The Clinton Master Plan

To Take Over Education

by Phyllis Schlafly February 19, 1997

The Clinton Administration learned a big lesson from the defeat of its plan to take over the entire U.S. health care industry. Releasing its plan as a single 1,342-page bill in 1993 gave conservatives a large target to hit at and enabled them to identify at least a dozen fearsome features against which Americans could rally.

When health plan author Ira Magaziner and other Friends of Bill and Hillary developed a parallel plan to take over the entire U.S. educational system, they used a very different strategy. They dispersed its coercive mandates among several federal statutes, bureaucratic regulations, a strange relationship between the Departments of Education and Labor, state legislation (whose authorship traces to a common source), and grant applications submitted by states seeking federal funding.

The master plan for the health industry was developed by what became known as the Jackson Hole group, which met for several years at a private residence in Wyoming, according to an expose in the New York Times Magazine published after the Clinton plan was dead. The master plan for the federal takeover of public schools is contained in a remarkable 18-page "Dear Hillary" letter written on November 11, 1992 by Marc Tucker, president of the National Center on Education and the Economy, an organization that has been able to milk the public treasuries of many states for millions of dollars to pay for copies of his plan to "restructure" and set "standards" for public schools.

Tucker's letter confirms that his plan is the result of meetings with other leftwing gurus, including Ira Magaziner, David Hornbeck, and Lauren Resnick. It lays out a plan, modeled on the German system, "to remold the entire American [public school] system" into "a seamless web that literally extends from cradle to grave and is the same system for everyone," coordinated by "a system of labor market boards at the local, state and federal levels" where curriculum and "job matching" will be handled by counselors "accessing the integrated computer-based program."

The Tucker-Clinton plan would change the mission of the public schools from teaching children

knowledge and skills to training them to serve the global economy in jobs selected by workforce boards.

Nothing in these comprehensive plans has anything to do with teaching schoolchildren how to read. Although most Americans think that is the number-one task of schools, and it is obvious that the schools' failure to do this is our biggest education problem, teaching children how to read is not on the radar screen of these plans and is not even one of the eight national education goals in Goals 2000.

The implementation of Tucker's ambitious plan was contained in three laws passed in 1994: the Goals 2000 Act, the School-to-Work Act, and the reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The final piece in the Tucker plan to convert the school system into job training to serve a managed workforce, which was called "Careers" in the House version and "Workforce Development" in the Senate version, didn't pass in 1996 but will certainly be revised this year.

The Tucker-Clinton-Magaziner plan to restructure the public schools is based on specific mechanisms of control.

Bypass all elected officials on school boards and in state legislatures, either by making federal funds flow to a new entity called a "consortium" of several district superintendents (the device revealed in Clinton's January 22 speech in Northbrook, IL), or to the Governor and his appointees on workforce development boards (as projected in the Careers/Workforce Development bill).

Use a computer database, a.k.a. "a labor market information system," into which school personnel would scan all information about every schoolchild and his family, identified by the child's social security number: academic, medical, mental, psychological, behavioral, and interrogations by counselors. The computerized data would be available to the school, the government, and future employers.

Use the new slogan "high standards" to cement national control of tests, assessments, school honors and rewards, financial aid, and the Certificate of Initial Mastery (CIM), which is designed to function much like the green card used by resident aliens, i.e., you can't get a job without it. Marc Tucker's outfit has been paid hundreds of thousands of dollars by individual states to write their "reform" plans, which, funny thing, turn out to be substantially similar.

Control the vocabulary of education, so that many words have double meanings. Thus, when parents hear the words "outcome-based" or "performance-based," they think the outcomes must be skills such as reading and the multiplication tables, but the educators mean "accepting diversity" or "being

environmentally sensitive."

Coopt the Governors and the CEOs of large corporations to front for these "reforms" by promising the former some control over the flow of federal funds and the latter some free teenage labor. Once a Governor or CEO signs on, all decisions are actually made by the same education bureaucrats who gave us the problems in the first place.

An all-day briefing put together by Rep. Henry Hyde (R-IL) on February 12 will examine federal funding mischief from the viewpoint of state legislators all over the country.