



Learn or Else

Barack Obama, that noted educational authority who's taught public school for decades, has again blessed us with his expertise by touting longer incarceration for the victims. "[A] month [less in American classrooms each year, compared with such nations as Japan and Korea] makes a difference," he announced via that noted scholarly forum, NBC-TV's Today.



"It means that kids are losing a lot of what they learn during the school year during the summer. It's especially severe for poorer kids who may not see as many books in the house during the summers, aren't getting as many educational opportunities." Oh, the contempt politicians bear the taxpayers they impoverish!

Leviathan's lackeys are criminal in their megalomania, yes. But Americans enable this conceit by equating careers spent stealing our money, sending other people's kids to die overseas, and lying about it all on the nightly news with omniscience. Why? What do taxing and warring teach a man other than the rankest immorality? For sure, they don't equip him to understand education or any of the myriad issues on which politicians pontificate.

Whether it's bureaucrats unable to tell their own BS from manure but dictating nonetheless to farmers, or politicians who neither sell insurance nor practice medicine reforming [*sic* for nationalizing] both industries, inept know-nothings presume to manage our lives. And Americans not only allow but encourage this with their wide-eyed naïveté: They cherish the fallacy that government's ignoramuses and incompetents know best, care deeply about us, and work hard for our good. Indeed, the Associated Press' report on Barry's blather begins, "President Barack Obama issued a tough-love message to students and teachers on Monday: Their year in the classroom should be longer, and poorly performing teachers should get out." Balderdash! Government knows nothing of "love," tough or otherwise, but it certainly and completely understands control.

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Glaringly evident to everyone but teachers' unions is the fact that public education does not educate. That doesn't mean the system is a failure, though politicians constantly exploit taxpayers' misunderstanding on this score. Rather, public schools are an astounding success, perhaps one of government's greatest, because they accomplish exactly what the State established them to do: produce "good citizens," *i.e.*, malleable, interchangeable, subservient serfs.

In mortifying contrast to Barry, [John Taylor Gatto is a hands-on expert in education](#) — such an expert, in fact, that he was New York City's Teacher of the Year three times and once for New York State. But "he quit teaching on the OP ED page of the *Wall Street Journal* in 1991 while still New York State Teacher of the Year, claiming that he was no longer willing to hurt children." He's written several books exposing as sociopaths the 19th-century Americans who imported "compulsory education" from Prussia. Totalitarians there had developed the system following Prussia's humiliating defeat at the battle of Jena; they hoped to remake men as automatons who would unquestioningly obey their military and industrial masters, mistake slavery to the State for freedom, and fear nothing but non-conformity to their fellows.



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Parents would no longer decide whether and how to educate their offspring; instead, government would monopolize childhood to indoctrinate kids. As Gatto puts it, compulsory education was nothing more nor less than "[an instrument to achieve state and corporate purposes.](#)"

That agenda shows in the oxymoronic term: It is as impossible to compel humans to learn as it is to compel them to love. If politicians truly deplored students' increasing ignorance and irrationality, they would advocate not longer school-years but none at all. The responsibility for education would revert to the individual and his family, where it belongs; scholarship would again become a proud pursuit, liberal and magnanimous, illuminating, intensely satisfying, instead of nonsense and propaganda that elevates "womyn's studies" and "queer history" to the reverence mathematics and literature once enjoyed.

But citizens who think independently are difficult to govern; they're prone to relying on themselves, on their own judgment and initiative, rather than on "leaders." And so politicians appreciate and nurture with billions of our taxes the dumbed-down babysitting that passes for education — even as they confirm our suspicions that American students lag behind those in other nations so that we'll relinquish even more of our money and our kids' care to the State.

Politicians also exploit the illiteracy and emotionalism public schools inculcate to the empire's advantage. How many Americans can locate Iraq or Afghanistan on a map, let alone know about the former's oil or the TAPI pipeline planned for the latter? The Feds and their corporate cronies capitalize on such ignorance: They know public-schools' fools will applaud whatever excuse they invent, even the flimsiest, to invade countries worldwide.

Compulsory "education's" damage extends far beyond a child's years of captivity to it. So synonymous with learning have its boredom, silliness, and irrelevance become that most prisoners graduate to despise the life of the mind. When commencement finally frees them, they determine never to crack a book again. The State has had a dozen years to mock their intellectual curiosity, crush their individuality, and destroy their ability to reason: no wonder most shun thinking as hard work and resent following anything more complicated than Paris Hilton's latest depravity. The whys and wherefores of the Fourth Amendment elude them, as does the Feds' assault against it. When [guys in black robes decree](#) that the Constitution does indeed permit cops to track us by attaching a device to our cars, or contend that we're fair game for [official spying simply because we appear in public](#), they merely shrug.

Virtually everyone has a solution to the horror that is public schooling. Some blame teachers and administrators and propose more pay to attract better ones; others want vigorous discipline — or, indeed, any discipline at all. Still others insist that academic subjects like Latin should replace courses on rock'n'roll and cinematic technique. Many agitate to restore prayer and the Bible to classrooms, as though an America fresh from the Second Great Awakening didn't embrace the evil of compulsory education. Whitewashing its atrocities now with Christianity won't help, though it does violate the Commandment against taking the Lord's name in vain.

None of these remedies, nor all of them put together, can save the public schools. And why would we want to? The system is irredeemably rotten from the get-go and in every detail — rotten in its conception, ambitions, execution, and philosophy. It is utterly opposed to liberty, a scholastic complement to a national ID, the Patriot Act, the FBI's surveillance, the Transportation Security Administration's checkpoints at airports, the IRS, and all other totalitarian schemes.

We must abolish not just the U.S. Department of Education but compulsory education in its entirety; we must vehemently, vigorously prohibit the State from messing with and up kids' minds.



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