaggerated, that the solutions will be found, and that any companies not compliant by the due date will not be in critical industries.

Truly, we are a people who live in hope.

Formal education today is a tool for the systematic destruction of knowledge because it bypasses the basic questions. It is Alexandrian, learned but ignorant, and given to masses of detail without a focus. As at the end of the Middle Ages, the academic world again is plagued by a reign of dunces.⁵

The dunces are in charge and reign with a vision. Their vision has been exalted to a level higher than any other vision, and their vision of "reality" is the one that is "politically correct." It may not be factually correct, but when man can make himself anyway he wishes and defines reality any way he wishes, the idea of objective facts is bypassed and ignored.⁵ They control education, which we should call non-education for its failure to pass true knowledge from teacher to student.

The Solution

If our basic problem is, at bottom, religious, then the solution to the problem is to be found in a new faith in an old religion. But this brings us back to Pilate's enigmatic question: "What is truth?"

If we follow modern philosophy into its intellectual cul-de-sac, we

cannot answer this question, just as Pilate was unable to answer it. Yet answer it we must if we intend to rescue education from its treasonous path.

This involves not just an intellect assent to certain truths. Knowledge alone will not save the world, yet the world will not be saved without it. Right knowledge must lead to right practice, the things we do on a daily basis. This means our education must reflect that which we say we believe.

If we believe that modern education is treasonous to the child, the family and God, then we will do our best to keep our children out of that environment.

If we believe that truth is important then we will be concerned about what our children learn. This is a tough one, for our schools reflect a middle-of-the-road policy towards some aspects of Christian truth. This

is ambivalence over creation science; most Christian schools fail to teach economics from a biblical perspective; and the schools, reflecting the ambivalence of many churches, fail to be dogmatic about beliefs such as church government, baptism, and eschatology, to name just three items that are in disagreement amongst Christians. And these points do not touch on the even tougher and more critical issues known as the Five Points of Calvinism.

We have a long way to go if we are to present the world with an alternative to its compulsory state education and its humanistic, man-centred curriculum that denies the child his God-given gifts and abilities, destroys the family by usurping parental authority and family togetherness, abandons the idea of true education, and attempts to turn young minds against God Almighty.

5. R.J. Rushdoony, *The One and the Many* (Craig Press, 1971), P. 18.

6. Sowell, *ibid.*, chapter 4: "The Irrelevance of Evidence."