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The Politicization of Education

By Jeremy Hatfield

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There were some interesting fun and games surrounding last week's Presidential back to school speech. Parents were suspicious, many on the right gave it the same treatment Dick Gephardt gave Bush 41 in 1991. The "lesson plans" were rewritten, parents exercised their parental rights, some districts refused to air it, and Keith Olbermann and the Moonbat Minions over at MSNBC went on another monkey poo flingfest.

The speech itself was decent, but that wasn't the point. Some of us simply don't like education being more politicized than it already is. (*video of the speech below*)



Neal McClusky over at the Cato Institute has a lot to say about that in light of the Obama speech, before, during, and after:

<http://www.cato-at-liberty.org/2009/09/07/staid-speech-is-cold-comfort/>

<http://www.cato-at-liberty.org/2009/09/08/presidents-campaign-speech-to-kids/>
<http://www.cato-at-liberty.org/2009/09/09/more-sense-on-the-presidents-speech/>

Thank the NEA for the state of affairs in education. For more on that matter, you can read Charlotte Iserbyt's book "The Deliberate Dumbing Down of America" free over at <http://www.deliberatedumbingdown.com/>

I'll let you draw your own conclusions. For me, it just further confirms my suspicions that public education tends to amount to little more than ideological puppy farms, where at the end of at least 12 years of schooling, kids can't really read, but they know well the progressive party line (envirowhackoism, white guilt, gay supremacy, and Marx is god, and Obama is his prophet).

Seriously. When instructors feel they can inject political indoctrination into any academic setting, regardless of how inappropriate it is (chemistry?), you know something's up.

For more on that, I recommend Evan Coyne Maloney's documentary "Indoctrinate U." <http://indoctrinate-u.com/pages/welcome.html>

Anyway, I discovered, much to my dismay, that my field of specialty (foreign languages) is not immune to this.

I know, it sounds ridiculous. How politicized can teaching a foreign language become? Today's verb is "streicheln"—to stroke—and the example sentence is "Ich will Obamas Egoismus heute streicheln" (I want to stroke Obama's egotism today).

I know, that's a little too much of an exaggeration, but what I'm about to relate to you is not.

I used to be a member of the American Council on Teaching Foreign Languages (ACTFL). I still get invitations and announcements from them every now and then. Yesterday, I got a prospectus advertising their 2009 Annual Convention & World Languages Expo, which is being held in San Diego this November.

I open up the mini-booklet, and on the second page, they announce the keynote speaker and his address.

Now, these conventions are like trade shows. They're places where you can network, get some updates on the latest developments in your field, get some tips and tricks, new materials, and so on and so forth. Here, you'd expect the keynote speaker to be a language scholar, or an educator of some note, or even a public official somehow related to foreign language education.

This November, they are featuring a political strategist.

I am not making this up.

It gets worse—this isn't a non-partisan strategist, either. This fellow's clientele is exclusively Democrat, and his work is exclusively with Democrat causes.

He's none other than Steve Hildebrand, who was the deputy national campaign manager for Obama last year.

Needless to say, it ran up a red flag for me. Still, I read on, giving ACTFL the benefit of the doubt. It said his presentation had to do with helping educators leverage technology to garner support for their programs in much the same way he helped Obama. Well, sounds innocuous enough.

That is, until you reach this line: "And he will suggest how language educators can best craft their policies and advocacy efforts to blend with the broader policies of the Obama administration."

Big red flag. Very big red flag. Massively big red flag. Seriously, I may not have been a member of ACTFL that long, nor that of the American Association of Teachers of German, and my contributions as a founding editor of the International Society of Language Studies may have been no more than lending my name to the organization so it could get started, but nowhere in all the articles of the quarterlies I got, nor in any of the invitations to the various conferences did I ever hear mention of anything similar relating to the Bush administration.

Can you say “Gleichschaltung?” Look it up sometime. I’m not one given over to likening any administration to the NSDAP, but the modus operandi is not that much different: get in bed with government.

But don’t expect them to respect you in the morning.

Jeremy Hatfield is a contributor to The Conservative Fun House Blog



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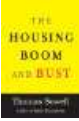
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