

The Blumenfeld Education Letter

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." HOSEA 4:6

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

Benjamin Bloom: OBE's Godfather His Writings Tell All

As everyone knows, American public education has been in crisis for at least the last three decades. In fact, it was the famous *A Nation at Risk* report, issued by the National Commission on Excellence in Education in April 1983, that called for drastic measures to be taken if the public schools were to be saved from further deterioration. And the calls for educational reform came fast and furious.

Basically, there were two types of reforms called for. Conservatives called for getting back to basics, for teaching reading by intensive phonics, for strengthening all of the academic subjects, for greater discipline, more homework, etc. The liberal education establishment had other ideas. Besides calling for more money, higher teacher salaries, all of which they got, their view of reform included whole language, invented spelling, no memorization in arithmetic but lots of calculators, a breakdown of traditional subject matter into relevant topics, and above all, a greater emphasis on the affective domain, that is, more emphasis on feelings, beliefs, values, attitudes, socialization, sexuality, group learning, group therapy, peer

counseling, death education, drug education, etc.

Obviously, these two views of education are not only mutually exclusive but produce totally different outcomes. The conservative approach represents a traditional Judeo-Christian world view that sees education as a development of intellect and spirit. It sees the school as serving the parents who entrust their children to the educators who are to teach the youngsters the basic academic skills that will serve them in any future field of work or career they may choose. In other words, the function of a free public school is to provide a basic, no-nonsense education.

Vice Admiral Hyman Rickover summed up the non-sectarian traditional view when he said the following to a Congressional committee in 1962:

[A] school must accomplish three difficult tasks; first, it must transmit to the pupil a substantial body of knowledge; second, it must develop in him the necessary intellectual skill to apply this knowledge to the problems he will encounter in adult life; and third, it must inculcate in him the habit of judging issues on the basis of verified fact and logical reasoning. . . . [The school's] principal task . . . is to develop the mind.

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